Inquiring into Teacher Professional Learning: Mentoring, Induction, and Beyond

12 noon – 3:30 p.m.
19 May, 2016

Programme and Abstracts

This Symposium is sponsored by the UC School of Teacher Education and Teacher Learning and Innovations in Practice Research Hub
E kore e taea e te whenu kotahi ki te raranga i te whāriki kia mōhio tātou ki ā tātou.
Mā te mahi tahi ō ngā whenu, mā te mahi tahi ō ngā kairaranga, ka oti tēnei whāriki.
I te otinga me titiro tātou ki ngā mea pai ka puta mai. Ā tana wā, me titiro hoki ki ngā raranga i makere nā te mea, he kōrero ano kei reira.

The tapestry of understanding cannot be woven by one strand alone. Only by the working together of strands and the working together of weavers will such a tapestry be completed. With its completion let us look at the good that comes from it and, in time we should also look at those stitches which have been dropped, because they also have a message.

*Tukutuku panel image acknowledgement: www.maori.org.nz
Programme

- Welcome and overview; Professor Letitia Fickel
- Framing the research dialogue; Professor Sharon Feiman-Nemser

**Inquiry focus one: Examining ITE programme design and preservice teacher opportunities to learn**

- *Working together intentionally to develop student teacher adaptive expertise: The role of an educative mentoring co-ordinator* (Vivienne Mackisack, Phil Spriggs, and Nina Hood, University of Auckland)

- *Co-constructing and enacting a shared vision for culturally responsive and inclusive pedagogy: Enabling preservice teacher growth and development* (Benita Rarere-Briggs, University of Canterbury)

**Inquiry focus two: Exploring facets of mentor teacher ‘work’**

- *Assuming relational responsibility: Teaching preservice teachers to teach during school practicum* (Ruth Radford, Kerry Howells, and John Williamson, University of Tasmania)

- *Associate to mentor: The challenge of preparing secondary teachers to mentor their preservice colleagues* (Ngaire Hoben, University of Auckland)

- *Mentor teachers of provisionally certificated teachers in New Zealand: Perceptions of the dual role of assessor and assistor* (Sandra Joseph, Mau ki te Ako, Te Tapuae o Rehua)

- Summary insights and commentary; Professor Sharon Feiman-Nemser
- Shared Dialogue: Continuing puzzles of practice and future research insights
- Conclusion
**Abstracts (in order of presentation)**

**Vivienne Mackisack, Phil Spriggs, and Nina Hood**

**Paper: Working together intentionally to develop student teacher adaptive expertise: The role of an educative mentoring co-ordinator**

The University of Auckland’s Master of Teaching (Primary) programme is built on the principles of collaboration. Student teachers are mentored by a team of faculty- and school-based teacher educators who are working together intentionally to construct contextually appropriate practicum approaches and practices within the framework of university credentialing requirements and the Education Council’s Graduating Teacher Standards (Villers & Mackisack, 2011). Such an approach is aimed at addressing what Darling-Hammond (2010) identified as being the central issue confronting initial teacher education: how to foster learning about and from practice in practice.

The theoretical framing of the on-going Master of Teaching (Primary) evaluation research project is the extent to which the programme develops adaptive expertise in student teachers. The researchers have drawn on the literature (Feiman-Nemser, 2008; Hatano & Inagaki, 1986; Soslau, 2012; Timperley, 2011) to develop a series of measures to capture thirteen dimensions of adaptive expertise across a range of programme inputs and outputs.

This presentation will outline the development of an educative mentoring co-ordinator role as part of the Master of Teaching (Primary) team. It will examine the work that the educative mentoring co-ordinator undertakes with adjunct lecturers and associate teachers to support their development (and thus student teacher development) of adaptive expertise through two dimensions: 1) critically engaging with, questioning and if necessary adjusting beliefs and actions in response to context of practice and 2) evaluating the effectiveness of teaching practices for supporting the learning of all students and adjusting approaches when something is not working adequately.

**Bio’s**

Vivienne joined the Faculty of Education and Social Work at The University of Auckland to support student teacher professional learning in the practicum in 2010 and is the programme leader for the Master of Teaching (Primary). She has 30 years teaching experience in primary and secondary schools and research interests in the ways that universities and schools can work together to support student teacher learning during practicum.

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Phil is the Educative Mentoring Co-ordinator (Primary) at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at The University of Auckland. She is currently on secondment from her
position as Deputy Principal of Point Chevalier Primary School where one of her key roles was supporting associate teachers with their work during practicum.

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Nina is a research fellow at the Faculty of Education and Social Work at The University of Auckland. As part of her role she is helping to co-ordinate an evaluation of the Masters of Teaching programmes at the Faculty.

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**Benita Rarere-Briggs**

**Paper: Co-constructing and enacting a shared vision for culturally responsive and inclusive pedagogy: Enabling preservice teacher growth and development**

The New Zealand Ministry of Education recently signalled to ITE providers that a key thread of ‘quality teaching’ for working effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse students is “adaptive expertise” (2013, p. 3). Other threads that define ‘quality teaching’ within our cultural context, include the Graduating Teacher Standards and Tatāiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners (Education Council, 2011, n.d.), as well as culturally grounded research (for example, Bishop & Berryman, 2009; Macfarlane, 2005). Moreover, Treaty of Waitangi partnership principles ask that we as ITE providers develop meaningful bi-cultural partnerships with iwi and mana whenua that recognise and reflect through practice the aspirations of Māori for education and educational success of Māori learners.

In partnership with representatives from our local rūnanga, teacher educators at the University of Canterbury wove together these policy and practice threads to co-construct our shared vision of quality ‘culturally responsive and inclusive teaching’ for the Masters of Teaching and Learning. The result was the development of Te Poutama: Nga Pou te Ako, a unifying and culturally encompassing framework representing our shared understanding of pre-service teachers’ growth and development as beginning teachers. Drawing from our ongoing practice-based research, this presentation briefly outlines the development of the framework, and then describes how university mentors, mentor teachers, and the preservice teachers iteratively use Te Poutama to guide and support the learning pathway for each preservice teacher toward adaptive expertise and action competence as culturally responsive and inclusive practitioners.

**Bio**

Benita Rarere-Briggs is a lecturer in the area of Early Childhood Education in the School of Teacher Education, College of Education, Health and Human Development, University of Canterbury. She is interested in how voices of family and whānau are heard in ECE
services, educational practices that honour the Treaty of Waitangi, and curriculum experiences for children.

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**Ruth Radford, Kerry Howells, and John Williamson**

**Paper: Assuming relational responsibility: Teaching pre-service teachers to teach during school practicum**

While the global policy context is advocating pre-service teachers spend increased time in schools, the research literature describes the school practicum as problematic and argues for educative and reform minded mentoring by school based teacher educators. The context for this investigation was a partnership between an Australian Department of Education and a University that focused on an intensive school placement program from 2009 to 2013. Teachers in the placement schools were encouraged to be intentional about the use of the additional time in schools facilitated by this partnership. Through qualitative inquiry using the method of a case study and interviews, this research explores what 30 mentor teachers, across 12 schools (primary and secondary), learned about teaching pre-service teachers. The paper explores one of the themes arising from the data analysis: “relational responsibility” – the recognition by mentor teachers of their connectedness with and responsibility for the other. Further, the paper investigates the epistemology of the mentor teacher (a voice recognized as missing in the research literature), what they know about teaching pre-service teachers and how their sense of relational responsibility, influences their role. Our findings suggest a model that is significant for understanding mentor teachers’ perception of where they stand in regards to their responsibility for the relationship with their pre-service teacher, and we illustrate this with examples from our data.

**Bio’s**

Ruth Radford is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania. At the end of 2013 she retired as Principal Education Officer in the Tasmanian Department of Education.

Dr. Kerry Howells is a Senior Lecturer and Professor John Williamson is Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

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Ngaire Hoben

**Paper: Associate to mentor: The challenge of preparing secondary teachers to mentor their pre-service colleagues**

Training for teachers who undertake to be mentors for pre-service teachers is perceived to be necessary (Fairbanks et al., 2000; Timperley, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001), but training for the role is not often made available to mentors and is not necessarily perceived to be important by them (Hoben, 2007).

Recent initiatives in initial teacher education in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2013) have been accompanied by an increased emphasis on the provision of mentor preparation. This presentation considers the challenges faced by both the teachers and the provider when mentor preparation is part of the relationship between school and provider. The preparation of mentors working with pre-service secondary teachers in three very different initial teacher education programmes will be discussed.

**Bio**

Ngaire Hoben is Director of Secondary Teacher Education at the University of Auckland and has a strong interest in the mentoring of new teachers.

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Sandra Joseph

**Paper: Mentor teachers of provisionally certificated teachers in New Zealand: Perceptions of the dual role of assessor and assistor (2015)**

Generally in the extensive induction and mentoring literature, assessment and assistance of beginning teachers is regarded as mismatched. The focus of this ongoing debate contends that the two aspects of the role are incompatible as the evaluative aspect of the role inhibits trust, a component viewed as essential in the mentor/mentee relationship. However, more recent studies suggest that assessment is central to new teacher learning.

This presentation reports on the findings of a qualitative research study and addresses the relation between providing assessment and assistance when supporting the professional development of the provisionally certificated teacher (PCT). More specifically investigated were PCTs and mentors perceptions about what was important when undertaking the dual mentoring role.

This study set out to answer the following questions:

- Assessment and assistance, are they really exclusive elements in mentoring PCTs?
- How do mentor teachers and PCTs perceive the effect of the dual role of assessor and assessor on mentor – mentee trust?
• Is there a perceived inequity of power with the stakeholders in the mentoring process and if so does this perceived power influence the mentor–mentee relationship?
• Can a mentor teacher who has the power to affect career advancement still be perceived as trustworthy by the PCT?

Questions generated from the study about mentor professional learning and development will also be presented.

Bio
Sandra brings over thirty years of experience in education, with a background in primary school teaching in various leadership roles both within schools and as a facilitator supporting schools. Her current work for Te Tapuae o Rehua, Mau ki te Ako enables her to facilitate PLD with provisionally certificated teachers and mentors across various regions in New Zealand. Induction and mentoring and new teacher development are particular areas of research interest.
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Frances Langdon*

Paper: Developing mentor expertise: Perspective intention and enactment

While studies have shown that mentoring is central to new teacher development (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006), few investigations have examined what mentors learn about themselves as mentors (Bullough, 2012). Via a case study approach, examined was the development of mentoring expertise over a two-year period. Participants were two experienced mentors who were members of an intervention aimed at developing expertise. Data sources included: documented action research cycles (n=22), field observations, recorded individual and focus group interviews and mentor-mentee conversations (n=22). Professional conversations were coded against proforma: seven themes and 46 categories of utterances. The author and research assistant independently scored four conversations (inter-rater agreement .91). Analysis of documentation and interview data was an iterative process of mapping and analytical coding.

Using these data sources, we found that despite good intentions, mentors’ preconceptions of their role were difficult to change. Findings indicated that professional growth was evidenced but varied among the two mentors; and a difference existed between the goals and actual content of mentors’ conversations and practices. While the professional development opportunity appeared to benefit mentors, shifting mentoring to match intentions with practice and to develop mentoring expertise, was by no means simple or assured. The study suggests that to restructure and realise ideas and practices about
mentoring requires time and a particular context to embed and assess new knowledge and learning. To unravel treasured beliefs and not to revert to tried and true practices built over many years is a challenge.

Bio
Frances Langdon is senior lecturer in the School of Learning Development and Professional Practice in the Faculty of Education at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. Her research and teaching is in the field of professional learning and development with a particular interest in early career learning, teacher beliefs, leadership, mentoring and the development of adaptive expertise. She was the principal investigator of the New Zealand Teachers Council National Primary and Intermediate Induction and Mentoring Pilot (2009-2011). Currently is the principal investigator of the Leading Learning in Induction and Mentoring project. This project includes a national longitudinal study into comprehensive induction and mentoring - an investigation of teacher learning and development in secondary, intermediate, primary and early childcare education settings. Frances publishes nationally and internationally and is on the advisory board of the Journal of Professional Development in Education.

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* Unfortunately Frances is now unable to attend the symposium; she has given permission for her abstract to remain part of our discussion. Her study is in press with Teacher Development (Learning to mentor: Unravelling routine practice to develop adaptive mentoring expertise).
Opening remarks & Commentary

Professor Sharon Feiman-Nemser

Professor Sharon Feiman-Nemser is the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Professor of Jewish Education at Brandeis University. A former high school English teacher, Feiman-Nemser received her BA at the University of Michigan, her MA in English at the University of Chicago and her Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction at Teachers College, Columbia University. Before coming to Brandeis she directed innovative teacher education programs at the University of Chicago and Michigan State University and did research on teacher education and learning to teach. Since coming to Brandeis University, she started the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program, the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education and a fellowship program for Teacher Leaders. Sharon has written extensively on mentoring, new teacher induction, teacher education, learning to teach, ongoing professional development.

Her most recent book, Inspiring Teaching: Preparing Teachers to Succeed in Mission Driven Schools (2014), is based on a study of 30 beginning teachers in Jewish, Catholic and urban public schools and the programmes which prepared them for teaching. Also recently published by Professor Feiman-Nemser is Teachers as Learners (2012), a collection of landmark essays which shine a light on teacher learning.