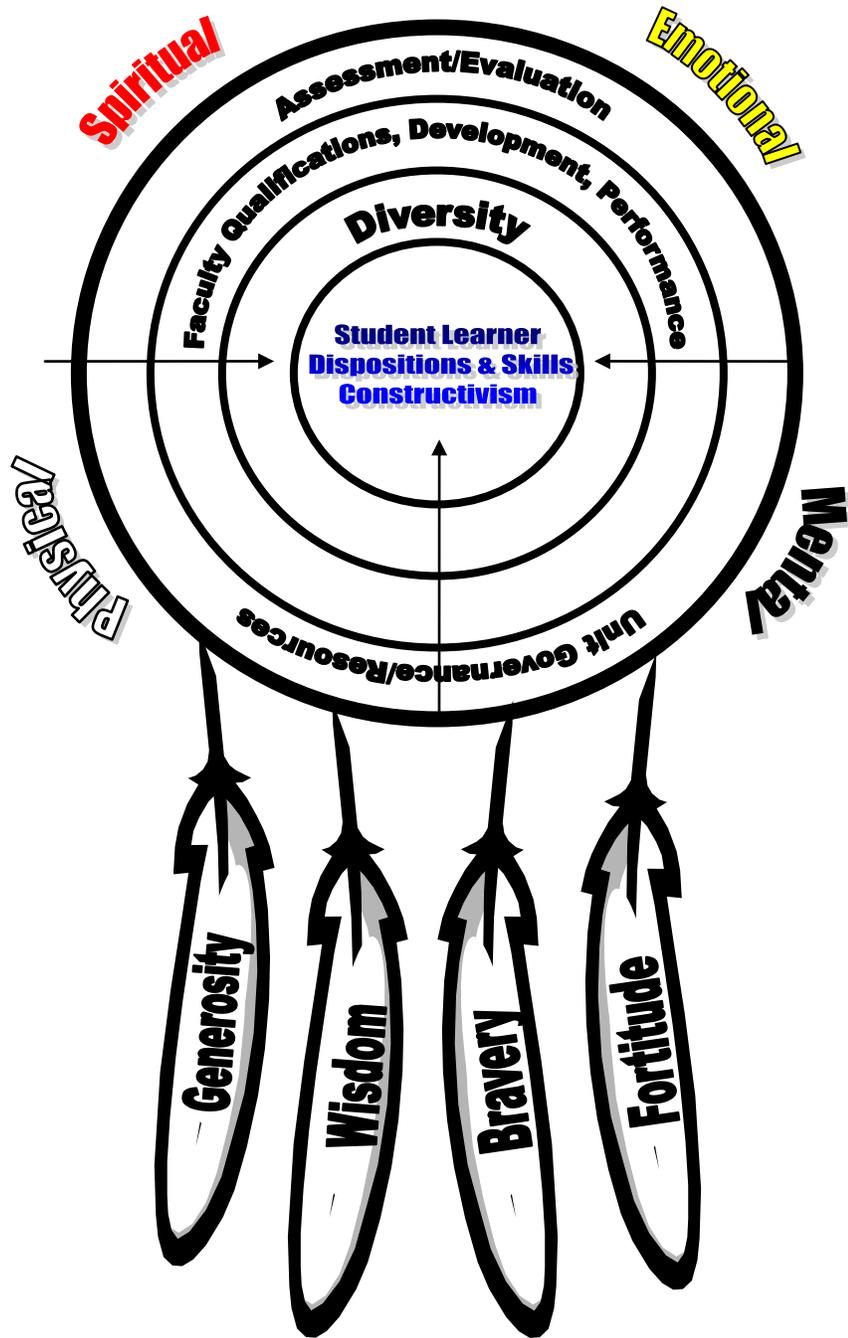




Division of Education
Conceptual Framework
12/14/06



Sitting Bull College Mission Statement

Sitting Bull College (SBC) is an academic and technical institution committed to improving the levels of education and training, economic social development of the people it serves while promoting responsible behavior consistent with the Lakota/Dakota culture and language.

Sitting Bull College is tribally controlled and located on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. SBC offers academic and vocational training. The College has implemented a standard core curriculum incorporating the essential basics for each specified degree offering. The core curriculum is founded in the general education requirements. These requirements are directly linked to the seven student outcomes identified as the central goals for student achievement by the institution. These seven outcomes directly correlate to the mission of the college.

Sitting Bull College offers the Associate of Arts degree, Associate of Science degree, Associate of Applied Science degree, and Vocational Certificates of Completion.

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS

The Associate of Arts (AA) degree is generally granted to the student who intends to transfer to a four-year institution. Students must complete the SBC general education requirements and may also select an area of emphasis in any of the instructional areas. Each AA degree program requires a minimum of sixty-three (63) credit hours of course work.

Sitting Bull College offers the following Associate of Arts degrees:

Business Administration
General Studies
General Studies – Nursing Transfer
Native American Studies

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE

The Associate of Science (AS) degree is designed to prepare students for a vocation by providing more specialized training than the AA degree. It also provides enough general education course work for the student who intends to transfer. Each AS degree program requires a minimum of sixty-three (63) credit hours of course work.

Sitting Bull College offers the following Associate of Science degrees:

Agribusiness
Business Administration/Management
Early Childhood Education
Environmental Science
Human Services Technician
Information Technology
Natural Resources Management
Office Technology

Practical Nursing
Teacher Education

ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE

The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree is granted to the student who wishes to complete a vocational program of study, which leads to employment in a specific career. It requires that nearly all the course work be in a specific area, with only limited general education requirements. Each AAS degree program requires a minimum of sixty-three (63) credit hours of course work.

Sitting Bull College offers the following Associate of Applied Science degrees:

Building Trades
Business Administration/Management Arts & Crafts Entrepreneurship
Criminal Justice
Office Technology

CERTIFICATE

A certificate of completion is awarded for successful completion of a vocational training program. Certificate programs provide vocational skills training and will require minimum academic course work.

Sitting Bull College offers the following Certificate of Completion:

Building Trades
Business Administration /Management Arts & Crafts Entrepreneurship
Entrepreneurship
Farm/Ranch Management
Information Technology
Office Technology
Peace Officer

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE

Business Administration & Elementary Education

The Bachelor of Science (BS) degree is granted to the student who wishes to complete a program of study, which leads to employment in a specific career. Each BS degree program requires a minimum of one hundred and twenty-eight (128) credit hours of course work. For admissions into the Bachelor's program a student must successfully completed one of the Associate Degrees in Business Administration for the BS in Business Administration or the Associate of Science degree in Teacher Education for the BS in Elementary Education.

Sitting Bull College Division of Education

Vision Statement

As a Community of Learners in fulfilling Sitting Bull's vision of building a better future for our children we emulate the Lakota/Dakota values of bravery, generosity, wisdom, and fortitude.

Tribal Colleges have developed their own teacher education programs in an effort to validate and empower American Indian communities. (Rehyner, 1992).

Mission Statement

The mission of the Sitting Bull College Education programs balance and integrate the Constructivist view of teaching and learning using the Lakota/Dakota philosophy, values, and beliefs. With the help of SBC cultural leader and language faculty, Wilbur Flying By, the following values are acknowledged as indicators of excellence:

- Woohitika (Bravery) – the ability to be courageous when facing challenging situations by modeling leadership and positive agents of change.
- Wowacintanka (Fortitude) – to persist despite difficulties, be resilient when facing obstacles, and to keep in mind the need for humility.
- Wacantkiya and/or Wacanlkiya (Generosity) – to show generosity in a variety of ways, but mainly through modeling compassion for others. The SBC Education programs expect that all candidates demonstrate generosity within the context of their communities.
- Woksape (Wisdom) – This is defined as the accumulation of individual experience, and using that wisdom to make appropriate decisions in life.

The SBC education programs focus on preparing teachers who are sensitive and respectful of all learners. SBC educational programs understand that “knowledge is inherent in everything”, and that traditional teachings tell that wisdom is harmony with nature and recognizes that lessons were taught through story-telling. The program will create and deliver a professional development curriculum by providing a climate that gives future teachers with educational experiences that impact their lives in a geographically and economically challenged region.

Program Purposes

The Sitting Bull College Division of Education programs are developed to meet two over-arching purposes. These are:

- Prepare candidates to meet the needs of the communities they serve.
- Providing community members with access to a higher education while remaining connected with their communities.

Central Principles

Central principles guide our instructional practices and all aspects of work done with students, schools, parents, and communities. These principles are:

- Prior knowledge is honored, valued, and acknowledged.
- Culturally relevant instruction and standards are meaningful when infused throughout the curriculum content.
- Providing a supportive and caring classroom environment is related to positive student outcomes.
- Empowering students through successful learning experiences enhances learner self-efficacy.
- Providing strong student services is related to program completion.

Program Outcomes and Candidate Performance

Constructivist principles and the Lakota/Dakota values guide the professional education programs and are illustrated in coursework and modeled by faculty. The combined principles complement the program outcomes; candidate performance is driven by the Constructivist teaching and learning model. The Sitting Bull College Division of Education program candidates demonstrate competencies in dispositions, content knowledge and instructional practices as prescribed by the following six outcomes:

A. Candidate Outcomes:

- Candidate Outcomes are specific to each degree program. See individual Program Assessment Matrix in appendix.

B. Candidate Skills, Traits, and Habits

- Generosity- Candidates' model the Lakota/Dakota value of "giving back" through service learning activities in the communities they serve. Community service is related to constructivist teaching where authentic assessment can be demonstrated in the form of real life projects in the communities.
- Wisdom- Candidates demonstrate thoughtful deliberate decision making skills through reflection and critical thinking. They understand the constructivist principles and demonstrate their ability to apply those principles to their teaching using a variety of teaching strategies and techniques. They understand the unique needs of all learners regardless of social economic status, ethnicity, physical appearance, prior academic achievement, or other social/emotional factors.
- Bravery- Candidates demonstrate bravery in the role of leader and advocate for children in their individual educational settings. They are aware that as educational leaders they must be willing to collaborate, building relationships with parents, and community members. Candidates recognize that they must apply professional skills in making responsible decisions and problem solve ways to engage families and communities.
- Fortitude- Candidates persist in continuing a path of life long learning despite the challenges of time and resources. They are resilient when facing barriers to fulfilling their commitment to all children and communities.

C. Candidate Knowledge

- Teacher candidates demonstrate an understanding of the developmental stages of learners and are able to create appropriate learning environments.
- Teacher candidates demonstrate knowledge of theorists, both Native and Non-Native, who have contributed to the field of teaching and learning. They are especially knowledgeable of ways to create meaningful learning experiences through the use of culturally relevant instructional methods.
- Teacher candidates apply current assessment and evaluation theory, research, and practice to their practices.
- Teacher candidates practice constructivist principles especially cognizant of the idea that learners bring with them prior knowledge and cultural experiences.

Beliefs that Guide Our Teaching Practice

With guidance from Sitting Bull College Lakota/Dakota cultural leader, Wilbur Flying By, the Division of Education holds the following beliefs:

- A.** We believe that each learner is unique and different and that there are critical periods in a person's emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual growth.
- B.** We believe that each learner, if given the opportunity to learn – learners will make wise decisions.
 - Constructivist teachers mediate the learning environment through coaching and facilitation.
 - Constructivist teachers provide opportunities for meaningful and relevant learning, while valuing student's prior knowledge.
 - Constructivist teachers are aware that in order for learning to occur knowledge is presented in a variety of ways.
 - Constructivist teachers are sensitive to and respectful of all learners. They must possess a broad knowledge base of skills and be reflective practitioners.
- C.** We believe that each learner be encouraged and educated to value the Lakota/Dakota cultural values of bravery, generosity, wisdom, and fortitude. It is recognized that values are learned through imprinting, modeling, and influence.
- D.** We believe that each learner recognize, affirm and celebrate the educational value of diversity.
 - Learners have opportunities to experience diversity through exposure to a variety of teachers, learning environments, and field placements.
- E.** We believe that each learner understand that assessment and evaluation must:
 - Reflect traditional beliefs about learning and guide teaching practices
 - Result from multiple forms of authentic assessment provided by the SBC community of teachers.
 - Be analyzed in order to improve delivery, content, and instruction.
 - Focus on supporting learner self-efficacy, perceptions while monitoring learner growth.

The Role of Context

Tribal colleges were created to reduce the need for out-of-community education and to provide college instruction responsive to the needs and desires of Native American communities and students. For the American Indian student, out-of-community schooling presents not only an unusual academic environment, but also an alien social and conceptual milieu far from the familiar and interconnected world of American Indian communities. Tribal societies are community-based societies. The “community” is a world of interrelationships among humans, plants, and animals and of values and spirituality. Therefore, the community is considered the appropriate context for the process and content of education. Through the process of Indian self-determination, communities strive to achieve an effective balance among knowledge, beliefs, and values of Western and Indian Cultures (Simonelli, 1991).

Sitting Bull College (SBC) is located on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation situated on the west bank of the Missouri River in south-central North Dakota and north-central South Dakota. The reservation covers approximately 2.3 million acres; the tribal people call themselves Lakota/Dakota people. In 1995 the reservation was home to approximately 5,860 mainly impoverished Dakota and Lakota tribal members (The History and Culture of the Standing Rock Oyate, 1995). The nine pre-college level schools on the Standing Rock reservation represent four system types: public, private, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Tribal Grant. The nine pre-college level schools are identified as: Cannon Ball/Solen School (K-12), Fort Yates Public School (K-12), Standing Rock Grant School (K-12), Selfridge School (K-12), Rock Creek Tribal Grant School (K-8), Little Eagle Bureau of Indian Affairs School (K-8), Wakpala School (K-12), St. Bernard’s Mission School (1-6), McIntosh School (K-12), and Mclaughlin School (K-12).

In the late 1960s, a few American Indian and non-Indian professionals working for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe sought to offer higher education courses on the reservation. Their efforts led to the founding of Standing Rock Community College (SRCC), the predecessor to SBC. These individuals felt that the opportunity to offer a higher education program for members of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, might improve economic and social conditions. (Stein, 1992; see also Status Study for North Central Accreditation, 1977).

In response to the group’s search, Bismarck Junior college (now Bismarck State College), a comprehensive community college, brought the first courses to the Standing Rock Sioux reservation in 1968 through its Division of Continuing Education. Mary College (now University of Mary) of Bismarck and several other North Dakota institutions joined Bismarck Junior College. By 1971, they were providing coursework to tribal and federal program staff on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, but in an uncoordinated fashion. The growing number of providers of higher education courses, the lack of coordination, and the inconsistent format concerned the original sponsors. According to Gipp (as cited in SBC Self-Study, 1977), their concerns led to an examination of the possibility of forming the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe’s own tribal college as a potential solution.

An interview with Jack Barden, one of the founding members of Sitting Bull College, was recorded in the 1977 Sitting Bull College Self-Study. This interview provided historical information about the early development of the community college. Barden (as cited in SBC Self-Study, 1977) reported that on December 6, 1971, higher education advocates met to form a committee that pursued the development of a community college on the Standing Rock Reservation. Under the direction of Robert Gipp, the committee members divided the research activities necessary to begin the process of founding a community college. As a result of strong leadership and a desire to meet the needs of Standing Rock tribal members for higher education, Standing Rock Community College was founded. Officials of Bismarck Junior College did not see the tribal college on Standing Rock as a threat or competition for students. Rather, they perceived the proposed college as an opportunity to be of service to Indian people not previously served by the state of North Dakota (as cited in SBC Self-Study, 1977).

In 1973 seven classes were offered. According to E. Smith (personal communication, May 15, 2006) these classes were held in the Douglas Skye Complex Retirement Center, located at Fort Yates, North Dakota. According to Ms. Smith approximately 30 students were enrolled in 1973, but by January, 1975, Sitting Bull College Board Minutes showed an enrollment of 110 students. The first coordinator of the Standing Rock Community College was Minard White. The students represented an age span of 18 to 65 years old, with the average age being close to 40. The typical student was female, an employed mother, and seeking to improve her job marketability. Standing Rock served students from all walks of life and all adult ages. According to the Barden interview (as cited in SBC Self Study, 2004), some had bachelor's degrees, some were high school dropouts, and others had levels of education everywhere in between. The belief that tribal colleges were the product of their communities and existed to serve their communities became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because of additional strategic planning by those visionaries, improvements were made that led to Standing Rock College receiving a ten-year accreditation in 1996. That same year the board of trustees agreed to change the name from Standing Rock Community College to Sitting Bull College. In the fall of 2003, the enrollment at the college increased to 385 with the student body having an average age of 34 years and being 76% female with dependents. At present, there are 21 full-time faculty, 54 administrative support staff, and 10 adjunct faculty. The college received another 10-year accreditation in the spring of 2004 with approval to offer two four-year degrees, one in Business Administration and the other in Elementary Education (Sitting Bull College Self-Study, 2004).

Today the college is engaged in a major capital campaign to support the continuing construction of a new campus. The first phase of the project was the completion of student family housing in February 2004. The next phase of construction was the science/math/nursing building completed in June 2005. The Education and Early Childhood programs are housed in the Family Support Center, completed in March 2006. It is anticipated that the new facility will increase the student enrollment to 500.

Development of the Division of Education

Throughout the years the college has maintained a focus on developing education programs. Grants provided the college with the capacity to offer teacher training through other institutions. Teacher Corp, developed in the early 1970s, was one of the first training programs followed by the Teacher Training Project. Both projects were in collaboration with the University of North Dakota.

The two-year Teacher Education and Early Childhood Education programs were first listed in the 1992-1994 catalog. The SBC education programs were attempting to address the many challenges facing Standing Rock Reservation children and schools. The primary focus of the teacher education program was to provide opportunities for para-professionals working in the reservation schools to attain bachelor's degrees. A second unique characteristic of the Sitting Bull College Education Programs was that the curriculum was developed to integrate and perpetuate the Lakota/Dakota traditions, history, language, and values within required courses.

As the Division of Education continued to grow and develop, other higher education institutions provided technical assistance and mentoring. One such institution was Sinte Gleska University (Spotted Tail), located on the Rosebud Reservation in the southwestern corner of South Dakota. Since 1995-96 Sitting Bull College has been able to offer community members the opportunity to pursue a four-year double major degree in elementary/special education through an articulation agreement with Sinte Gleska University. Students admitted to this program are allowed to take all of their coursework at Sitting Bull College while maintaining their established lives that may include full-time jobs and family responsibilities.

The Division of Education recognizes the standards set forth by both the Educational Standards and Practices Board of North Dakota and the South Dakota Department of Public Instruction. This is collaborated by Sitting Bull College Division of Education having received North Dakota state approval in February 1998 and again in 2002. South Dakota state approval has been articulated through the agreement with Sinte Gleska University. Currently, the Sitting Bull College Education program is seeking to offer a stand alone program by the spring of 2007 in elementary education, special education, early childhood education, and secondary science education.

The teacher education program at Sitting Bull College enrolled its first cohort of students in 1993. The students were predominantly first-generation, non-traditional students whose ages ranged from 32 to 45 years. Many of these students had been working in area schools for many years as paraprofessionals. During this time one of the challenges facing Standing Rock schools was the high teacher turnover rate, which ranged from 40% to 70% with teacher shortages in critical areas, such as special education, math, and science. The role of the paraprofessional continued to be instrumental in transitioning new teachers into the school systems and maintaining some consistency for students.

Tribal colleges are making an effort to revitalize the culture by emphasizing the value of teaching the children through their own cultural context and by acknowledging the value of traditional teaching and learning within the context of the community and the culture. Therefore, the Sitting Bull College program requires that all (Native and Non-Native) students take the following courses: Lakota/Dakota Language I, Lakota/Dakota Culture, Native American Studies, Human Relations, and Indian Education. For certification purposes, North Dakota requires North Dakota Indian Studies and a multicultural education course, while South Dakota requires a course entitled “Human Relations” and a South Dakota Indian Studies course.

At the same time, the program acknowledges that a disproportionate percentage of American Indian students receive special education services in the area of learning disabilities (National Research Council, 2002). Therefore, education majors are strongly encouraged to complete coursework toward a double major with special education offered through Sinte Gleska University. This broad range of knowledge diversifies the skills needed by the graduates of the Sitting Bull Education Program to make them more marketable.

The Sitting Bull College Division of Education Program focuses primarily on preparing Native American teachers to serve Native American children. However, each year, the programs have increased the number of students who are not enrolled members of a tribe, but are lifelong community members. Since 1995, the programs have provided the opportunity for thirty-six participants to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in elementary education; these graduates could choose additional certification in either special education or early childhood. Twenty-nine of the participants are Native Americans and seven are non-native. Of the thirty-six graduates, four were male and thirty-two females. Currently, fifty percent of the past graduates have enrolled in a Master’s degree program or have graduated with an advance degree. Employment includes twenty-seven of the thirty-six graduates employed by educational systems on Standing Rock Reservation. Employment of the other nine graduates has been on various reservations in the United State. Sitting Bull College Division of Education has a 100% teacher retention rate, with the thirty-six participates either working in an educational system or enrolled in an advanced degree.

Due to cultural and extended family/community connections, the Division of Education at Sitting Bull College is fortunate to be able to keep in close contact with all of the graduates from year to year. Maintaining a continued relationship with graduates makes the probability of collecting and completing surveys and interviews for this study a realistic goal.

Philosophy and Professional Commitments

The conceptual framework establishes a shared vision for a division's efforts in preparing educators to work effectively in PK-12 schools. It provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability. The conceptual framework is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, consistent with the division and/or institutional mission, and continuously evaluated. Faculty is committed to the beliefs and principles that guide the program.

With direction of the Native American Studies faculty, Wilbur Flying By, the Division of Education and other faculty integrated the values and beliefs of the Lakota/Dakota culture within the Conceptual Framework. Graduates of the Sitting Bull College Division of Education will integrate the four sacred Lakota Values with several learning models into the curriculum. According to Wilbur Flying By "students will strive to become all that they can be, and learn to be the best that they can be". The four values are Bravery (Woohitika), Fortitude (Wowacintanka), Generosity (Wacantikiya), and Wisdom (Woksape). Using these values and principles the SBC faculty help candidates identify individual strengths and needs upon entry into the program, and leave the program empowered with tools needed to reach all learners.

The SBC program and faculty believe that good teaching and learning is an active process where learner questions and suppositions are valued. Learners need opportunities to construct their own meaning and understandings through a variety of learning experiences. As facilitators of learning the teacher provides support and encouragement, understanding the link between confidence, motivation, and self-efficacy.

The Way Learning Occurs

As a result of many studies in the area of Indian Education and particularly findings of the Meriam Report (Meriam Report, 1928), views of progressive educator John Dewey are strongly supported. According to the views of John Dewey "all subject matter should be relevant to students and their communities". Therefore the three consistently integrated models are: the Constructivist approach to learning, Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence, Differentiated Instruction and Multicultural Education. Constructivism is based upon the idea that students construct meaningful knowledge through inquiry and interaction with their environment. Traditionally the teacher was viewed as the giver of knowledge and information, but the emerging paradigm is that of a facilitator or coach. Constructivism encourages students to seek their own answers and articulate those discoveries. In the constructivist classroom the students are responsible for their own learning; learning is viewed as an active process. Learning must be relevant for the student, student opinions and views are valued, the curriculum is driven by student suppositions, teaching to multiple learning styles is emphasized, the teacher is viewed as a co-learner, collaboration enhances learning and is grounded in the context of the "real world". Gardner's Multiple Intelligence recognizes the uniqueness of each individual by identifying eight ways of knowing: logical/mathematical, linguistic/verbal, interpersonal, intrapersonal, bodily kinesthetic, musical, spatial, and naturalist. The integration of

Multicultural Education and Differential Instruction focuses on the strengths of all learners by providing students with skills in providing a learning climate that is conducive to and respectful of individual learning differences.

The Classroom and School Climate – Community Practice

Graduates of the Division of Education will model *Woohitika* (Bravery) and a constructivist approach as they move into the communities. They must be reflective in assessing their own perceptions, thinking and problem solving. Creating a caring and supportive learning environment requires a teacher that can model that is able to build positive relationships with learners. According to Jacqueline Gennon Brooks and Martin G. Brooks (1999) in their text, In Search of Understanding: The Case for the Constructivist Classroom, teachers must:

- Provide a learning environment where students search of meaning;
- Be given opportunities to engage in active learning;
- Provide an interdisciplinary curriculum; and
- Empower to students in realizing that they are ultimately responsible for their own learning.

Decision-Making

One characteristic of a good teacher is the ability to use *Woksape* (*Wisdom*) when making decisions. This is demonstrated in the selection of teaching materials, strategies, and methods. Solutions are usually the result of thoughtful reflection; however, candidates are aware that many times spontaneous decisions must be made.

Traditionally Lakota/Dakota instruction was done through imprinting and modeling, influence from significant others was recognized as powerful. Decision making skills are developed with candidates through interaction with Sitting Bull College education faculty. This is applied in the context of the learning environment. Faculty provides positive influence as candidates grow through mediation during practicum, internships, field experiences, and other institution wide activities.

Connections and Linkages

Brain research and technology have enabled educators to understand the ways in which the brain searches for patterns, linkages, and connections for learning. Therefore, conceptual models are compatible with the natural way in which learning takes place, and drawing upon prior knowledge and life experiences.

The SBC education faculty utilizes this understanding into the content areas, beginning with themes and big pictures making connections to discipline areas. Faculty stresses the importance of units of study that connect and integrate these areas, while strengthening the cultural relevant elements.

Faculty also utilize knowledge of learning styles in addressing student questions of why, what, how, and what if? Bernice McCarthy's 4MAT model is both a conceptual model as well as an instructional model that integrates these questions with brain research and learning styles. The Sitting Bull College Nursing Director, D'Arlyn Bauer; cultural faculty, Wilbur Flying By; and Division of Education Director, Kathy Froelich have developed a model that recognizes 4MAT with traditional educational curricular models: humanistic, academic, technological, and social reconstructivist and Lakota/Dakota beliefs in a holistic way.

Future Directions

Faculty continues to make changes and improvements to the programs in a systematic way through planned networking and collaboration. Balancing the requirements of state, federal, and tribal is challenging, yet it is vital that the programs remain true to the values and beliefs of the communities served. Therefore, the SBC education model is fluid and changing with the growth of the college and needs of the communities.

Through a technology gift from the University of South Florida students, faculty and staff will be able to interact with university students and faculty from New Mexico, California, Florida, and Guam during teleconferencing sessions. This project will begin late fall of 2006.

The Division of Education is organizing visits to other rural schools off the reservation and exploring ways to develop cross-cultural student teacher exchange with other communities in the state. Professional development activities are planned for all faculty during the 2006-07 academic year.

Both the institutional and education unit mission statements articulate a need to enhance the educational attainment of Standing Rock members while maintaining a focus on Lakota/Dakota history, language, culture and values. Since 1995 the education division has integrated constructivist principles throughout the program of study.

The following discussions will explore the Beliefs that Guide Our Practice and explain the conceptual understandings, theories and thinkers who have informed the understandings, and the practice applications of those understandings.

Conceptual Understanding

The conceptual framework articulates the division's professional commitments as follows: Using a cohort model, Sitting Bull College education programs permits teacher candidates to support each other cognitively, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

The conceptual framework provides a cohesive link between and among curriculum, instruction field experience, clinical practice, and assessment with each candidates program of study.

First the aspects of cultural relevancy are integrated throughout the education curriculum and within the general education coursework to the greatest possibility. Students construct knowledge through coursework that will serve them in later aspects of their program such as in field experience and clinical practice. In addition curriculum instruction and assessment are all centered on pre-service faculty as an active learner. The education candidates in their field and practicum experiences demonstrate social construction of knowledge based in the conceptual model. As they begin to offer opportunity for active learning, reflection, and social constructual knowledge to their k-12 students in the classrooms. The social construct of knowledge of pre-service teacher education allow them to engage in learning that is relevant to the context of Lakota/Dakota History, Culture, and Language.

The basic premises and the five principles make this model highly complementary to the Lakota/Dakota cultural teachings, philosophy, values, and beliefs as reflected in the Division of Education's Mission Statement.

It was from the principles of constructivism and the four Lakota values, that the conceptual model was developed. This model was also developed after a decided move from a behaviorist approach to a more cognitive approach.

Theory and Thinkers

Schools, teaching, and learning have always played an important role in response to the needs of society (Lemlech, 2006). John Dewey, Vygotsky, and Piaget are some of the names most recognized for reform in thinking about how children learn and what methods have been most effective in acquiring knowledge. Today the predominant challenge is to provide an equitable education for the masses. Due to changing learner demographics, schools and teachers for the 21st Century are faced with a different set of challenges.

Parker Palmer (1998) stated that education reform will not be accomplished until people acknowledge that the "human heart is the source of good teaching" (p. 3). This statement forces a deeper look and questions more than the "what", "how", "why" that is taught. Palmer (1998) maintained that one seldom asks "who" the self that teaches is. The act of "reflection" as teachers can be threatening especially if one includes student voices in this process. Constructivist teaching principles acknowledge, value, and build on students' thoughts and prior knowledge. There is so much to learn if one listens and allows student voices to be heard. Cole and Knowles (1996) wrote about "the nature and intention of self-study of teacher education practices" (p. 2). They present the idea that reflection about one's work is vital to professional development and vital to teacher reform (Cole & Knowles, 1996).

Perrone (1991) stated that the following are needed in teacher education to make professional growth meaningful: 1) professional support that empowers teachers to develop their own in-service training; 2) opportunities to examine and reflect upon their

own practice and classrooms; and 3) support teachers by providing opportunities for “Teacher as Researcher” activities.

Fox (2001) stated, “The constructivist approach promoted by national and most state content standards allows for a more holistic, real-life, active-learning sort of pedagogy, which is more consistent with traditional American Indian ways of teaching and learning” (Estrin & Nelson, 1995, p. 1; Fox & LaFontaine, 1995 [as cited in Fox, 2001]). Fox completed extensive research and developed culturally responsive curriculum to be used in those schools serving American Indian populations.

Demmert (2001) identified best practices for American Indian students in the areas of teacher, instruction, curriculum, and factors leading to success. He stated that research by Barnhardt (1999, as cited in Demmert, 2001) showed that the integration of language, values and beliefs is related to the rise in test scores and higher graduation rates. Also evident is the decrease in dropout rates when students can relate academic curriculum to prior cultural experiences (Demmert, 2001).

Practical Application

The Sitting Bull College Education faculty collaborates with candidates as co-learners. Together, in the context of the community, they learn new skills or explore concepts in different ways using a variety of perspectives. Faculty value candidate prior knowledge, as they are engaged in field experiences, and together during direct instruction. Faculty model excitement about teaching and learning

It is expected that change is a fact of life; therefore flexibility is needed when working with candidates and the program. What is needed in a class on one day may not be needed on another day. Faculty recognizes that effective support is accomplished through modeling, asking higher level questions, challenging, telling, guiding, mentoring, and nudging when needed. Like the children in our schools faculty understand that each candidate is unique and different, acknowledging that the “one shoe fit all” may not be an affective approach. The program stresses the importance of modeling a variety of teaching strategies.

Conceptual Understanding

Preparing candidates for the 21st century requires that faculty take on the role of mediator, facilitator, or coach. Reflection brings a disciplined and purposeful way of thinking to our work. It allows and provides structure for us to step outside and activity or experience and carefully examine our thinking, practices and processes. It is vital that faculty and candidates reflect on their work and thinking in order that they understand the processes that guide decisions. Through positive collective engagement, faculty and candidates can reflect prior to making decisions. Technology enhances learner’s ability to acquire knowledge in a different way with focus being on the “learning process”. Candidates must be able to “learn to learn”.

Theories and Thinkers

The education division offers opportunities for education candidates to present and model their own point of view in community settings in which local knowledge is valued. Student teacher handbook and evaluation forms address the conceptual framework. Brooks and Brooks (1999) provide five overarching principles of constructivist pedagogy that served as the framework for the development of SBC Division of Education's conceptual model. These five principles are:

- (1) posing problems of emerging relevance to learners;
- (2) structuring learning around "big ideas" or primary concepts;
- (3) seeking and valuing students' points of view;
- (4) adapting curriculum to address students' suppositions; and
- (5) assessing student learning in the context of teaching.

Practical Application

SBC faculty provides candidates with enriching learning experiences that place emphasis on independent learning. The student centered constructivist approach is modeled in curriculum and assessment tools. Candidates are introduced to constructivism in their first education courses. Together with faculty, candidates examine traditional teaching and constructivist teaching characteristics. Faculty allows students the opportunity to reflect upon constructivist principles within the context of the learning community. Through early observation and practicum experiences candidates and faculty identify and practice constructivist teaching models.

Conceptual Understanding

All cultures educate their young but in different ways, the Sitting Bull College Division of Education honors American Indian

Theories and Thinkers

According to Jacobs and Reyhner (2002), "place-based education" is a new term for how American Indians view teaching and learning. They stress the importance for teacher candidates to be aware of the traditions and integration of spirituality within the teacher education program and to ensure that teacher education empowers American Indian/Alaskan Native students through valuing their culture (Trent & Reyhner, 2002).

Clark (2001) of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory stated that state departments continue to struggle with meeting the challenges of high drop-out rates and low achievement among American Indian students. Clark (2001) addressed the fact that schools need to provide for the "culturally relevant academic needs" (p. 1) or CRAN by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA). Ironically, the article suggested that, historically, education systems have tried to fix the American Indian student when, in fact, traditional models better match the reform recommendations of the 21st century.

Those traditional models include the following:

- An integrated curriculum is an example of the holistic approach.
- Applied/authentic learning experiences reflect the traditional practice of students learning by doing.

Cooperative learning models allow students to work and/or compete in groups, allowing team work and mentorship skills to develop.

Practical Applications

Both the missions of Sitting Bull College and the Division of Education articulate a strong commitment to perpetuating Lakota/Dakota values, history, language, and beliefs. American Indian and Non-Native candidates will learn about the culture language and culture of Standing Rock service area. Faculty are encouraged to help candidates understand the need to respect all learners focusing on culturally responsive instructional methods.

Candidates are given opportunities to demonstrate the Lakota/Dakota value of generosity through community service activities, after-school programs, and self-selected activities. This committing to collegiality that is formed as a result of Sitting Bull College conceptual framework is expected. Teacher club service learning projects fulfill the commitment to community outreach into the first year of candidate service in local school systems.

Bravery is demonstrated through candidate's persistence, determination, and resiliency. Faculty encourage candidates as they complete PRAXIS I and PRAXIS II testing for admissions and for final certification.

Faculty engages candidates in decision making activities through the advisement process and in practicum and field experiences. Candidates are allowed the opportunities to learn from their successful and less successful experiences.

Fortitude is learned through modeling and influence. The context of this is done in the community, education settings, and classroom. Classes emphasis multiple layers of diversity, including age, gender, culture, and most importantly individual meaning making. Because of regional history and culture we emphasis the essential understandings of the Lakota/Dakota culture. Candidates are engaged in an analysis of research related to Native American learning and education. Several faculty have presented training sessions at state and national conferences.

Faculty is involved in professional development activities related to diversity and assessment.

Conceptual Understandings

James Banks placed high value on giving students the opportunities to grow in their understanding of “who they are”. In order for learners to know where they are going they must first know where they have been. Banks tells us that the additive approach is a beginning, but that implementing a contributions or transformation approach is more effective. In the classrooms learning needs to offer multiple perspectives and valued throughout the curriculum.

The SBC Division of Education strongly supports the idea of creating a learning environment that empowers students to make a difference in their communities. This can only happen when they feel good about themselves. Building a positive self-concept is the bridge to motivation, persistence, and self-efficacy.

Learning activities are structured to demonstrate an authentic need for learner’s contributions; this begins with identifying local community resources. The first step toward building positive relationships with the learning community is for Teacher models to view themselves as learners when entering a new community and not as the expert.

Theories and Thinkers

In *A Letter to Teachers*, Vito Perrone (1991) pointed out that the historical trends in teacher education continued to be related to the climate of society, wars, and economic insecurity. One example of this trend can be found in the education of American Indian children when the policy was to “solve the Indian problem”. Whether seen as acculturation, assimilation, or civilization, it was the intentional “deculturalization” of a people (Perrone, 1991, pp. 46-47). Therefore, teacher candidates must recognize, honor, and respect the unique background of the community they serve and become the learner not the expert. (Peacock & Ness, 2001).

In their text, *Next Steps Research and Practice to Advance Indian Education* Swisher and Tippeconnic (1999) summarized several theories by Erickson (1987), Philips (1983), and Trueba (1988). According to Swisher and Tippeconnic (1999): “There is a growing body of research that suggests that better learning occurs when teachers transform their educational practices and the curriculum reflects the home culture from which the children come” (pp. 86-87).

Researcher Nicole R. Bowman (2003), who addressed the topic of cultural differences of teaching and learning, identified “underutilized systemic strategies” (p. 98) that worked with Native American students.

They included:

- Collaborative learning and more inclusive and diverse learning environments.
- Creation of multiethnic research and evaluation teams.
- Use of culturally relevant pedagogy, research and evaluation processes.

- Multicultural education that is integrated into systemic classroom practices and policies.
- Need for mentors of color – that is Native American.
- Need for cultural capital, competencies, and philosophies to be understood and embraced by all races in the classroom and through pedagogical practices.
- Policy changes directed toward embracing diversity and addressing low socioeconomic status (Bowman, 2003, p. 98).

Practical Applications

Both the mission of Sitting Bull College and the SBC Division of Education clearly support a commitment to diversity. Past collected data indicate that Standing Rock Reservation brings together rich and diverse rural and cultural communities within it's boundaries. While the majority of the reservation populations are enrolled members of the Lakota/Dakota tribe many other members are affiliated with other tribes throughout the nation. Many residents are descendants of other ethnic groups who came to the reservation in the 1800s to homestead. Those residents and their communities rely on agriculture to support the economic base. Social economic status, age, and gender are varied across the reservation, and the unemployment rate is significantly higher than off reservation communities.

The Sitting Bull College education learning community defines diversity **as a collaborative effort to create, model, apply, and practice the values of generosity, bravery, wisdom and courage to enhance the strength and uniqueness of all learners.** The unit is dedicated to providing a quality program that addresses the skills needed in today's pluralistic/global society. Examples of coursework that provide the needed skills are: EED 247 Multicultural Education, NAS 101 Lakota/Dakota language, NAS 105 Lakota/Dakota Culture, NAS 112 Native American Studies, and SPD 200 Exceptional Children.

Candidates are prepared to work in their communities keeping in mind that their classrooms will reflect the reservation diversity. It is important that teachers model instruction responsive to the needs of the communities they serve.

Current data indicates that reservation school systems have identified a disproportionate number of Native American students with special needs especially in area of Learning Disabilities. On the average, schools have reported that about 70% of the students qualify for free or reduces lunch. Therefore candidates graduating from Sitting Bull education curriculum provides opportunities to develop skills needed to work with diverse groups of students, the education unit firmly believes that teachers must be prepared to teach and become advocates for **all** students.

Beginning fall of 2006 the SBC Division of Education will have the opportunity to participate in a project through the University of South Florida. This project provided the SBC Division of Education with a technology award that included conferencing equipment needed to receive guest lectures on a variety of education/special education

topics. Other sites included are: University of New Mexico, University of Guam, Southern California University, and others. This project will be open for students and faculty.

The Division of Education recruits candidates from diverse backgrounds, who are life long community members; in addition efforts have been made to recruit from boarder reservation communities. The institution catalogue includes an affirmative action statement as suggested by federal law, Title IX. The college provides a process for meeting the federal requirements of Title IX. In addition the academic dean requires that all course syllabi contain a cultural component that reflects our institutions commitment to diversity.

SBC program coursework integrates a multicultural foundation with emphasis on diversity, culture, age, and inclusion. Students experience diversity during off campus activities: the annual NASA Pre-Service Conference in Norfolk, Virginia, planned visits to off reservation schools, guest lectures from other educational sites in and out of the state, and interactions with elders in the communities.

Conceptual Understandings

SBC faculty understands the need to continuous assessment and evaluation, keeping in minds the constructivist model and the Lakota/Dakota traditional way of knowing. The following model is used to show the developing stages of a model revised by Cultural Leader, Wilbur Flying By; Nursing Division Director, D'Arlyn Bauer; and Education Division Director, Kathryn Froelich.

Theories and Thinkers

One instructional model that seems compatible with American Indian styles of learning is Howard Gardner's (1991) Multiple Intelligence theory. This model has created a conversation about the many ways students can demonstrate intelligence. Also, the program utilizes Bernice McCarthy's 4MAT that has developed an instructional/conceptual model that incorporates all stages of the learning cycle using brain based research. McCarthy (1999) has completed extensive research in both how the brain acquires new learning and the relationship to learning style. Recent brain research has indicated that both the right and left mode dominance impacts teaching and learning strategies. McCarthy (1999) has developed an instructional model that integrates current knowledge of the brain and learning styles. This conceptual model helps teachers deliver instruction that honors most learners in the classroom. This instructional model suggests that teachers guide students to making connections with prior knowledge based upon their prior experiences. The model provides opportunities for teachers to use traditional types of instruction for transmitting information and knowledge. This instructional cycle allows the hands-on learners trial-and-error activities to apply skills learned through traditional methods. Teachers are perceived as facilitators who move from an active role to empowering students to participate as active learners. During the final phase, students use knowledge to create and apply skills through individual or group projects.

Assessment is demonstrated in authentic ways honoring all learner types while creating a learning climate that implements many valued teaching strategies (McCarthy, 1999).

Practical Applications

Development of the assessment plan is a continuous journey; focus is placed on those techniques compatible with a Constructivist view of learning. Reflection, rediscovery, and mediation are highly valued. Faculty uses a variety of assessment tools both traditional and authentic in their assessment of candidates.

Due to cultural and extended family/community connections, the Division of Education at Sitting Bull College is fortunate to be able to keep in close contact with all of the graduates from year to year. Maintaining a continued relationship with graduates makes the probability of collecting and completing surveys and interviews to be used as an assessment tool a realistic goal.

Performance Based Assessment and Evaluation

This requires that practical application of skills learned is demonstrated in the context of an authentic environment. Coursework and internship is required early on in candidate program of study. During these observations and practicum experiences learners use skills and knowledge within the context of real life situations. During these experiences faculty provide valuable feedback, support, and guidance.

Carefully developed assessment tools and evaluation measures are used by faculty, these checklists, forms, and handbooks ensure consistency.

Formative Assessment and Evaluation

SBC programs requires that all candidates complete the PRAXIS I prior to admissions to the division and PRAXIS II upon exit from the division. Data received from the PRAXIS I assessment is used for advisement purposes; the program provides remediation when needed.

E-Portfolios

Candidates are required upon admissions to the Division of Education to develop an e-portfolio, this collection of academic artifacts is intended to give learners the opportunity to reflect and monitor learning in a continuous manner. Candidates choose five of the program outcomes to demonstrate within the portfolio. The program has developed rubrics to be used as a guide for the candidate portfolio. Bloom states that synthesis, analysis, and evaluation are higher levels of thinking; the portfolio is intended to move candidates toward those levels.

Our commitment to constructivist teaching and learning requires emphasis on individual meaning, making the portfolio offers an ideal evaluation tool. It offers concrete evidence of dispositions, skills, traits and habits.

Candidates are required to present their completed portfolios to an institution committee upon exiting the program. It is seen as a time for celebration and accomplishment.

The division developed a disposition checklist to be used during candidate field and practicum experiences beginning with ED 250 Introduction to Education & ED 298 Pre-Professional Experience and EED 250 Introduction to Early Childhood Education. E-portfolios are designed to provide Candidates several opportunities to reflect and self-assess professional growth throughout their program of study.

During the final semester of the Associate of Science degrees candidates must complete 135 hours of internship in their area of study. This experience provides opportunities for candidates to practice and apply skills, dispositions, and knowledge to real life settings. All students are required to complete the PRAXIS I test prior to admissions to the Bachelor of Science Education program.

COMMITMENT TO TECHNOLOGY

The Division of Education graduates will meet ISTE National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) and demonstrate the appropriate use of technology in authentic settings. The education curriculum is designed is designed to utilize web based learning and other distance learning technology that can be used to improve teaching and learning. The Vice President of Academics also requires all course syllabi to contain a technology component to further provide students the opportunity to incorporate technology within their learning process.

The Division of Education students are required to complete an e-portfolio. Training sessions have been held for faculty and students on development of the e-portfolio. The college has installed the software program FrontPage on computers for students use in development of the portfolio. In addition a template has been designed to assist students in the development of their e-portfolio.

SBC continues to provide training sessions for faculty and staff. Sessions were developed to address the development of web-based instruction; and e-portfolio assessment.

The SBC education programs collaborate with other North Dakota Universities and Tribal Colleges to strengthen skills in e-portfolio. Valley City University and Sitting Bull College have developed a positive working relationship. Since that time the institution has provided continuous and systematic e-portfolio training as a part of the general education curriculum ensuring candidate success.

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