Senior EXIT Surveys

Spring 2002 Summary Report

Mentor Leaders of Graduating Cohorts in Initial Preparation Programs:

Dr. Cynthia Alby, M.A.T. Secondary Education at Macon Campus
Dr. Ellen Campbell, Health & Physical Education (School of Health Sciences)
Dr. Kevin Crabb, M.A.T. Secondary Education
Dr. Rosemary Jackson, Special Education Interrelated Disabilities
Dr. Karynne Kleine, Middle Grades Education
Dr. Brian Mumma, Middle Grades Education at Macon Campus
Dr. Patricia Tolbert, Music Education (School of Liberal Arts & Sciences)
Ms. Lyndall Warren, Early Childhood Education

Data Analysis by
Sharene L. Smoot, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Department of Foundations & Secondary Education

Date of Report: Nov.19, 2002
Summary

97% Rate Their Field-Based Program Positively -- Excellent (58%) or Good (39%)

A Total of Eight Cohorts of Students Participated in the Exit Survey this School Year

1. Overall ratings are about the same as last year; there were 108 participants in the survey. There was a new M.A.T. (secondary education) in Milledgeville this year. Also both mentor leaders on the Macon Campus were new to GC&SU.
2. The main emphasis of this survey was changed slightly this year in order to do the validity study. Instead of asking “Overall, how would you rate your preparation to begin teaching?” the survey asked “How would you rate your skills as a beginning teacher right now?” (The results of the validity study can be found in another document.)
3. Results for this entire Exit Survey are broken down for each program and campus. All ratings are given in the percent responding positively, that is ratings of Good or Better are considered Positive on a scale of Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent.
4. The Macon MAT satisfaction with their overall program rose was highest with 63% Excellent this year. Early childhood Milledgeville cohort was 63% Excellent this year. Special Education was 58% Excellent. Lowest rated was the new MAT cohort in Milledgeville with 38% Excellent ratings.
5. Breakdowns are also given for the Music Education Program and the Health and Physical Education Program, which are included in the overall results found in this document (even though they are not in the School of Education, we work closely together).
6. A new question was added this year asking participants to rate the mentoring ability of their host teachers as well as the teaching ability of their host teachers. The results were about the same with a 90% positive rating for mentoring and an 87% positive rating for teaching ability.
7. Satisfaction with content area preparation and with technology skills are much higher this year which might be due to the slightly different version. However the ratings are much higher than the previous year for both and probably reflect a true improvement in these aspects of the programs.
8. The M.A.T. students in the Milledgeville cohort gave the highest ratings to their core classes; 67% of 9 who took their core and undergraduate major at GC&SU said that these classes were Excellent. This is a good reflection on the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences.
9. Written answers to open-ended questions about good and bad aspects of the program are also included. These comments support the reliability of quantitative results listed above as well as the strengths of a field-based cohort with a consistent mentor leader and the disadvantages of time constraints that go with the program.
Results of Exit Survey of May 2002 Graduates of the
John H. Lounsbury School of Education
Georgia College & State University

Ratings of Student Self-Evaluation of their Skills as a Beginning Teacher

The ratings were slightly lower than last year; 98% of the respondents rated their overall preparation to begin teaching as Good (39%) or Excellent (58%). Exit surveys were received from 108 participants.

Figure 1

Overall, How Would You Rate Your Skills as a Beginning Teacher Right Now?

There were 6 cohorts from the main campus at Milledgeville and 2 cohorts from the satellite campus at Macon State College. The Milledgeville cohorts were Early Childhood (n = 27), Health and Physical Education (n = 7), Middle Grades (n = 16), Music (n = 4), Special Education (n = 19), and M.A.T. Secondary Education (n = 15). The Macon cohorts were Early Childhood (n = 10) and M. A. T. Secondary Education (n = 8). The Dublin campus is now closed and all cohorts there have finished.

New to the GC&SU Mentor Leader Program were Drs. Alby and Crabb in the M.A.T. one year program for secondary education. Also new was Dr. Brian Mumma who finished the senior year of the Macon Middle Grades Program and Dr. Ellen Campbell who took the Health and Physical Education cohort through two years at GC&SU. All of the other mentor leaders are experienced and finishing their second or third cohort of initial preparation undergraduates.
All but 2% of the respondents felt their overall readiness to begin teaching was good or excellent this year. Unless otherwise specified, all cohorts are assumed to be from the main campus in Milledgeville.

Since each cohort is a completely different group of students with a different mentor leader, year-to-year comparisons may be very unreliable. Another aspect to consider is the change in the number of courses taught by the Faculty of Liberal Arts that increased for the cohorts graduating in 2002. This would most affect the early childhood education and middle grades education cohorts on the Milledgeville campus, both of which are lower in overall satisfaction this year. However, the secondary MAT program in Macon was actually a little higher in their percent of excellent ratings this year. These course changes were required by the Board of Regents and do not affect the K-12 certification area cohorts such as special education, music, and health & physical education.

There were 13 specific skill areas in which the participants were asked to rate how well prepared they felt at this specific time. The charts on the next page show the percent of good or excellent ratings for each skill rated.

Satisfaction with content area preparation is much higher this year, 95% rated their content area ability as good or excellent. Last year only 74% did so.

Technology in teaching ratings have also increased noticeably this year (from 77% to 90% good or excellent this year), but there was a lot of variation in technology ratings from cohort to cohort in the last three years.
Content area and technology skills ratings were last in the previous year (May 2000) also.
Technology skills and content area knowledge are up considerably. Knowledge of professional ethics and educational laws are down somewhat. The difference in the others areas were about the same for both 2000 and 2002; however graduates in spring 2001 had a slightly higher opinion. Each year represents different cohorts of students with different mentor leaders, so these variations are to be expected.

Most of the content area courses are taught by the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences for the undergraduate programs. All of the M.A.T. program content area is taught by the school of Liberal Arts & Sciences. However, many students (38%) transfer into these programs with either their core courses or their degree from other institutions.
**Figure 7 - Improvement in Content Area Development**

in 2002 Ratings is in Middle Grades and Secondary Education Cohorts

Breakdown by Cohort for Content Area Satisfaction

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**Figure 8 - Last Year's Ratings (2001 Graduates)**

Breakdown by Cohort for Content Area Satisfaction

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Figure 9 - Technology in Teaching Ratings Vary Considerably by Cohort

There has been an improvement in the ratings this year from last year, but it appears that there is still a lot of variation. Secondary education (MAT) ratings are the lowest followed by Special Education in 2002.

Technology Ratings by 2002 Cohorts

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Technology in Teaching Ratings for 2001 Cohorts (below)

"Using Technology in Your Teaching Job" by cohort

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Ratings of ability to assess the learning of students was lowest for the main campus cohorts in Music, Secondary Education and Middle Grades.

Ratings of ability to design teaching units was lowest for the main campus secondary and middle grades.

Ratings of ability to understand and comply with professional ethics and educational laws was lowest for main campus cohorts in Health & Physical education, Early Childhood, and Special Education. It was relatively low for middle grades and secondary education also. This looks like something that this set of mentor leaders could collaborate on and target for improvement in their next cohort.

The only cohort that had an obvious problem in their confidence in their ability to self-evaluate was the middle grades cohort.

There was also a slight change in the wording of the directions of this part of the Exit questionnaire that may have affected the ratings. Last year it asked "How would you rate your teacher preparation at GC&SU?"; but this year it said "How would you rate your skills as a beginning teacher right now?" The wording was changed for the purpose of the validity study. The validity study is reported on separately, but these mentor leaders were asked to rate their students' abilities and the data were matched for comparisons. Overall for the school of education the correlations between the student and mentor leader ratings were statistically significant in the expected direction (r = .52), but varied from leader to leader and from skill to skill.
Ratings of Other Important Aspects of Field-based Cohort Programs
The chart below shows how highly rated the field experiences are. On the other hand, preparation for the Praxis II exams again rates below the others, but the improved ratings have been maintained from 36% positive in the 2000 cohorts. Most of the ratings are about the same as last year.

**Figure 11 May 2002 Graduates**

A new question was added this year asking them to rate the mentoring ability of their host teachers as well as the teaching ability of their host teachers. The results were about the same with a 90% positive rating for mentoring and an 87% positive rating for teaching ability.
Satisfaction with Praxis 2 preparation was the lowest rated in almost all programs. This is an area that faculty are continually being asked to stress to their cohorts. The objective is to improve the students' perception of being prepared to take the Praxis 2. The very high passing rate is evidence that the students are being well prepared.

### Ratings of Preparation to take the Praxis 2 by Cohort

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Special Education (95%) and Health & Physical Education (100%) Majors feel the best prepared to take the Praxis II exam. Health & Physical Education majors report special study sessions as being very helpful for their Praxis II examinations. Preparation for the M.A.T. program participants is all in the content areas; their low ratings reflect their major coursework in their baccalaureate institutions. Each person takes a test in their content major, there is no pedagogy on those Praxis II tests.

The Early Childhood Cohorts at the Milledgeville campus have shown a large variation over the past three years. Students graduating in 2000 gave ratings of only 37% positive (sum of ratings of good or excellent). However the percent positive rose to 92% for the 2001 graduating cohort, but the 2002 cohort ratings fell to 67% positive.
Ratings of Core Classes Have Improved

Finally we take a closer look at the classes students take in their freshman and sophomore year at this liberal arts university. These are known as the core classes. Transfers who did not take their core classes here were 38% of these respondents (up 4% since last year). Of the remaining 65 students, 83% said that their core classes were good or excellent.

**Figure 12 – May 2002 Graduates**
### Satisfaction with Core Curriculum Classes

#### Ratings of Core Classes by Major

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>MAT Macon</th>
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</table>

The M.A.T. students in the Milledgeville cohort gave the highest ratings to their core classes; 67% of 9 who took their core and undergraduate major at GC&SU said that these classes were Excellent. This is a good reflection on the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences.
Breakdown of Exit Survey Satisfaction Ratings by Programs

Secondary Education (M.A.T.)

There were two secondary education programs leading to a Master's of Arts in Teaching, one in Macon and one in Milledgeville. The Macon cohort (n = 8) had an overall teacher preparation rating of 63% Excellent and the Milledgeville cohort (n = 13) had an overall ratings of 38% excellent.

**Figure 13 Macon M.A.T. Program**

2002 Cohort Ratings of How would you Rate Your Skills as a Beginning Teacher Right Now?

Dr. Alby had the highest correlation of her ratings of her students’ skills with their self-ratings in figure 13 of any of the Mentor Leaders in the validity study.
1. There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

- Excellent student teaching experience and good courses.
- I thought the cohort leader was professional and knowledgeable and did everything she could to prepare us for real teaching.
- Field experience.
- All is a one year program.
- Excellent professor knowledge.
- Courses were interesting and engaging.
- Dr. Powell's classes on research and exceptional students were wonderful and very useful in my student teaching.
- Teachers were very knowledgeable about classroom expectations.
- Most professors were very supportive.
- My placement for my student teaching could not have been any better. Wonderful!
- I was introduced to a lot of cutting edge research.
- Student teaching was invaluable.
- The small number of people in cohort allowed everyone to get to know each other.
- Instructors were willing to assist you in any way they could.
- The class expectations were not hard to reach and by incorporating InTech into our technology class was fabulous.
- The semester of observation prior to student teaching.
- Completing InTech certificate as part of technology course.

2. There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better. They were:

- There appeared to be a lack of organization. The program felt very chaotic at times.
- There could be more help in the preparation for the Praxis II test.
- Class timing, length of program, too many content grad classes required -- not time to take them.
- More emphasis should be placed on the importance of student teaching and not on classes during student teaching.
- Make the Milledgeville and Macon MAT cohorts more in line together. The Macon cohort had a substantial amount of more projects and requirements than Milledgeville cohort. The Milledgeville cohort agreed with this statement.
- The professors would better serve the program and the students if they would communicate with one another and coordinate the program instead of having completely separate courses with no understanding of what each other is teaching.
- Lack of support from cohort leader -- did not seem very student oriented.
- Provide more subject area preparation for Praxis II exam.
- The mentor (cohort) leader was not as supportive as she should have been. Curriculum and work load was not similar in both Macon and Milledgeville cohorts.
- More frequent observations and feedback during student teaching.
- Leadership and continuity b/t Macon and Milledgeville cohort work wad(???).
- The classes and student teaching conflict.
- Make content graduate courses more available and more choices (i.e. math) at later times.
Coordination with host schools and teachers could be improved. Host teacher were unaware of student teacher requirements. 
Lack of observation feedback when observed by professors during my student teaching.
Use less theory about what should be in classroom. Tell us what actually happens in classroom.
Host teachers did not receive all the necessary information in a timely manner.
A more thorough schedule of classes and meetings and student teaching times provided early on.
We need more support from our mentor (a leader presence) during student teaching.
Emphasis should be on classroom teaching instead of on academic coursework during student teaching semester.
Difficulty of incorporating content classes into 2 semesters as catalog suggest is possible.

(MAT Milledgeville Campus breakdown starts on the next page)
Dr. Crabb was highly rated by his preservice teachers who were typical of the other cohorts in giving their lowest ratings to their own skills in managing student behavior and in their preparation for the Praxis II exams. Most of these M.A.T. students are advised to take their Praxis II exam prior to beginning the M.A.T. program since the tests are only content oriented. If needed they can take it again in the summer after completing the pedagogical part of the program and while they are taking content area classes on the master’s level. Three more content area courses are required in the program.
Dr. Crabb, M.A.T. Cohort, Milledgeville/Gray Campus
Respondents Responses to Open-Ended Questions

1. There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

   Preparing daily lesson plans.
   My experience in student teaching. I had a great host teacher.
   Spending half-days in the Fall in the schools observing and teaching.
   All the time I got to spend in the field learning hands on.
   The understanding I received from my cohort leader.
   Allowed flexibility in classes that helped when discussing certain topics.
   My professors were always there when you needed them and they were willing to help you with a problem. Also Ms. Ruby was great.
   Classroom management studies.
   Dr. Crabb was very supportive and seems to really care about our success.
   The cohort itself. I liked the people in the cohort. It was good to get to know them.
   Supportive staff (teachers) and very relational.
   Dr Crabb was very supportive. He was always there when we needed him. He is very understanding.
   The ten week internship: I learned a great deal about lesson preparation and classroom management.
   Lots of time in the classroom (Fall and Spring).
   My cohort members were very nice, supportive, and interesting to learn with.
   Studying student-centered learning and lesson plans that reflected this.
   The fact that I got to spend so much time working in my undergrad field.
   I enjoyed the cohort experience. It was good to have others to talk to. We were able to discuss our problems together.
   Student teaching experience.
   Dr. Crabb and Dr. Powell tried their best to make our assignments similar so we did not have double the work.
   How to plan and use and organize materials into coherent lessons.
   The professors were nice and helpful. Very encouraging when it comes to a teaching unit. Whatever you may choose to do.
   Presentation of content knowledge from professor to student (variety of activities, made it clear and easy to grasp).
   Being in the public school system before student teaching helped a lot.
   My fall research paper: by learning about different learning styles I was prepared to accommodate different students.
   Understanding where to go for help.
   My cohort leader was very helpful, friendly, understanding and funny.
   The reading class is critical to course.
   The close knit unit of the group -- my fellow student teachers were great.
   I enjoyed being able to go back to my Fall placement for my 10 week student teaching experience. It was good to already know the teachers and the students.
   Getting "practice time" in a real classroom
   The program really tries to cover all the bases in teaching preparation.
   Provided "real life" experience such as practicums and student teaching experience.
   Dr. Crabb is very knowledgeable about being in the classroom. Not someone who is just teaching it but someone who has been there.
   The last day of my student teaching: my student threw me a party!
There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better. They were:

Understanding educational laws -- what a teacher can or can't do in a classroom.
I didn't like having to get some of my books off the Internet this semester (Spring). I depend on financial aid and those funds aren't available to get books off Internet on time.
My host teach needed more guidelines from cohort leader. There was not enough mentoring occurring between the teacher and me.
No one seemed to give me answers -- some things were forgotten and I fell we missed out on some opportunities.
The mentor could have taken up lesson plans and provided feedback. The mentor could have helped us figure out how long to plan for certain activities.
During the observation period (Fall semester) perhaps cohort could write a short research paper then.
Needs more instruction on classroom behavior management, legal issues in teaching, job hunting, and job application.
How to conduct a parent/teacher conference.
My classroom management skills are awful. We never had a lot of instruction on this.
Student teaching. Baldwin High is not a good place for student teaching.
Not having so much class time after 10 week student teaching experience.
There was too much busy work that I didn't learn anything from.
The spring research project should have been completed in the fall when we were observing.
More role playing -- parent/teacher conferences, confronting a hostile student in the classroom.
There needs to be more communication between cohort leader and host teachers particularly in observing and evaluating student's teaching performance.
I feel this cohort is considered less important and less a part of the school of Ed look at all the awards for the other cohorts from awards night compared to MAT for an idea of what I am saying.
The program should offer section on classroom management. I still feel like I don't know enough about handling problems.
Need to know more about legalities of the job.
The cohort idea is great in theory, but isn't very conducive to people with a family that need to work at least part-time. I wanted to do this program 5 years ago, but couldn't because of finances.
There probably should be more emphasis on the planning of lessons, but I wouldn't want to cut into other aspect of the preparation the program provides.
More information on legal issues in teaching.
Hard to do this program if you are not a traditional student. No time for work.
More peer teaching.
Classes should be 2 1/2 hours long as opposed to 3.
Workshops for the different content areas for the Praxis II.
Class work needs to coincide better with student teaching experiences.
I feel I would have benefited more from more structured field evaluations -- I was not sure how I was being graded or what I was being graded on nor do I know how I scored.
I don't see the point in doing a research project. It took time away from planning lessons. It did help me because I chose something that was easily integrated into my teaching style.
How to deal with administrators.
Some of my assignment seemed more like busy work rather than assignments that would better my teaching.
It would be good to have some more regular meetings during the student teaching since I don't think we see each other enough.
Too much emphasis on making this program your top priority. Some of us have families and/or jobs that won't "just go away" for a year.
Journals should be written by week(s) instead of daily.
Middle Grades Education

There were 16 graduating students in the Macon cohort lead by Dr. Kleine and ten students in the Macon cohort lead by Dr. Mumma.

Figure 17 – Dr. Kleine, Middle Grades Education Cohort, Main Campus

2002 Cohort Ratings of How would you Rate Your Skills as a Beginning Teacher Right Now?

The high ratings for content area are a significant improvement in collaborating with the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Many of these preservice teachers were specializing in science education.

Figure 18 Middle School Cohorts' Ratings of Field-based Program Aspects
There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

Reflection used as a tool to self-evaluate and be self-aware of what I am doing.
Being in seniors placements, experiencing multiple teaching procedures, and strategies.
The preparation itself; the hours that were spent in the field was very beneficial to my overall development.
Experience in field classroom.
The whole cohort experience was a good setup to relaying the idea that professionally we are colleagues and as such should work together cooperatively to collaborate for the good of our students and the profession as a whole.
This program stretched me to become a much more critically disposed thinker and practitioner.
If felt that this program thoroughly prepared me for my future in education. The experience was great and I think that helped the most.
Content preparation.
Field experience gave me the opportunity to apply the theory I learned and be well-prepared for student teaching.
Being in the field from day one to gain as much knowledge about students as possible.
Hours spent in the field.
I grew from a passive teacher to an authoritative teacher.
Field work was very important to insuring a correlation between what was being taught to me and the real classroom.
Various placement experiences.
Using technology
The amount of field experience I have gotten.
The support of the staff at GCSU and their willingness to help me grow as a teacher.
Going to conferences (professional) and observing other professionals as they present.
The course work or classes that were taken really helped me build my content knowledge.
Overall experience of cohort and the knowledge of others.
Attending a professional conference helped me to view myself more as a professional and appreciate the work other teachers are doing.
The program offered the support of some of the most skilled professionals to scaffold my development as an educator.
Content classes were very hard but they prepared me for Praxis II and my field.
Field work. I feel as though I learned more about teaching through my field work.
Professional development opportunities.
Attending different conferences and workshops.
Most of the teachers were helpful and understanding.
Involvement in professional organizations.
Reading strategies
The diversity in middle Georgia because it was something I was not used to.
The close mentoring with the mentor leader gave support throughout.
Experiencing placements in a variety of school, grade levels, and counties.
The program modeled a passionate and reflective disposition, and inspired the same in me.
Mentor leader she was tough but I don't think I could have had anyone else. She pushed and motivated me.
Staying with same group of people.
Using mathematics knowledge on my students levels.
The host teachers I have had in the past year and a half have been incredible.

2. There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better.

They were:

The course load along with student teaching could have been lightened so that close attention could be paid to student teaching.
As a professional, dedicated to the teaching profession, I did not see how conducting an equality investigation was pertinent to my development as a professional educator science related. It was a challenging assignment for me and took time that could have been dedicated to improving my practice. More collaboration between A&S and school of ed so that content course are rich in pedagogical knowledge application.
Middle grade half days I was not prepared for full days because of my half day experience.
I think the program should take longer. There is way too much crammed into 2 years.
Some course require overload of work to be submitted at one time.
Not making us do college assignments and student teaching at the same time. I could not give my students my full effort because of so much to do.
The number of tasks assigned during student teaching needs to be decreased in number.
The program could have been more organized and "with it".
It was very demanding to the point of being insensitive to illness, personal needs, and the mental state of the cohort members.
Not knowing the expectations.
More classroom management skills.
Support and encouragement from professors. It seemed like many times that nothing was even good enough. We all need some encouragement.
The pairing of personalities with host teachers and student teachers.
Daily reflections became very tedious and seen more as a dreaded assignment that a tool for improving my practice, philosophy, and theories.
More preparation on work sample final semester.
Load of work limits involvement in community and extracurricular activities.
Making content classes in the middle grades level; we would not be teaching the concepts we learned in discrete mathematics to middle school students.
A couple of the A&S sciences courses seemed irrelevant.
More varieties of classes should have been available for concentration areas so that we could have had more of a choice.
The program limited involvement in other campus organizations and the community as a whole.
Having an enormous amount of work to do and plan lessons at the same time.
Helping students with different levels of learning in one class.
The amount of school work and field experience was difficult to manage at times.
Communication between school of ed and A&S and communication between school of ed and host teachers need to be improved.
The teaching methods that we were being taught were not modeled by GCSU teachers. My mentor leaders included!
Not preparing me for finding a job (resume writing).
Help students with special needs!
Dr. Mumma is a newly hired professor who replaced the first mentor leader that this cohort had in their junior year. Although their program aspects are rated a little low, their self-evaluations of their skills was quite high. They were much less satisfied with their content area classes which were taught by faculty in the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences who were willing to travel to Macon campus to teach. See the comments that follow for details of the problems that they encountered, even though they were very appreciative of Dr. Mumma’s support.
WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

   The opportunity to do out into the schools so much -- the diverse experiences I had helped me to know what kind of teacher I want or do not want to be.
   Working in the field placement with host teachers working on projects with cohort members.
   Being able to be in the classroom, teaching, for the entire 2 years.
   Experience
   The experience (hours) spent in the schools.
   I feel very prepared to go out and teach my first year. Also the cohort concept was great!
   Field experience -- I believe this was the most beneficial.
   I felt that I learned the most about becoming a teacher through my field placements.
   Having so much time out in the field to work with students.
   Great mentor leader during senior year.
   Pre-planning!! What better way to prepare me for my first year of teaching than to sit with my host teacher during pre-planning.
   Mentors that work for the needs of their students.
   Cohort experience, learning to work with a variety of people.
   The constant evaluations and suggestions for improvement.
   I felt very prepared for the Praxis II only the language arts portion not the math. I did not feel the math department prepared well.
   The cohort community -- communicating with nine other women who were experiencing the same situations.
   Being allowed to stay with the same supervising teacher through my senior year.
   Plenty of classroom experience. Mrs. Therp is great!
   Having Mr. Mumma as my cohort leader. He was very supportive and encouraging. He really let us know that not only was he professional but he was also there for us if we needed to vent.
   The diversity of schools we were placed in.
   I liked being out in the field so much. It was very helpful.
   Pre-Planning and student teaching -- wonderful and great opportunities.
   Collaboration with cohort members.
There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better.

They were:

The main program and the teachers. A lot of situations where they weren't professional and I did not learn much. The environment was not a good, positive one for learning.

Mathematical classes with their professors. Professors that demonstrate GC&SU's standards for teaching educational strategies.

Support! They never showed much support in what we were doing. Our 1st mentor leader was very negative towards everything we did.

Having the only requirement during student teaching, to be student teaching. They were way to many assignments due when I would have liked to concentrate on my student teaching.

Too much work load during student teaching (too many projects took away from student teaching).

Support from the administration. I did not feel like they really cared when I had a very important issue about a particular incident.

The work load that is assigned during student teaching is too much. I would rather do more before my student teaching so that I can enjoy this time.

Having 5 classes the last semester.

Some professors were not supportive (math department) and could have created a more healthy learning environment.

Local Praxis II workshops.

Organization of the program. The instructors seemed clueless on what was going on. They were rarely prepared for class and rarely available for questions.

Location of classes should only be at Macon since we attend Macon campus.

Not enough relevance in the courses (classes -- mostly taught theory and did not focus on a lot of the concrete aspects of teaching).

Being in Macon we were left out and uninformed about a lot of events. We also did not receive a very good quality of professors.

The organization of the off-campus program could be improved.

The technology class taught me nothing that I really didn't already know. I felt it was a waste of time.

I felt as though we did not have as much access to materials and technology at Macon campus.

More technology at Macon State Campus. A choice of concentrations at Macon campus.

Work load. During our last semester, we had so much busy work I want to concentrate on teaching and it was hard to do with all the other work for our classes. A lot of the work was repetitious.

Not enough help with the application process (when applying for jobs).

I don't think I'll be hack to GCSU. I am very disappointed in the way we were treated and absolutely no one would make an effort to make us feel better or do anything about it!

More involvement in choosing placements would be great!!
Early Childhood Education

There were 27 respondents from the Milledgeville cohort with Lyndall Warren as Mentor Leader. Their self-evaluations were very high with the typical apprehension about their ability to manage the behavior of children. They were very appreciative of Ms. Warren’s support for the two years.

Figure 21 – Lyndall Warren, Middle Grades Education Cohort, Macon Campus

2002 Cohort Ratings of How would you Rate Your Skills as a Beginning Teacher Right Now?

Figure 22 - Ratings of Field-based Cohort Program Aspects
WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

   The field-based experience in my various placements.
   My mentor leader helped me the most. Always there for me. Always there to offer suggestions and help me out.
   My field experiences. Being in the classroom from the beginning gave me the knowledge and skills to succeed.
   Field experience for 2 years in a variety of grade levels.
   The content of information that I needed to know in order to be an effective teacher was presented in ways so that it could be used in the classroom.
   Meeting new people in the cohort program and making friends with some of them.
   The field experience.
   Field based experience. Support from my mentor leader. Hands on activities that can be used in the classroom.
   I feel very confident to begin my teaching career.
   Having so many diverse field placements with numerous field hours.
   The amount of time we were able to spend in the school/classroom.
   Experience in all grades.
   I feel confident that I can handle any situation that may arise in my classroom.
   The time we spent in the classrooms.
   The opportunity to experience grades PreK-5 (in my case K-4).
   Reflection -- I learned how to analyze my teaching for strengths and weaknesses so that I might improve.
   Having the opportunity to teach at a variety of schools and grade levels.
   Field-based experience.
   Having an extensive amount of hours in the classroom.
   The student teaching was great. No one can believe how much student teaching is involved in the cohort at GCSU. Tons of experience!
   Field experience.
   The field placements were the best to help me see what really happens in a classroom.
   The field experience -- it was very beneficial to see the teaching styles and management techniques of the different teachers I worked with.
   I feel extremely prepared to go into a classroom and begin teaching thanks in part to the multitude of placements we are placed in.
   The time spent in my field placements. I really feel that Learned more from my experience in my placements than I did in my classes. Amount of time in classrooms.
   The reflection in journals and collaboration between the special ed. cohort.
   The field based experiences was great. I feel like I am prepared for anything in the teaching field.
   Preparing units to integrate into the curriculum.
   Good lesson planning instruction and opportunities for additional certification (project wet, wild).
   The preparation through the many different placements.
   Being able to be in an elementary school classroom for the entire two years. This was great and I gained much needed experience. The variety of placements.
   Being able to experience many different grade levels.
Host teachers were very willing to allow me to complete my assignments within her classroom, and very welcoming.
I never felt that I was on my own. I could always go to my host teacher for help and especially my mentor leader.
Working together as a cohort gave needed support in times of stress.
Staying with the same group was a benefit.
Senior year is so much more involvement in classroom.
The great ability to student teach and hands on the school.
The relationships we made.
Feedback -- All of my professors and teachers provided me with feedback to let me know how I may continue to improve.
The course work and classes were all setup for us.
Being able to see a variety of teaching styles (host teachers).
I liked having a mentor leader the whole two years. It was nice to have someone to turn to I knew would probably know how to help.
Supportive environment.
Ms. Warren was a mentor leader who has high expectations of her students and this was good because it makes you be better prepared.
Collaboration with other cohort students.
The majority of the classes are extremely valuable to teaching learning. Provide you with a wealth of information that is very useful.
Being able to work with a variety of cohort members, professors, and school teachers.
Taking the behavior management course.
Opportunities and advice on how to plan and implement units of instruction.
Being able to experience different counties and school systems
I learned many ways and strategies to become an effective teacher.
Having a mentor leader to support you.
Some of the classes we took including some of the projects we created.
Knowledge -- I learned how to teach to the needs of diverse learners.
I liked the yearly cohort schedule. The way our classes and placements worked out well.
Preparation for professionalism in the classroom and everywhere, including the interview process.
Teachers and professors very will to help you in any way they can.
Support from the dean.

2. **There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better. They were:**

More communication between the mentor leader, host teacher and myself.
We had many classes with more than one teacher. These courses always seemed not organized and planned.
Relevance of classroom work to field placements.
More information on the Special education students and the actual referral process.
More communication between college professors and students.
They classes could relate better to the areas that are expected, when you become a teacher. It seems that GCSU classes are not balanced with the field based placements.
The organization of some of the classes could have been better.
I felt some things were redundant maybe instead of doing things 2 or 3 times, we could have tried new things.
I felt like some of the courses in arts and science were not related enough to my needs as a prospective teacher. The professors for these courses were not aware of my needs as a prospective teacher.
Not so much busy work, many of the assignments were similar to previous assignments. I felt like it was just busy work. Fewer number of classes while student teaching. I am currently taking seven. I would have hoped to focus more on experience in classroom rather than on requirements for these 7 classes. Having the same classes with the same people for two years straight. More feedback while we are in the schools. I was only visited once this semester and it was by someone who doesn't know me at all. Allowing more time to experience day-to-day classroom activities and eliminating the worries of the class work and from seven classes. Make the exceptional children's class meet more often. I would really like to know more about special education than the class provided. Having all assignments known before going in to the schools. At times there were many assignments that were given to us last minute and it is hard to work in while teaching. Math courses -- would be more useful if they were directed at teaching cohort students how to teach math effectively. The mentor leaders should make it clear to principals that we are not in the schools to be used as paraprofessionals, but to experience "teacher" situations, not to used as a paraprofessionals. I wish the same evaluations would have been used throughout the whole two years that would have been a more comparable representation of our progress. Lack of organization at times and not very often. The math professors are extremely hard to learn from, but I realize that the education department cannot control this. Things could have been explained better as far as expectations for assignments. It seemed like we learned expectations after we turned in assignments and saw the rubric. Learning how to write lesson plans out the long way is wonderful but once you get the hang of it continuing to write them this way is overkill and time consuming. Time is something you don't have a lot of when in the cohort. I feel as if the math classes we took were not appropriate for preparing us for the grade levels we will teach. Organization and structure among assignments and deadlines. I don't like how there were some students that would turn their work in late, not show up for placement and they would still make a better grade. Taking assessment class prior to senior year. More specific strategies for teaching students concepts they have difficulty with (reading, science, spec. math skills). They could prepare me more for the Praxis II. There were only volunteer things that were given this did not help at all. Some of the course could have been related to the classroom, so the knowledge that we learned could be used in the classroom. Some of the course, such as the management course, should have come much sooner in the program. Some classes were very unorganized! I would suggest better preparation. Being in the schools and also having a major load of work to do and turn in for college. Less course work while in our field placement so we can focus more on our class. Make some of the projects more relevant to classroom. More mentor leader support while in the placement room. Some of the classes that are offered during the cohort time do not benefit the cohort students. Example: Children's literature class. I had (as well as most of my peers) had a lot of trouble with some of the professors, one in particular. Little was done to improve the situation. Having more than one professor for a course tends to cause problems with communication among the faculty and students.
The math class we took seemed to have nothing to do with teaching us how to be effective teachers. Dr. Sander does not know how to "bring things down to our level" -- the level of elementary school teachers.
Some of the assignments seem to be more "busy work" than they are of any relevance to the courses or the classroom. There are too many projects!
A lot of the professors made our projects be done all at once. I think I would have done better if they had been spaced out.
Some of the courses within the program were meaningless where we did not learn things that can be taken back to the classroom such as the math course.
Changing the course description of the children's lit. class.
The instructors, everyone who teaches should be aware of all of the works that is given to the cohort they should not treat the class as if it is the only class that the cohort has.
This last semester I felt like my mentor leader did not give our group the attention and support that we needed.
Relevant classes to major. Some classes had no relevance to our major.
At some points (in my last semester) I felt used at my school that I was doing my student teaching. Making expectations more clear.
Learning about phonics -- I do not feel prepared to teach this area.
Have communication with principals at placement schools. Often this last semester I felt I was being used. I was substituting for other classes and being asked to monitor testing when I was student teaching.
The assessment course needed more meat to the class. I feel like my knowledge came from other classes and not this one.
Eliminate taking classes on top of student teaching. During other placements it is fine, but student teaching is a time to focus on teaching not on trying to complete course work.
Cohort leader could have visited the classroom more than 3 times during my student teaching.
Special Education

There were 19 special education initial preparation candidates majoring in interrelated special education with Rosemary Jackson as Mentor Leader. All of Dr. Jackson’s preservice teachers rated their field-based program aspects very high (89% positive and above).

Figure 23 – Dr. Jackson, Special Education Cohort, Main Campus

2002 Cohort Ratings of How would you Rate Your Skills as a Beginning Teacher Right Now?

Figure 24 – Ratings of Field-based Cohort Program Aspects for Special Education
Dr. Jackson, Special Education (Interrelated Mild Disabilities) Cohort

WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

I. There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

Having several types of placements. Since there were different types of disabilities and grades, it allowed to get a better understanding of what I want to teach.
The collaboration we participated in our cohort among other colleges as well as with other cohorts. Preparing me to go out into the public school system and know the laws, acronyms, and information that is valuable.
Being able to collaborate with other students.
The help and support of a mentor. I really liked the fact that I knew there was always someone to answer my questions.
The support we received from our mentor leader and her willingness to help us and be available for us.
Hours in field -- I have a real feel for what a classroom is going to do for life.
Field based experience was excellent.
Having a mentor leader that knew our personalities strengths and weaknesses and worked to improve us.
Field-based experiences in different schools.
Field-based placements prepared me for my own classroom.
Exposure to a variety of grade levels and disabilities within the schools.
Learning how to reflect and use it as a learning tool for myself and the benefits of my students.
The in-depth examination of laws and litigation related to special education.
The amount of placement experience I received prior to my student teaching.
I learned so much from spending over 1000 hours in field placement.
Repetition of preparing the lessons.
Having a wide variety of guest speakers to give different perspectives about subjects discussing in class.
The information given to us to better us as teachers.
The way my mentor leader encouraged me. There were times when I was ready to quit but she encouraged me and helped me make it.
The abundance of field-based experiences we were involved in.
Creating lesson plans to keep the students involved and bring them to a higher level of learning.
The bond we form in the cohort.
The use of counselor to help us relieve stress during group sessions.
The amount of time we spent in our placements and the experience we gained from these.
Spending so much time in field placements has made us comfortable in the classroom.
Assignments and projects that called for collaboration with my classmates.
Working together with other cohorts to learn how to use collaboration effectively.
Bonding of classmates was excellent. Such a diverse group.
Learning to love literacy and knowing how to get my future students to enjoy it as well.
The efforts of the cohort leader to unite the cohort as a group.
The small size of my cohort.
The professors were always ready and available to assist you.
Collaborating with other cohorts.
Numerous placements in various counties and grades levels.
The support we received from our peers and mentors.
Having to do so many lesson plans. By having to do several lesson plans, I feel ready to do them in my classroom.
The support given to me from our mentor/cohort leader.
Preparing me to teach students with all disabilities.
The collaboration with different cohorts.
This program prepares us for the job. We see what teaching truly is and do not live in the ideal world.
The ability to stay in the same classroom our entire senior year.
Advice from mentor leader and other professors.
Having a mentor leader that was always there to guide and direct me in anyway needed.
Engagement of classmates with projects.
The outstanding exposure to the "real world" classroom.
The time and energy put into my education by Dr. Jackson.
The atmosphere in the school of education is very caring, warm, and relaxed.
Hands-on activities to help me learn by doing mock IEP, SST, etc.

2. There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better.
   They were:

   Having more collaboration experience. I do not feel I had a lot of experience with this area.
The content subjects that are supposed to teach us how to teach those subjects could have more relevance to the teaching aspect.
Preparing us for the Praxis. I think the students should be required to take a Praxis class. A lot of people seem to fail one part.
Having assignment that are required to be administered in our placement earlier to allow better planning.
The management of time during the two years. Some semesters felt like there was little to do while others were hectic.
Better placements -- being able to go to a county of my choice.
The social studies class was good but if it could be done at a different time because it is hard to do all those assignment and focus on student teaching.
During student teaching, I feel the workload from your classes should be lessened or maybe simplified because it is hard to concentrate on your student teaching when there also assignments and projects that you have to be just as concerned about. Many of my classmates expressed the same concerns.
The organization of classes meaning when the classes are taught within the program.
Not having to rush through classes and assignments.
Better collaboration between instructors so special education cohort students will know (in the future) what is expected of as well and in a timely manner.
The fact that this program all but eliminates non-traditional students, means that there are some really great teacher out there who can't go to school because of the time commitment that the cohort demands.
More time should be focused on courses at the senior level. So much concern is placed on field experience, therefore, some courses are crammed in.
I felt as if my senior semester could be arranged differently. I felt as if during my student teaching I could not give them 100% because of all the little projects that were required.
Mentor leader saw me teach two times. Would have preferred more visits from mentor leader.
Being able to see the cohort more. When returning to campus, we felt out of touch.
I don't feel it was necessary to give as much busy work to us especially during our student teaching. I felt I could've given more to my students.
Don't give such petty work. Some of the work that was given seemed a little too time consuming and not very practical.
Having assignments better fit our placement so we don't have to take instructional time away from the class Ex: (social studies lessons in a Math and Language resource room).
Taking classes during student teaching. I was having to teach lessons for my class instead of teaching in my own style.
More content area classes.
I would like a class to help us learn how to safely restrain a child and other safety issues.
A greater concentration on content.
Having some semesters with very little to do and other that were filled with things.
I bought several textbooks that I never opened. If we don't need textbooks, we shouldn't have to buy them.
Collaborating with other cohorts but we need to all be able to see what they have to go through because it is not the same. There is a jealous vibe between them all.
Some classes were rushed. Didn't receive as much instruction as wanted. Mentor leader could have managed classes better to cut down on excessive talking and chasing rabbits.
I feel there should be more collaboration with other cohorts other than the three classes we took with each other.
Don't take so much time (all day) on meetings and group decisions.
More diverse range of disabilities covered. Autism, MI, MO etc… I feel I only learned about BD, CD and ADHD.
Behavior management needs to be covered better.
The independent study course could be more relaxed. I was unsure of what was expected of me.
Better preparation of classroom management is needed.
Some classes I felt like the answers were given to me for test. Ex. Each student emailing a guest for answer for the test. Just memorizing facts. I did not learn the material.
Health and Physical Education Program Ratings

There were seven respondents from this cohort with Dr. Campbell. The program is in the School of Health Sciences.

**Figure 25 – Dr. Campbell, Health & Physical Education Cohort, Main Campus**

**2002 Cohort Ratings of How would you Rate Your Skills as a Beginning Teacher Right Now?**

![Skill Ratings Chart]

Core courses are problematic. Only two of the seven students took their core courses here. Those two both rated their core classes as only Fair.
WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

   We did a lot of practicum hours which was good because we were in a lot of different schools. In most of our classes we actually taught the lessons. Dr. Block was a great help as well as Dr. Martino. These two teachers are very knowledgeable about their area of study. Helpful and knowledgeable faculty members who were always there to help out any way that was needed. Going to several schools in all grade levels in different school programs. They were always available and responded promptly when needed. I liked the direction that the program is going with the mentorship program. The health sciences professors were great. The classes we took and the way they were taught really transferred to the schools easily. We were given the opportunity to work with different age groups and in many schools systems. Support and help from Dr. Campbell (my advisor) was tremendous. They gave you everything you needed to know and some more. The teachers are very knowledgeable and willing to help.

2. There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better. They were:

   I don't know because I had a really great experience here. No coaching classes or prep at all and most of us will end up teaching a sport at some time. Dr. Campbell had no clue how to teach motor development -- get a new teacher. Also she was not very helpful. More emphasis on coaching and strength and conditioning for HPERD major. More emphasis on discipline techniques.

   I wish there had been better communication between the department and the students.
Music Education Program Ratings

There were four respondents from this small cohort with Dr. Tolbert in the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

**Figure 27 – Dr. Tolbert, Music Education Cohort, Main Campus**

2002 Cohort Ratings of How would you Rate Your Skills as a Beginning Teacher Right Now?

![Graph showing skill ratings for various teaching skills such as planning lessons, asking questions, diverse learners, etc.]

**Figure 28 – Ratings of Field-based Cohort Program Aspects for Music Education**

![Graph showing ratings for aspects like mentor leader, make connections, field experiences, etc.]
1. There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

   The close work with local schools leading to special attention to individuals.
   Music history was excellent and difficult.
   Individual attention from teachers due to small classes.
   Any class that Dr. Tolbert or Dr. Hendley taught me they are both thoroughly knowledgeable and have sincere desire to produce excellent new teachers.
   Excellent classroom preparation and school environment preparation.
   My voice teacher was like a second mother.
   Professors with excellent knowledge and guiding capabilities.
   The environment socially was very nice.

2. There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better. They were:

   Not enough attention to technology in the classroom
   I had real trouble with sight reading and ear training stress. It took me a long time to relax about the issue.
   Praxis II preparation.
   It would be great if there was a professor designated specifically for student teacher observations, preferably one with classroom experience.
   No classes were offered on how to repair instruments.
   I was required to take way too many fluff classes. Many of them were a complete waste of time. It took me five years instead of four because of this.
   More accommodations to commuters and non-traditional students.
   Not enough emphasis on the financial and bookkeeping aspect of teaching.
   I was always unclear of exactly what I was required to do in order to graduate. I still am.