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STATE COLLEGES
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06 - 0230

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 9, 2006

TO: Representative Bud Nornes, Chair
House Higher Education Finance Committee

Senator Sandy Pappas, Chair
Senate Higher Education Budget Committee

FROM: *Linda L. Baer*
Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

SUBJECT: Report on the Urban Teacher Program (UTP)

The Urban Teacher Program (UTP) is designed to enable teacher candidates to master the knowledge and skills needed to serve an increasingly diverse student body in urban schools. Minnesota statute specifies that Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) and Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) shall provide the first two years and Metropolitan State University shall provide the final two years of the UTP. The legislature appropriated funding for program development and implementation and directed that the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees annually submit a progress report regarding the development of the program. The attached FY 2005 report has been completed to fulfill statutory requirements.

The report describes the progress of the program designed to provide prospective urban educators the ability to complete an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree at either IHCC or MCTC which can then transfer seamlessly into upper division work at Metropolitan State University for teacher licensure. Over the past year, the Urban Teacher Partnership has grown in enrollment and developed new opportunities to serve its students and community. It is an excellent example of coordination and cooperation among three Minnesota State Colleges and Universities for the benefit of students.

I am pleased to submit this report and would welcome any questions you may have.

c: Legislative Staff
Legislative Reference Library

**THE URBAN TEACHER PROGRAM (UTP):
A TEACHER PREPARATION COLLABORATIVE OF
INVER HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, METROPOLITAN
STATE UNIVERSITY, AND MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY
AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

A REPORT TO THE MINNESOTA STATE LEGISLATURE
FEBRUARY 2006



MINNEAPOLIS
COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL
COLLEGE



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Urban Teacher Program continued to achieve important milestones in 2005. Growth continued in enrollments in our pre-professional programs, admissions to teacher candidacy through the Metropolitan State University Urban Teacher Program, and the number of prospective teachers of color. The development of programs of strategic importance continued as well.

This year's program highlights include the following:

- Finalized and began implementation of the UTP post-baccalaureate process for teacher licensure in grades 5-12 in mathematics, biology/life science, English, and social studies
- Gained approval of the Urban Elementary Education major and started the process of gaining Minnesota Board of Teaching approval of the licensure program in elementary education
- Established an on-going community conversation with stakeholders in the Twin Cities aimed at increasing direct community participation in the UTP Joint Steering Committee
- Strengthened the partnership between the UTP Education Department and the College of Arts & Sciences in delivering methods courses and licensure programs
- Enhanced the core program by adding courses in urban-based classroom management and instruction of English language learners and integrated expanded pre-student teaching field experiences into methods and professional core courses

All three partner institutions – Metropolitan State University (MSU), Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), and Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) – have registered continued enrollment growth. For example, at Metropolitan State University, enrollment increased 15 % compared to 2004 despite tuition increases. Metropolitan State has also seen increases in admitted teacher candidates, declared majors in high-demand teacher fields, and teacher candidates of color. Currently, 119 students have been admitted into teacher candidacy, up from 68 in fall 2004 (an increase of 75%). Forty-six students (46) are admitted for mathematics education and 30 for science education. Of these, 35 mathematics majors and 21 science majors were enrolled in fall 2005. Twenty-four (24) mathematics majors and 11 science majors are currently in teacher candidacy, one to two years from graduation.

All programs have worked hard to increase the number of students of color. MCTC continues to meet its goal (51% in 2005), while the percent at Metropolitan State increased to 39% in 2005 (up from 32% in 2004) and 25% of students in the IHCC program identified themselves as non-White. In addition, Metropolitan State has built arguably the most diverse faculty and professional staff in Minnesota, with the majority from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, even as the overall number of staff has grown in number.

Finally, as of fall 2005, 28 teacher candidates have graduated from Metropolitan State and another 19 are projected to graduate in spring/summer 2006. Coupled with continued program growth, these results indicate a strong future for the Urban Teacher Program. The report that follows provides more detail on this year's efforts.

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CURRENT PROGRAM INITIATIVES

The Urban Teacher Program is built from successful collaborations among Inver Hills Community College, Metropolitan State University, and Minneapolis Community and Technical College. These three institutions, in partnership with metropolitan area school districts and local teacher unions, have forged a working relationship that demonstrates the power of a shared purpose and the value of strong legislative support. Faculty and staff of the three institutions and their school partners comprise a collaborative designed to provide a seamless transition for aspiring urban teacher candidates.

Community Colleges

Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Inver Hills Community College offer courses that meet general education requirements and offer pre-professional learning opportunities during the first two years of postsecondary study. The program at MCTC offers a two year transformative educational urban experience in which prospective teacher candidates work as a learning community to examine issues of power and privilege, engage in reflection, value diversity, and model advocacy and activism. The program has an interdisciplinary focus and is grounded in the liberal arts. The program at Inver Hills uses service learning, combined with seminars and liberal arts courses, to provide students with a program in pre-professional urban education. At both MCTC and IHCC, a specific transfer curriculum has been developed to provide teacher candidates the opportunity to begin study in their disciplines of choice.

Minneapolis Community and Technical College

When the Urban Teacher Program began at Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), its vision was clear – provide future educators with a transforming urban educational experience rooted in examining issues of power and privilege and engaging reflection on current educational practices and methodology. Since the inception of the program at MCTC in 1999, it has enrolled a total of 400 students. In 2005, new spring enrollees numbered 20, while new enrollees in Fall 2005 numbered 32. During 2005, the program served 135 students through four seminar courses, and a total of eleven sections of courses were offered. Over the seven years of the program, 51% of the students reporting ethnicity were students of color. In 2005, 86% of the urban teacher students at MCTC declared they were first generation college students and reported an average age of 27. At the same time, stronger links to K-12 partners and active collaborations to promote careers in education resulted in a 12% increase in 16-17 year old students expressing an interest in UTP.

To date, MCTC's Urban Teacher Program has graduated 103 students. Forty-six of these former students continue to be enrolled in college and working on teaching degrees at the following institutions: Metropolitan State University (11); Hamline University (2); Augsburg College (11); University of St. Thomas (1); Concordia College (3); University of Minnesota (5); Minnesota State University, Mankato at Normandale Community College (1); St Cloud State University (2); and four-year universities outside Minnesota (4). The remaining 50 students are still pursuing their AA degree or lower division coursework at MCTC. Information about post-graduate progress for 12 MCTC graduates was unavailable at the time this report was written. Finally, at the end of the spring semester in 2006, an additional 21 students are anticipated to finish their urban teacher coursework.

New Programs

During 2005, the Urban Teacher Program successfully transitioned its curriculum from offering the Associate of Arts Degree to offering the Associate of Science Degree in Urban Teacher Education in order to enhance student transfers into four-year universities and colleges to complete teaching degrees. The required and recommended courses in the AS degree program are aligned with current Minnesota Board of Teaching standards and are focused on the skills, abilities, and competencies needed to work successfully with urban learners. Students also gain hands-on teaching experience through an active involvement with the Public Achievement process and a strong collaboration with the Center for Democracy at the University of Minnesota.

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In 2005, the MCTC Academic Council approved the collaborative design of Mathematics and Urban Teacher faculty by providing a series of workshops to help students prepare to pass the math section of the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST). Additionally, a new course, Math for Teachers, was approved; running for the first time in spring of 2006, it will fill all 25 slots.

Another UTP achievement in 2005 was the successful collaboration with Metropolitan State University, Hamline University and Augsburg College to formalize articulation agreements and thus help smooth the transition for students into a four-year university or college to complete teacher training.

In the spring of 2006, the urban teacher program will unveil a new joint elective workshop course with the Child Development program and Big Brothers/ Big Sisters of Minnesota to give students practical, hands-on experience with urban youth. Students will be able to access the course on-line and will mentor one urban youth through the Inter-District Downtown School, Richfield Public Schools, or Edison High School. The diversity of participating sites will enable students to interact with a wide range of youth from elementary to middle school to high school age.

UTP continued to expand its efforts with the K-12 community in 2005, including the following:

- With a grant from Best Buy, MCTC has collaborated with Richfield Public Schools to expand the number of high school students of color interested in pursuing a career in teaching, especially in the fields of math and science.
- In the spring of 2005, Richfield students were able to take the Seminar I course through concurrent enrollment, with 6 students taking it for college credit and 6 students for high school credit.
- In the summer of 2005, MCTC and Richfield High School offered a summer science camp which engaged 50 Richfield students in a week-long program at Woodlake Nature Center and an additional 28 Richfield students for a two-week experience in the BWCA. Almost 50% of the participants in these activities were students of color.
- In the fall of 2005, Richfield Public Schools offered a teacher education seminar course which enrolled 35 high school students. In the spring of 2006, 13 Richfield High School students are enrolled in the new urban teacher elective workshop, *Mentoring the Urban Youth*, through PSEO. This course will engage students in hands-on opportunities to work with urban students from their community through a collaborative effort with Big Brothers/ Big Sisters of Minneapolis. This course is currently taught on-line, exposing students to the use of technology in educational settings and providing them with intellectual opportunities to engage in classroom discussions with college students who are also pursuing careers in education. Additionally, David Boie, the Urban Teacher Coordinator at Richfield will be mentored by Stacey York from MCTC on the *Mentoring the Urban Youth* course to enable him to continue teaching the course in the future through concurrent enrollment (pending a formal agreement between Richfield Public Schools and MCTC). In the December of 2005, MCTC provided Richfield students interested in teaching with the opportunity to explore the Urban Teacher Program by meeting faculty and students, touring campus, observing a UTP class, and receiving D2L training.
- In December of 2005, the urban teacher faculty at MCTC met with the faculty of Edison High School's Small Learning Community in Education and Public Service to frame discussions around future opportunities for collaborations on behalf of students. In 2006, the two groups anticipate bi-monthly meetings to frame future initiatives, including (1) concurrent enrollment opportunities for students in education, (2) a possible expansion of the *Mentoring the Urban Youth Course*, (3) opportunities for faculty-to-faculty exchanges around best practices, (4) workshops focused on college readiness and designed to offer professional development that can be used for teacher licensure renewal, (5) creating opportunities for classroom observations at Edison, and (6) expansion of the Public Achievement model at Edison.

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In the fall of 2005, the Urban Teacher Program also increased its faculty of color from 20% to 40%. The hiring of Tina Jackson allows the Urban Teacher Program to benefit from her knowledge in the field and her expertise in Special Education. In the fall of 2006, Larry Burgess, a current Minneapolis Elementary School principal, will join the program as an adjunct instructor for Seminar I, adding his expertise in administration to the program.

Awards, Grants, and Scholarships

Since the UTP program began in 1999, more than \$100,000 has been awarded to over 100 MCTC students. In fall 2003, the Best Buy Children's Foundation awarded MCTC a grant of \$233,600 to enable the college to expand its Urban Teacher Program to the Richfield Public Schools. During 2005, MCTC has worked with the Richfield Public Schools to hire an Urban Teacher Coordinator who has recruited teacher mentors and students into the program. The Urban Teacher Program at Richfield worked with 100 young people over a two-year period to encourage first-ring suburban youth to consider teaching careers within Richfield and other urban schools. It provided pre-college career counseling for children of color and immigrant youth and college-level pre-education courses for 9th through 12th grade students. The project goal is to provide the Richfield school district and other first ring suburbs with 50 new teachers by 2009.

Inver Hills Community College

Inver Hills Community College initially responded to the Urban Teacher Program legislative mandate with a series of workshops designed to engage students' interest in classroom teaching as a high potential career choice. Since that time, the program has grown into a viable contributor to pre-professional teacher education in the greater Metro area and in Fall 2005 began offering an Associate in Arts degree with a Pre-major in Urban Teaching Foundations. An Associate in Science degree in Urban Teaching Foundations, developed so that education paraprofessionals could meet federal teacher quality standards, also received Minnesota State Colleges and Universities approval in spring 2005.

The mission of the program – to develop and implement the secondary and early childhood education lower division components of Metropolitan State University's B.S. programs leading to teacher licensure of students of color – has subsequently been broadened. Its mission is now to offer a comprehensive, quality, pre-professional teacher education curriculum that addresses high-need subject areas of urban and inner-ring schools and provides equal access to relevant upper division teacher education licensure programs. This mission aligns with the college's institutional mission and master academic plan to "help students lead purposeful lives, contribute to a vital social and economic community, and pursue lifelong learning."

Recruitment and Retention

Urban Teacher Education at Inver Hills has achieved healthy enrollment numbers this past year, with 106 students in the pipeline for either elementary or secondary licensure and 26 students for early childhood education licensure. Metropolitan State University hired an Urban Teacher recruiter to work with both IHCC and MCTC recruiters to increase the number of students of color seeking teacher licensure. Working collaboratively with the Metropolitan State UTP recruiter and Education Department admissions advisor, the Inver Hills program continued its focus on recruitment and retention of students of color, primarily from the counties in its service area. Of those UTP students identifying their ethnicity, approximately 25% were students of color. Most reported residence in Ramsey (41%) and Dakota (36%) counties. Other students resided in Washington (10%), Hennepin (3%), Goodhue (2%), and Scott (2%) counties. One percent or fewer reported residence in Anoka, Chisago, Marshall, Pierce, and Rice counties.

Established to strengthen UTP students' association with the college and their commitment to civic engagement, the IHCC Teacher Education Club now has more than 50 active members. In January-February 2005, club members designed a "Caring Coats & Communications" service learning project which resulted in delivering 46 adult and children's winter coats and 15 cell phones to Community Action Council's Lewis House in Eagan, a safe refuge for battered women and their children. In October-November, club members also sponsored a Holiday Craft Sale as a

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fund raiser for Lewis House, for which they made and sold a variety of gifts, ornaments and baked goods.

Darin McKinley, an African-American member of the college's Teacher Education Club, was named a Midwest Campus Compact Student Fellow in Fall 2005, participated in Campus Compact's Student Civic Leadership Institute in Iowa, and has organized a "Leap Up" leadership program for 5th and 6th graders at St. Paul's Benjamin Mays Elementary. This work supports the alignment of the college's Urban Teacher Program with the work of the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership in influencing middle school students of color to consider the teaching profession.

Program Partners

Internal Partners. Urban Teacher Education at Inver Hills Community College has benefited this past year from internal collaborations with other departments, including ASAP (Adult Success through Accelerated Programs), Human Services, Physical Education and Service Learning. The program's largest partner on campus is Human Services, with six of Urban Teacher Education's 21 courses co-listed as Education/Human Service courses; three Education courses are also listed as part of Human Services' Child Care Teacher Certificate program.

ASAP's paraprofessional accelerated program track has been the alternative academic choice for Education and Teaching Assistants (EAs/TAs) from Saint Paul and inner-ring public schools working to meet requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Close to half of the paraprofessional enrollment has been comprised of persons of color or "first generation" college students. Unlike other colleges that have attempted to "mainstream" their local paraprofessionals into existing "traditional" college courses and degree paths, programs in ASAP were able to quickly respond to individual needs, offering the flexibility required to get students through an intensive, accelerated, two-year degree program in time to meet specified NCLB timelines.

External Partners. In 2005, the college implemented the third year of a grant, awarded under the NCLB's Improving Teacher Quality program, to sustain an interactive and inquiry-based institute designed to develop and supplement mathematics pedagogical content and knowledge for paraprofessionals in the Saint Paul Public Schools. IHCC partnered with the Saint Paul Schools and the Saint Paul Federation of Teachers to offer the After Math III Institute for EATAs in Title I classrooms.

Inver Hills, in collaboration with Hamline University's Center for Excellence in Urban Teaching (CEUT), is piloting a series of AFT Education Research & Dissemination courses to support the professional development of pre-tenure teachers, making available both undergraduate and continuing education graduate credits for summer coursework at Inver Hills in 2006.

In addition to articulation agreements with Urban Teacher Program partner Metropolitan State University, students completing either AA or AS degrees in Urban Teaching Foundations may now seamlessly transfer to Augsburg College; Bemidji State University; the College of St. Catherine; and Minnesota State University, Mankato. Articulation and/or transfer agreements are also in progress with Hamline University, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Awards and Grants

To better retain urban education students, program staff have worked with the college's Foundation office to support funding of academic scholarships and emergency financial assistance, which this year resulted in nearly \$25,000 being awarded to 98 Urban Education students in amounts of up to \$500 per student per semester.

Inver Hills has also successfully completed the second year of a three-year, \$500,000 federal grant awarded to the college to develop a comprehensive partnership to implement an adult accelerated program that provides on-site opportunities for paraprofessionals. This program enables students to complete their AA or AS degrees and provides sustained, on-site tutoring and instructional support for technology, learning, and ESL/ELL needs.

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Metropolitan State University

In 2005, the Urban Teacher Program at Metropolitan State University expanded with the establishment of a post-baccalaureate teacher program and approval of an Urban Elementary Education major (pending BOT licensure approval, which is in progress). Student enrollment has continued to climb systematically at the pre-professional level and in the number of students admitted into teacher candidacy (the professional core).

New Programs

Last year, three initiatives were begun: establishment of a post-baccalaureate program for secondary education licensure, development of an elementary education program, and adoption of a program evaluation and assessment plan to monitor growth and continuous improvement. These changes were designed to further the strategic goal of attracting larger numbers of aspiring teachers from diverse cultural, linguistic, and urban backgrounds.

The *post-baccalaureate program* was completed and approved at the graduate level to attract potential teacher candidates into the existing secondary teaching programs (mathematics, science, social studies, and communication/writing arts). It will serve persons who either hold an existing teaching license and want to earn a second license in a new content area or who hold a non-teaching bachelor's degree and are seeking their first teaching license. The program will model a "fifth year" licensure program that can be completed in approximately one full academic year, including summers and based on a 12-credit load each term (up to 36 semester credits depending on review of transcripts and other professional preparation). So far, more than 56 potential candidates have inquired about this option and 7 post-baccalaureate teacher candidates have been admitted for initial graduate coursework in spring 2006.

The *Urban Elementary Education* major was approved by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system in fall 2005 and initial course offerings began in Spring 2006. Simultaneously, UTP at Metropolitan State University has begun the approval process through the Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT) for authority to recommend candidates for licensure in elementary education as part of BOT institutional accreditation. This new major was designed primarily to enable the development of programs in the high demand fields of special education and ESL, both of which are K-12 licenses that require preparation in both elementary and secondary education. To that end, initial steps are also being taken to develop proposals in special education and ESL as outlined in the program's strategic plan.

Another new initiative is the completion of an *evaluation and assessment plan for the Urban Teacher Program*. Begun in 2003, the plan was reviewed and accepted by the department in fall 2004 and implementation was begun in 2005, timed to meet the requirement for an initial progress report to the BOT in 2007. The Department has established a committee to collect data that will inform continuous improvement of the program. Specific efforts include a continuing curriculum review (in collaboration with program partners in P-12 schools), development of program structures to solidify program management, review of field experience procedures, review of advising procedures, and systematic implementation of an outreach/recruitment plan.

Beginning in spring 2006, an electronic portfolio system will be used to document student competency and support continued program improvement. Program improvements are also being built from faculty reviews, meetings with community stakeholders, and enhanced data management by a UTP admissions advisor. Student recruitment is being facilitated by a new, full-time UTP recruitment coordinator. Finally, UTP field experiences were significantly enhanced through a faculty review and revision process led by a newly-hired field experience coordinator.

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Faculty and Staff

In 2005, the number of resident UTP faculty remains at seven. However, the program grew through the addition of 3 new professional staff: a field experience coordinator, a UTP admissions advisor, and a recruitment coordinator. These hires both strengthened and enhanced the department's faculty and program diversity. Table 1 illustrates the growth and diversity faculty and staff from its inception.

Table 1 Resident Faculty and Professional Staff of Metropolitan State University Urban Teacher Program by Year

Year	African-American	American Indian	Latino/Hispanic	Asian/Pac. Islander	White	Iranian-American	Total
2001	2	0	1	0	2		5
2002	2	0	3	0	2		7
2003	3	1	3	0	1		8
2004	3 (one on Admin. Leave)	1	3	1	1		9
2005	3 (one on Admin. Leave)	0	4	2	1	1	11

Student and Program Demographics

Table 2 illustrates student enrollments in program courses by year from Fall 2001 to Spring 2006. In most cases, the unduplicated count shows yearly increases.

Table 2 Combined Course Enrollment in Metropolitan State University Urban Teacher Program Education Courses from FY 2002 to 2006

FY	Total Courses Offered	Total Active Registrations	Average Course Size	Unduplicated Heads	Regs/Head
2002	27	361	13.37	122	2.96
2003	64	550	8.93	167	3.29
2004	83	737	11.70	238	3.10
2005	78	804	12.03	210	3.83
2006 *	90	659	10.19	240	2.75
Total	252	2452	11.25	977	2.51

***Note: FY2006 registrations were incomplete when this report was prepared.**

These data show continued growth in both average course size and number of sections. The addition of new programs, including the post-baccalaureate option, will challenge the department's ability to meet growing demand, including supervision of student teaching.

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Teacher Candidate Demographics. In 2005, significant progress was made in the recruitment of prospective educators across all majors. Table 3 shows declared and enrolled majors by subject area over the years of the program. Table 4 describes the number of program majors currently admitted into teacher education.

Table 3: Declared and Enrolled Education Majors

	2002		2003		2004		2005	
	Declared	Enrolled	Declared	Enrolled	Declared	Enrolled	Declared	Enrolled
English	7	3	27	18	59	35	80	42
Biology	4	4	11	8	35	27	40	28
Mathematics	10	8	25	18	46	27	70	40
Soc. Studies	4	1	29	22	61	40	89	59
Early Ch.	0	0	11	8	53	26	40	21
Total	25	16	103	74	254	155	319	190

Table 4: Program-Admitted Majors-2005

Biology	11	9.24%
Early Childhood	26	21.85%
Elementary Education	3	2.52%
English	19	15.97%
Mathematics	24	20.17%
Social Studies	36	30.25%
Total	119	

Prospective Teachers of Color. The program saw a significant increase in the number of admitted teacher candidates of color, from 32% in 2004 to 39% in 2005. Table 5 shows the numbers and percentages of teacher candidates by ethnicity as of fall 2005. Additional details not illustrated here include the percentage of prospective educators of color in mathematics (which continued at 50%), science (46%, an increase of 26 pts), social studies (47%, an increase of 15 pts), early childhood (27%, a decrease of 4 pts) and English (16%, a decrease of 4 pts).

Table 5: Distribution of Teacher Candidates by Race/Ethnicity

	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent Students of Color- 39%
African-American	21	18.26%	
African American and American Indian	1	3%	
American Indian	3	2.61%	
Asian-American	7	6.09%	
Hmong	3	3%	
Latino	10	8.70%	
Pacific Islander	1	1%	
White	73	61.00%	
Total	119		

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Gender Distribution of Program Participants. Table 6 shows female and male enrollment by major. These numbers show that many female program participants are entering secondary education fields in which women are historically underrepresented (mathematics, science, and social studies), as well as fields more traditionally selected by women (including English and early childhood education).

Table 6: Program Participants by Gender

Licensure Area	Female		Male	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Biology	8	72.73%	3	27.27%
Early Childhood	23	95.83%	3	12.50%
Elementary Education	3	100%	0	0.00%
English	15	88.24%	4	23.53%
Mathematics	9	37.50%	15	62.50%
Social Studies	19	52.78%	17	47.22%
Students Total	77	65%	42	35%

Finally, Table 7 illustrates the distribution of gender by ethnicity (White/non-White) in the program. Of note is the fact that the ratio of females to males of color is lower than that among white students (although differences are not statistically significant for this sample).

Table 7: Race/Ethnicity by Gender

	GENDER		Ratio	Total
	Female	Male	F/M	
White	50	23	2.2/1	73
Students of Color	27	19	1.4/1	46
Total	77	42	1.8/1	119

Scholarship Programs

The Urban Teacher Program at Metropolitan State University has continued to work with the Metropolitan State University Foundation, which administers scholarships through funds provided by community partners, to ensure that scholarships awarded to prospective teachers mirror the program's goals. Foundation funds come from private donors who have expressly provided funds to support the mission of the program.

Program Completion

In 2005, the Urban Teacher Program graduated 8 new prospective teachers for a total of 28 new teachers prepared in urban education principles since program initiation. Nineteen teacher candidates will begin student teaching in spring 2006. Most (88%) teacher candidates who complete the program apply for and receive teacher licensure; others have entered graduate programs. To date, however, only 8 new licensure recipients have received full-time teaching positions in the Twin Cities. This may reflect the fact that more than 600 teaching positions have been cut in Minneapolis Public Schools over the past two years and that St. Paul schools have experienced significant retrenchments as well. Most graduates who have not secured full-time positions are working in the schools as substitutes or education assistants. Many graduates are specifically interested in working in urban schools; it is not clear whether many have applied in outer-ring suburban schools.

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CLINICAL EXPERIENCES

Students in UTP complete their education in practicum placements in St. Paul, Minneapolis, and inner-ring suburban schools, all in sites with high concentrations of culturally and linguistically diverse youth to ensure that the experience is congruent with UTP expectations and curriculum. Practical experiences in an urban school environment begin in the courses offered in the community college programs and continue throughout the professional core of teacher education at Metropolitan State University. At MSU, targeted efforts were made this year to strengthen connections with schools sponsoring student teaching and pre-student teaching field experiences.

The work of the UTP Field Experience Coordinator has been reinvigorated with the hiring of a new coordinator who has enhanced the organization of UTP field experiences. Specifically, stronger partnerships have been forged with participating school districts; field experiences are being coordinated with the Urban Teacher Education Partnership, a collaborative effort between MnSCU and the St. Paul Public Schools; field experiences within pre-student teaching practica and field experience orientations in program courses have been added; and relationships with potential new sites have been developed to accommodate a growing array and number of pre-student teaching and student teaching placements. In addition, the Field Experience Coordinator participants regularly in department meetings, providing reports and updates on field experience activities. These enhancements were timely given that there will be as many students teacher placements in spring and summer 2006 as there were in the first two years of such placements.

Minneapolis Community and Technical College prepares students to analyze and enact a Teacher-as-Citizen model of teacher development in collaboration with the Public Achievement Initiative at the University Of Minnesota Center for Democracy and Citizenship. CTC students engage in "public work—the hard, on-going effort of working with a diverse group of people to solve public problems and to make things of lasting contribution in shaping and creating our communities and the wider world." In two sequential seminars, the UTP students learn the core concepts of Public Achievement, develop coaching skills, and work in public work teams with young people in middle and high schools. The coaching sites vary from semester to semester but are always off-campus, and the UTP student coaches work directly with urban learners from diverse backgrounds.

Inver Hills Community College engages students in Service Learning. Students in the program are trained by AmeriCorps-VISTA to be tutors for the America Reads program and are then paired with a school in either St. Paul or Inver Grove Heights, where UTP students offer reading assistance for teachers in elementary classrooms. The students' primary goal is to work with K-12 students of low reading ability. While in the classroom, UTP students also have opportunities to observe the classroom teacher and are required to keep a daily journal of their experiences and how they relate to their classes. Students are also expected to have a weekly debriefing to share their thoughts with other members of their class at Inver Hills.

In addition, IHCC has renewed a Community Service-Learning and Campus-Community Collaboration Initiatives grant to more fully institutionalize a campus-wide service learning initiative to increase the quality, impact, and sustainability of community-campus collaborations and to fully develop an "engaged campus" environment. IHCC is fulfilling a unique community role by partnering with external service organizations, developing a campus culture that "nurtures and encourages civic engagement," and providing opportunities for students and faculty to apply research and classroom learning in "real" settings with dynamic interaction, feedback, and opportunities for further learning and engagement.

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PARTNERSHIPS/COLLABORATION

In keeping with its mission, UTP works to foster and maintain collaborative partnerships within each college/university, the professional education community, and the urban community as a whole with a specific emphasis on building partnerships with communities of color. In 2005, major efforts were undertaken to increase the amount of community and school partner participation within the Joint Steering Committee as well as connections among the respective college and university programs.

Community-based Stakeholder Participation

In November 2005, the Joint Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of key school district and postsecondary partners, launched a community conversation entitled "From the Urban Community to the Urban Community" to engage community stakeholders. The event was attended by more than 125 parents, high school students, high school teachers, UTP teacher candidates, and representatives of community organizations and several institutions of higher education involved in teacher education. Participants engaged in dialogues designed to provide insights into a range of issues including the skills and knowledge needed for teaching in urban schools, urban students' perceptions about their school experiences, and the role of community stakeholders in the development of urban teachers. The event generated significant data to inform the program's development and identified new community representatives whose input as members of the Joint Steering Committee will help guide UTP efforts.

Articulation Agreements

Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Metropolitan State University have developed a strong articulation agreement that includes a streamlined program admissions process and course equivalencies in four major content areas (Biology, English, Mathematics and Social Science) as well as pre-professional education courses for licensure. In November 2005, faculty from the Child Development Program at MCTC and faculty from the Early Childhood Education program at MSU also came to agreement on course equivalencies. Comparable agreements in both AS and AA degree programs are in place between Metropolitan State University and Inver Hills Community College, and program faculty have collaborated to update course equivalencies in response to program changes at both institutions. These agreements were approved by the Office of the Chancellor in 2005. Metropolitan State also continues to work on agreements related to teacher education with other two-year colleges in the metropolitan area, including Century College.

Recruitment

This year, the Metropolitan State University Urban Teacher Program hired a recruitment coordinator to work with both MCTC and IHCC to actively recruit potential teacher candidates from the ranks of classified staff in school districts and community and school programs engaged in career development and to facilitate student transitions from the MCTC and IHCC programs into the MSU program. The recruitment coordinator began work in August 2005 and to date has met with numerous organizations, made presentations to organizations and groups of students, and developed publications to promote the program. She has also conducted initial interviews with prospective teacher candidates and informed program staff and faculty about opportunities for departmental recruitment activities.

Co-location of Metropolitan State University and Minneapolis Community and Technical College

In January 2005, the Urban Teacher Program moved its offices to MCTC as part of the university's co-location effort. The new Minneapolis location has substantially increased UTP's presence among MCTC students, faculty, and staff. Combined with direct recruitment efforts, UTP at Metropolitan State University has become much more accessible and attracted significant "walk-in" traffic. The new offices have also enhanced opportunities for UTP students to meet and work with program faculty and for program faculty at both MCTC and MSU to collaborate. One major outcome of the co-location was the successful community conversation described above.

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CRITICAL ISSUES AND NEEDS

The continuous growth of the Urban Teacher Program underscores the need for such a program as envisioned by the authors of the legislation establishing this program. A viable and attractive teacher education program has been established despite an already crowded field of teacher preparation programs within the metropolitan area and budgetary constraints that have resulted in decreased K-12 teacher recruitment and hiring. Yet, as the UTP has grown, several critical issues have arisen. Three primary challenges are clear:

1. Managing increased enrollments with a limited number of faculty;
2. Establishing program infrastructure while working to respond to teacher shortages in special education and bilingual/ESL instruction; and
3. Operating in the face of teacher cutbacks and retrenchment in Twin Cities districts.

Each of these issues brings pressures to bear on the Department as it tries to meet its commitment to improving the demographic and professional profile of classroom teachers in urban schools.

Need for Additional Faculty and Building Infrastructure

Despite a continuous increase in enrollments, the number of core UTP faculty has remained the same over the past three years. This challenges the ability of faculty to maintain program quality throughout each teacher candidate's experience. In particular, as students begin to complete their programs, there will be major obstacles to providing adequate supervision of student teacher candidates while providing high quality instruction for newer teacher candidates entering and progressing through the program.

Other teacher education programs meet this challenge primarily by hiring adjunct faculty with backgrounds in teaching. However, this program is constrained by two interrelated problems. First, supervisors knowledgeable about the principles and focus of UTP are limited. UTP has developed a unique, individualized program of field-based practica that incorporates both competence in meeting BOT Standards of Effective Practice and UTP Standards of Reflective Practice. As a result, it is difficult to find adjunct faculty (called "community faculty" at Metropolitan State) who are a "match" for the urban-focused curriculum. Difficulties in identifying high quality urban-focused student-teaching supervisors to meet the growing number of teacher candidates entering their final student-teaching practicum are also anticipated.

The second personnel issue is that program development requires faculty to fulfill multiple roles in teaching, strengthening program structures (e.g., curriculum development and post-baccalaureate entry advising), and building the infrastructure to support new programs in such high-demand teacher fields as special education and bilingual/ESL instruction. The emerging Urban Elementary Education teacher licensure program is an example of a new program necessary to establish the K-12 foundation required for licensure programs in special education and ESL. The department currently is operating with only 7 of 10 designated faculty lines due to an administrative leave, a temporary transfer, and an open position being searched. At least two additional faculty lines (for a total of 12) are needed to add programs in ESL/bilingual and special education licensure (with accompanying professional and classified staff) and meet projected growth.

Projected Urban Teacher Demand

The last two years have seen significant downsizing of urban school districts in the Twin Cities in the face of budget cuts and changing patterns of enrollment. Nearly 600 teacher positions in Minneapolis alone have been eliminated. School district personnel have expressed dismay at their inability to hire first year teachers from the program despite glowing recommendations from cooperating teachers and professional staff. By most accounts, this is a temporary setback as growing numbers of current teachers are expected to retire in the near future. In the meantime, UTP graduates will likely find it difficult to secure positions in the districts for which they were

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trained and may well go elsewhere for employment, including outlying suburbs or other urban centers in the Midwest and nationally. It is also likely that many graduates will end up under-employed as teacher assistants or as short-call or long-term substitute teachers. As a result, many of the P-12 learners for whom these new graduates were trained will be deprived of high quality teachers specifically prepared to meet their needs.

It is hoped that projected state budget improvements and the achievement-gap-closing requirements of No Child Left Behind will result in the increased funding necessary to maintain and develop UTP in ways that will enable it to expand and meet continuing demands. In the face of these and other challenges, the Urban Teacher Program remains committed to fulfilling its mission to prepare caring and supportive teachers who possess appropriate skills and dispositions and who can serve as role models for urban learners.

FEEDBACK ON THE URBAN TEACHER PROGRAM

Student comments continue to provide support and guidance for the Urban Teacher Program. The following excerpts offer a small sampling of comments from UTP students.

- I think that it is a great opportunity not only for us but also for the students we will be teaching one day.
- The classes I have taken will help me to be an effective urban teacher. Being a teacher you have to know [how to] effectively work with the child and their families. Learning that every child learns differently is also very important.
- The Urban Teacher Program has offered a glimpse at the obstacles which many urban learners must overcome to succeed academically. The diverse backgrounds of today's urban learners must be understood by teachers in order to effectively educate this group of students. With this information prospective teachers are armed with teaching strategies which heighten positive learning outcomes for students. The more you know about your students, the more likely you are of creating a learning environment where positive outcomes can be achieved.
- The best elements of the Urban Teacher Program include hands-on learning. Great teaching staff, and the goal to meet students' needs.
- The group advisor sessions are very helpful. The UTP has been a learning experience that is difficult because there is so much to learn in a short time.
- I entered this program feeling like teaching was something I knew I'd be good at but not really knowing if it was something I wanted. After this intro course I know that I want to teach and I have a clear idea of what I want to be like when I do.
- Civic engagement is incredibly important to urban teaching. People who teach in urban environments often live separated in geographic and cultural isolation from the community in which they work...An urban teacher needs to know and participate in the community she is teaching in.
- I learned that being involved in the community helps you bond more effectively with your students. If they see you outside the classroom in their environment they are more likely to be open to forming a trusting relationship with you. Also by learning about where and how students live...you are better able to understand what they bring to class from that environment that could be interfering with or aiding their learning...Being involved in the community gives you an opportunity to craft educational opportunities that speak to the real lives of the people you are teaching and in that way makes you a more effective urban educator.

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PROGRAM HISTORY

Legislation

Minnesota statute specifies that Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Inver Hills Community College shall provide the first two first years and Metropolitan State University shall provide the final two years of the Urban Teacher Program. The legislature appropriated funding for the development and implementation of the secondary and early childhood education components of a program leading to teacher licensure and directed that the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees annually submit a progress report to the chairs of the higher education finance divisions of the legislature regarding the development of the program.

Purpose

UTP is designed to enable teacher candidates to master the knowledge and skills needed to serve an increasingly diverse student body in urban schools. Specifically, the program is designed to enable prospective urban educators to complete an AA or AS degree at community colleges close to home (IHCC and MCTC) which can then transfer seamlessly into upper division work at Metropolitan State University for teacher licensure. The legislation to create the Urban Teacher Program enables students in the Twin Cities area to complete their teacher preparation in public, affordable institutions that are attractive to non-traditional and historically under-served students.

Goals

The Urban Teacher Program goals continue to align with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities strategic and work plans. Currently, there is particular alignment between UTP goals and Strategic Direction 1 in the system's 2006-2010 strategic plan to "Increase Access and Opportunity." With a focus on serving "new generations of Minnesotans [as they] look to higher education to advance their careers and contribute to their communities," Strategic Direction 1 includes goals to "raise Minnesota's participation and achievement in postsecondary education by meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and educational goals" and to "work with other organizations to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college ready for success." These clearly parallel UTP goals and in particular reflect its importance within the context of the system's "special responsibility to educate the child care workers, teachers....and others who can successfully support and prepare today's children for postsecondary education."

As a collaborative initiative among Metropolitan State University, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Inver Hills Community College, and K-12 partners, UTP is a strategically accessible and educationally solid urban teacher preparation program. Grounded in Minnesota's Standards of Effective Practice, UTP has two complementary goals to meet its mission: (a) to attract more teacher candidates of color, low-income 'first generation' students, and non-traditional career changers into teaching careers and (b) to prepare all teachers in its program to support improved academic outcomes among urban learners.