How does the School of Education live out Nyack College’s core values?

Table of Contents

Value 1: Socially Relevant .................. 1
Value 2: Academically Excellent ........... 1
Modular Master’s Degree .................. 2
Value 3: Globally Engaged ................. 2
Value 4: Intentionally Diverse .......... 2
SOE Personnel Adjustments ................. 3
Value 5: Personally Transforming ....... 3
Alumni Newsflash ............................. 4
R Teachers Smurt? ........................... 4

Value 1: Socially Relevant by Dr. Stuart Knapp

Graduate Education programs leading to the degree of Master of Science in Education are “Socially Relevant” and, as such, fulfill the mission of Nyack College of “preparing students to serve in ministerial, educational, healing and community-building professions.” Our graduate programs prepare students for the educational profession to serve in much needed areas in specialty and geography.

We offer a degree in inclusive education with two certification extensions—gifted education and middle school education. Additionally, the graduate school of education offers degree programs in Special Education and Childhood Education.

Since the inception of the graduate programs in 2002, graduate students have been placed in a range of districts for required field experiences in K-12 classrooms. These placements have included NY and NJ Christian, public, and private schools in every surrounding county. Our well-prepared graduates then launch (or continue) their teaching careers in these same schools, or in other schools, within their area of preparation and certification. Together, we are serving society relevantly.

Value 2: Academically Excellent by Dr. James Nichols

A Core Value with Unique Meaning in the School of Education

“Academically Excellent,” to the teacher candidates in the Nyack College School of Education, has three components as defined by NCATE: knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

“Knowledge” is demonstrated by teacher candidates achieving local, state, and national standards to certify them as teachers in New York and other states. A Nyack College School of Education graduate demonstrates mastery of subject matter by achieving a high GPA and meeting New York State standards on the L.A.S.T (Liberal Arts and Sciences Test) and the C.S.T. (Content Specialty Test).

Pedagogical or teaching skills are directly applied in fieldwork, student teaching, and in-class presentations. Nyack College teacher candidates also are assessed via the ATS-W (Assessment of Teaching Skills—Written), New York State’s pedagogical evaluation of teacher candidates. In educational (continued on pg. 3)
Greetings from the Graduate Education Department. As the current graduate education program director, I would like to share some exciting news with our friends, School of Education Family, and the Nyack Community at-large. All graduate education programs are offered in a new modular format that expedites program completion!

What is this “modular program” and how does it work? Each of the courses offered traditionally within the graduate programs is provided according to a prescribed schedule over a four-week block or “module.” These course “modules” will require that students attend class two nights per week (4 hours per night) as well as one full Saturday (of 7.5 hours duration) during the four-week block and will be eligible to receive the credits traditionally allocated for a full course (i.e. 3 credits) at the conclusion of the “module.” Subsequently, students will begin a new course approximately every four weeks until they have completed all the course requirements for their program (usually accomplished in from 10-12 months, depending on the program).

These classes will be provided, when feasible, on both campuses, unless they are offered online or must be offered in Rockland to satisfy the NYS requirement for one course to be provided at the main campus location (e.g., EDG 501, 502, & 503: Educational Research and Statistics). In the exceptional cases in which a course can only be provided on the Rockland campus, arrangements will be made to provide transportation to and from Rockland from the Manhattan campus (361 Broadway). Some courses will be available online and therefore will be universally accessible.

Our pioneer “cohort” of students enrolled in this innovative program began taking the first of their scheduled courses, EDG 530: The Inclusive Classroom, this fall. Initial enrollment is higher than anticipated and there are currently many students applying for admission to courses offered in the spring 2008 semester. Our “modular programs” appear to be a great “idea whose time has come!”

Value 3: Globally Engaged by Dr. Eleanor Pease

Have you glocalized yet? Glocalization is a recently coined word to describe the rapid changes in our global society. High-speed transportation, the internet, and the increased mobility of the world’s populations are among the rapid changes that have not only brought the world to our doorstep, but have taken us into the world with new possibilities. We Christians are no longer living in our safe little “villages;” rather, the local and the global are one and our world has changed.

Nyack College is placing a greater emphasis on world missions with more overseas missions trips and overseas academic winterim programs (Grenada with Dr. Harrigan this year). In addition, President Scales recently called together a group of Nyack people to explore other ways that Nyack can reach out into global society. The School of Ed, TESOL and ESL are represented in that group by Professor Peg Bowen and me. I’m excited about the possibilities.

This emphasis will bring a whole new meaning to the phrase “becoming agents of social change.” If you are interested in the concept of glocalization I recommend reading Glocalization: How the followers of Jesus engage a flat world, by Bob Roberts, Jr (2007). If you read it—let me know what you think.

Value 4: Intentionally Diverse by Marie White

Our President, Dr. Michael Scales, so eloquently defined the importance of being intentionally diverse in his inaugural address because “some challenges in our world can only be met when people, who would not otherwise come together, rally for the cause.”

In the School of Education we continuously gather input from a diverse field of professionals to design our instruction and evaluate our curriculum. In addition, we provide our candidates with field experiences in which they are called upon to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. This core value aligns itself easily to one of the (continued on next page)
SOE Personnel Changes:
Departures, Additions, & Adjustments

Administrative Assistants:

Jeremy Stiffler moved from the New York City Education Office into an executive assistant position in the NYC business community while he works on his masters in Instructional Technology. He will return now and then to offer his services with LiveText training.

Lewanda Miller has filled Jeremy’s vacancy. Lewanda joins us with 14 years of experience in the New York City Board of Education as an educator, administrator, and Assistant Professor at CUNY. She’s currently enrolled in the Alliance Graduate School of Counseling and desires to be an asset to Nyack.

Molly Donnelson left the Rockland Education Office in July to pursue her intended career as a missionary. She is currently living in China with Mara Thorson (’01 grad) doing a missionary apprenticeship that includes language study and teaching English.

Jamie Lettre (leh-TRAY) has filled Molly’s empty chair. Jamie, a native Rocklander, comes to us from Care Net Pregnancy Center of Rockland with a desire to learn and to serve. She interfaced with us before this as a Care Net presenter in Professor Buel’s Health Issues class.

Faculty:

Dr. Vance Austin will be officially leaving us as of Jan. 1, 2008 but will continue as an adjunct in several Childhood Special Education courses in the Spring. After much prayer and soul-searching he has decided to return to his first love—teaching students with special needs—and to develop his research techniques to enable further authorship. We have greatly appreciated the contributions of Dr. Austin in the time he has been a faculty member, and value his experience and wisdom. He has been a good friend to all of us. His servant spirit and work ethic are a model to us and our candidates. We will miss him greatly.

Dr. Bennett Schepens has been promoted from Associate Dean to full Dean of the School of Education and has moved his office to Shuman to take on an additional role as Director of Institutional Assessment. His focus in both roles will be improving assessment tools and collection for accreditation and program improvement purposes.

Dr. JoAnn Looney has been moved to Dr. Schepens’ old office and is now Assistant Dean for the School of Education. She is taking on many of the daily oversight tasks of the dean position.

Value 5: Personally Transforming by Dr. JoAnn Looney

Teaching, a courageous vocation, “requires constant renewal of mind and heart and spirit” (Palmer, 1998). It can be a personally transforming profession. President Scales in his Inauguration Address in April 2007 stated emphatically that “Nyack College is personally transforming because people encounter Jesus Christ here.” Students “abandon their youth in favor of a maturity that comes from knowing Christ.”

This journey can be frustrating and conflict-ridden; however, the School of Education faculty guides students to personally reflect on their faith walk, their dispositions and their teaching. They emphasize the integration of faith and learning to encourage renewal and transformation. Faculty in the School of Education pray with and mentor teacher candidates as they journey toward maturity in Christ. Teacher candidates, both individually and corporately, are personally transformed through their relationships with each other and with the School’s faculty. They encounter Jesus Christ on the Hilltop.
Alumni Newsflash

- Heidi Grajcar ('06), Li Du ('05), and Jessica Gallagher ('06) are all teaching ESL for Nyack Public Schools!
- Jessica Dawson ('07) is teaching at P.S. 397.
- Thom Smith ('07) is teaching 3rd grade at Nashua Christian Academy in New Hampshire.
- Manuela Rodriguez ('07) is enrolled at Tennessee Grad School.
- Lydia Kim ('07) is a 3's head teacher at the Rainbow School in Palisades Park, NJ.
- Rafael Santiago ('07) is working for ACS Agency.
- Megan Kelly ('06) is teaching in Quito, Ecuador.
- Rafael Velez ('07) is employed at a company in NY.
- Carlina Fan ('07) is teaching at P.S. 140.
- Kristen Luba ('00) is having baby #3 in February.
- Hyomi Yun ('07) returned to Korea.
- Amanda Martel ('07) is teaching transitional 3's at Educational Playcare in Farmington, CT and is pursuing graduate studies.
- Diana Velez ('04) is teaching at Evangel Christian School and enrolled in Nyack's graduate program.
- Megan Wedge ('04) is married with a baby girl, and is a Reading Recovery teacher for Benton Elementary in Maine.
- Carmen Cay-Garcia ('04) is teaching at P.S. 31 and enrolled in Nyack's graduate program.
- Sherleen Petion ('07) is teaching 3's and 4's at Fort Green Clinton Hill Cooperative Day Care Center in Brooklyn, NY.
- Tavi Riddle ('07) is teaching 1st grade at Logos International School in Cambodia.
- Patty Irish ('07) is teaching 4th grade at Cornerstone Christian School in New City, NY.
- Stephanie Caraccia ('06) and Donna Leto ('04) are teaching at Calvary Christian Academy, in Wayne, NJ.
- Nicole Sevigny ('07) is teaching 7th grade at a school in Arizona.
- Lauren Jacobs ('07) is teaching at Abundant Life Academy in Nutley, NJ.
- Christina Cook ('07) is teaching 5th grade at Mt. Zion Christian Academy in South Carolina.
- Miriam Smith ('07) is a special ed teacher in Honduras.
- Hana Park ('07) is a pre-K lead teacher at Bright Learning Center in Palisades Park, NJ.
- Cliff Larson ('07) got married last year.
- Dan Cernek ('07) is teaching 4th grade at Hooper Bay Elementary School in Alaska.
- Matt Grossmann ('07) is teaching 4th grade at Timothy Christian School.
- Luther Plummer ('04) is teaching for P771K at P.S. 236.
- These graduates are continuing on at Nyack in graduate studies: Jonitza Aviles, Elise Espinoza, Craig Fairhurst, Jonathan Carr, Sarah Gunning, Sarah McLaughlin, Tiffany Mosely, Yoli-Ann McLeod, Christopher Mitchell, Lynette Steffy, and Deanna Williams.

R Teachers Smart? by Dr. Bennett Schepens

A seven-year-old boy came to his mother and said, “I don’t want to be a teacher when I grow up.”

She replied, “Oh, why not?”

He responded, “Teachers don’t have to be smart.”

This intrigued the mother so she probed, “Why do you say that?”

He replied with a look that said it was obvious, “They have the book with all the answers in them. Miss Smith had one last year and my teacher this year tries to hide it, but she has one too.”

Thankfully, I doubt there was ever a day when teachers were not smart. Today, with the growth of knowledge, technology, world economies, media and a multitude of distractions for students, teachers need to be smarter than ever. States are requiring testing of all teacher candidates, often in general knowledge, teaching knowledge and subject knowledge. In New York State this requires that teacher candidates pass at least three tests.

This is why the School of Education has taken steps to ensure that our teacher candidates have the knowledge, skills and dispositions to be successful in the classroom. One of those steps is ensuring each program has met the rigorous standards of a specialized professional agency. The School of Education and the Liberal Arts departments that support the School of Education are currently nationally recognized for programs in:

- TESOL - Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Adolescent English – National Association of Teachers of English
- Adolescent Mathematics – National Council for Teachers of Mathematics
- Childhood Education – Association of Childhood Education International
- Music Education – National Association of Schools of Music

Several of our programs were too new to be reviewed in 2005 so we will be seeking national recognition for all programs in 2010. Programs that will seek national recognition in addition to the above programs include Early Childhood Education, Childhood Special Education, Adolescent Social Studies Education, Gifted Education and Middle Level Education.

A second step in quality assurance is successfully meeting the standards as a School of Education to be accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the most widely recognized accreditation for schools of education. This was achieved in 2005. The next visit from NCATE will be in 2010 to again review the entire School of Education.

The School of Education wants to thank you — those smart enough to teach — for your support and assistance in this process. Without teacher candidates like you the School of Education would not have received multiple national recognitions and the prestigious accreditation from NCATE. Are teachers smart? — Yes, very smart!!