

Tale of a Two-Year Initial Teacher Education Program Expansion: Examining the Development, Implementation, and Outcomes of One Ontario Program

WHAT WILL WE LEARN?

The Ontario government's legislated changes in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) took effect in 2015, whereby the "enhanced" (Ontario College of Teachers, 2014) ITE program moves from a two to a four-semester program, and includes a longer practicum and additional accreditation requirements within core content areas. This mixed-methods study explores the evolution of the University of Ontario Institute of Technology's ITE program and will answer the question: **How does one faculty of education in Ontario (re)develop and implement an ITE program as required under Ontario legislative changes and Ontario College of Teachers accreditation requirements to provide a strong(er) foundation in the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for teaching in the 21st century?** To answer this complex question, this research takes a multiphase case study approach whereby data from faculty, students, and documentation review will provide for a thick and rich description of the phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 1998). This poster shares one aspect of the study, specifically data from students in the ITE program. Students in the ITE program provided consent for the use of course materials, field experience results and for their participation in focus groups so that the researchers could examine their skills, knowledge, and attitudes using the learning to teach framework (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007) as a framework for analyzing student success. This study will eventually also track the students once they graduate and enter their next career or academic phase. This research will identify successes and challenges to not only enhance student learning but to inform program development. Specifically, this poster shares how this one phase of the research will:

Determine teacher candidates' learning in the new ITE program

Identify aspects of the enhanced ITE program that augment beginning teachers' growth and development for teaching in the 21st century, from various internal stakeholders' perspectives

Examine teacher candidates' assignment results with their final marks, field experience results, and feedback to determine some factors that promoted success as a "student" in the program and as a "teacher" in the classroom field experience.

Based on the individual instructor's foci, determine through a review of course outlines and teacher candidates' assignments, the strengths, challenges, and successes within the context of the course.

BACKGROUND

The Ontario government's legislated changes in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) take effect in 2015, whereby the "enhanced" (Ontario College of Teachers, 2014) ITE program moves from a two to a four-semester program, and includes a longer practicum and additional accreditation requirements within core content areas.

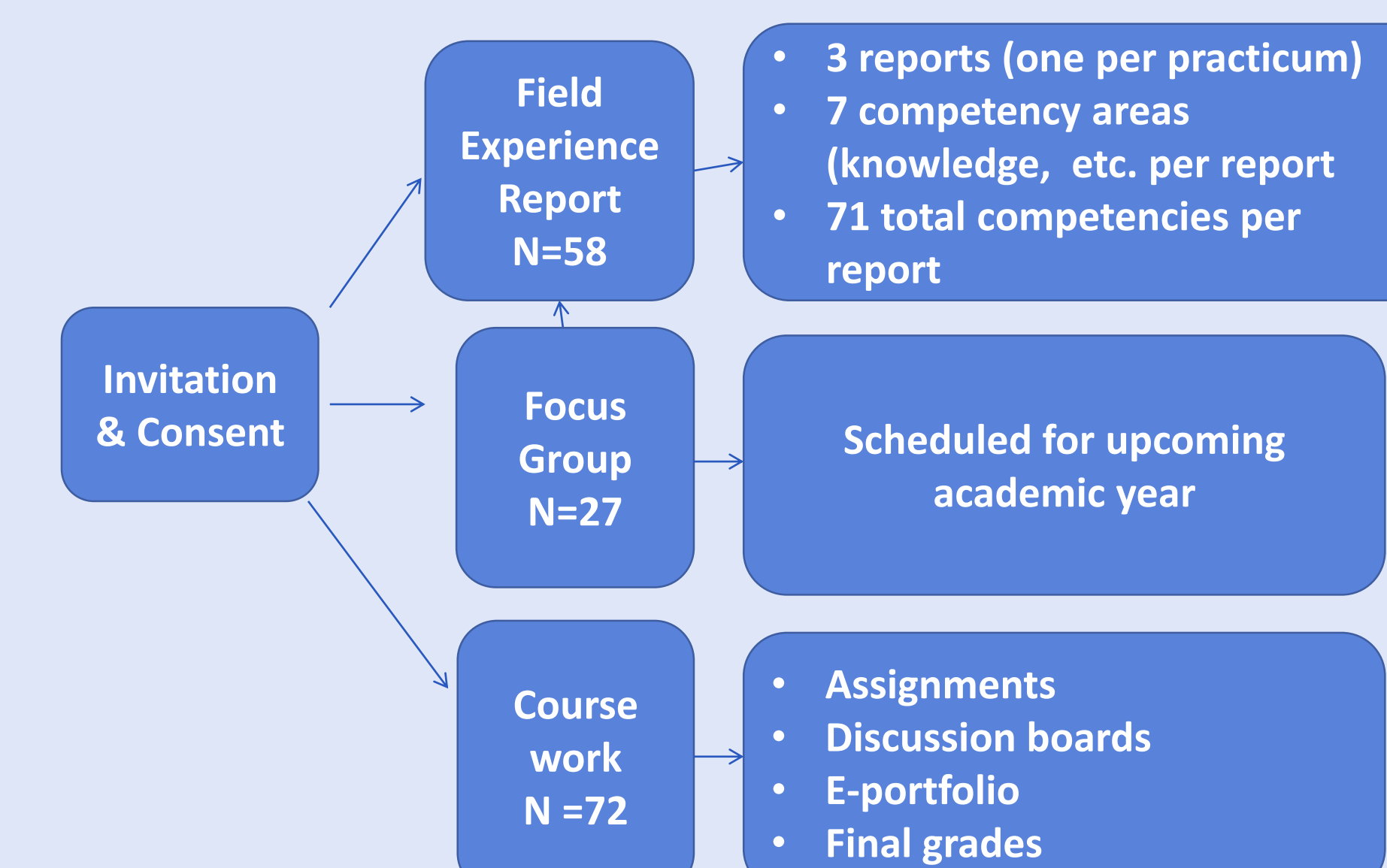
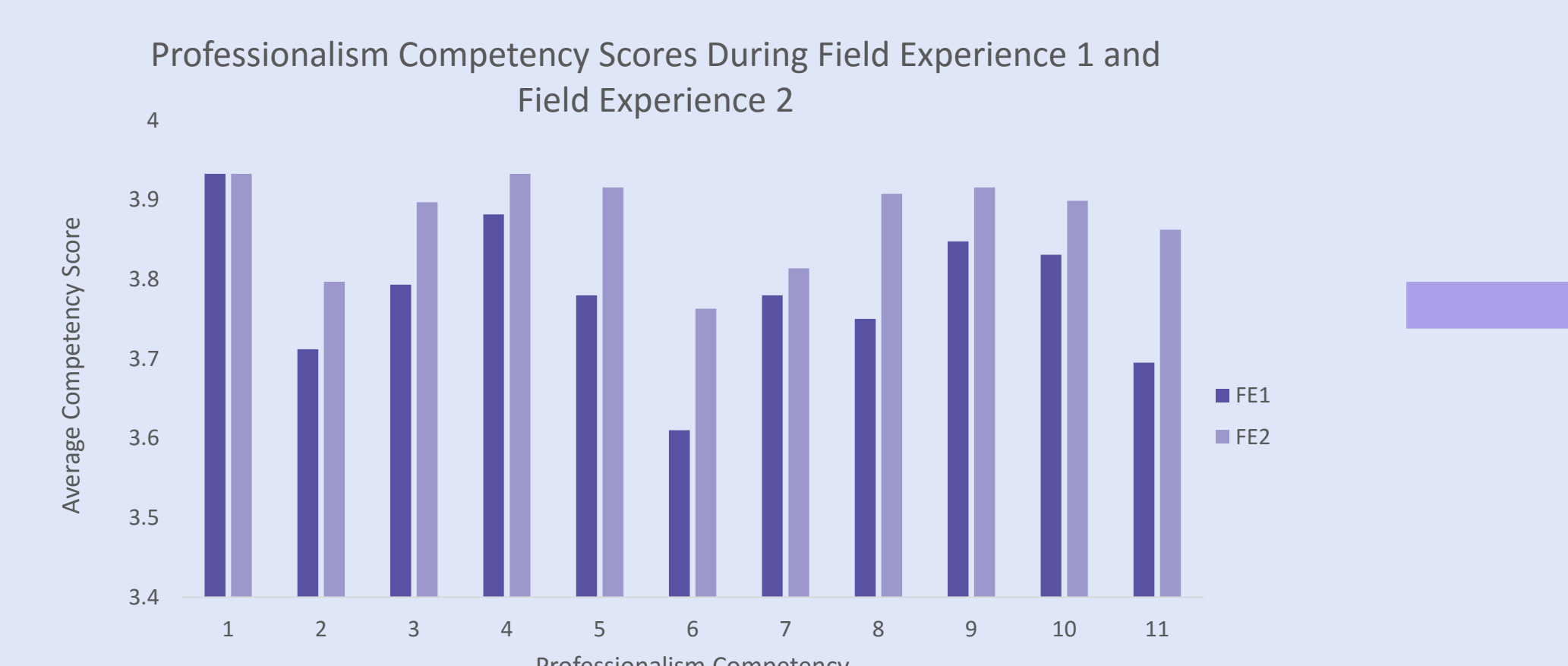
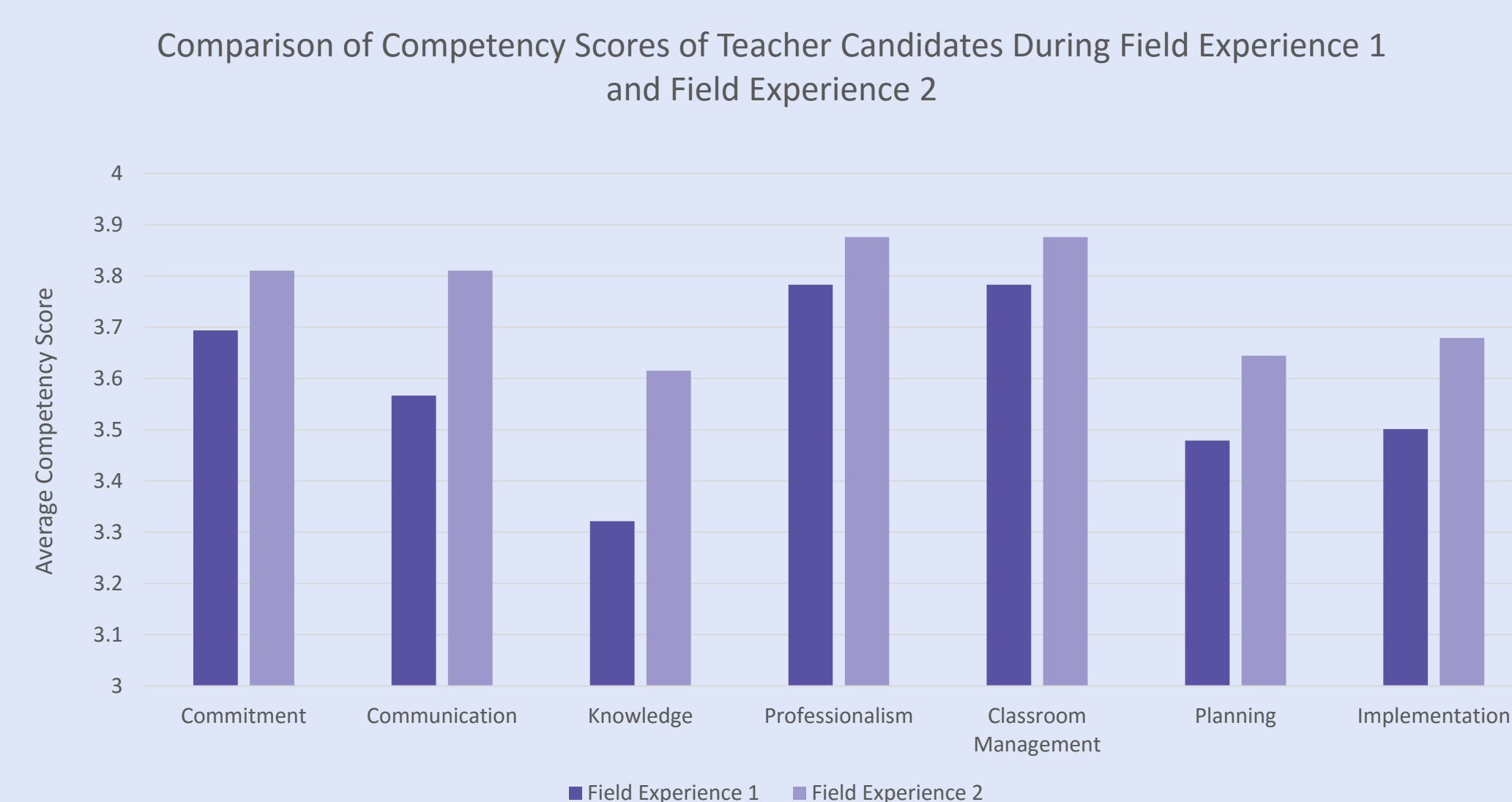
Using the research question as a guide, this research takes a case study approach, drawing upon the work of Stake (1995), Yin (2003), and Merriam (1998) as a guide. A case study allows for a thick and rich description of the phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 1998) in a manner that maintains and portrays "holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin, 2003, p.2). A case study is "specific, a complex, functioning thing" (Stake, 1995, p. 2) such as a person, a group of people, or an "innovative program" (Stake, 1995, p. 2), whereby the "distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena" (Yin, 2003, p. 2). There is a strong need for in-depth case studies on exemplary ITE programs in Canada, as well as the need for long-term studies to examine how ITE programs influence their graduates' teaching and learning (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008).

This research is based on the notion that the central goal of ITE programs is to provide teacher candidates (TCs) with a solid foundation of education, skills and learning upon which to build further teaching practice to enhance K-12 student learning experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Thus examining and understanding the challenges and benefits of this program will bring forward recommendations to improve the ITE to ensure that the K-12 student learning experiences are stronger.

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PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF FIELD EXPERIENCE REPORTS



C. KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCY				
The Teacher Candidate:				
1. demonstrates mastery of Ontario curriculum specific to grade and subject areas (i.e. content knowledge)	1	2	3	4
2. demonstrates knowledge of scaffolding, appropriate to student needs	1	2	3	4
3. demonstrates knowledge of diverse instructional and assessment methods (i.e. pedagogical knowledge)	1	2	3	4
4. demonstrates knowledge of subject specific instructional methods (i.e. pedagogical content knowledge)	1	2	3	4
5. demonstrates an understanding of learners, their learning, and development	1	2	3	4
6. demonstrates awareness of social contexts	1	2	3	4

D. PROFESSIONALISM COMPETENCY				
The Teacher Candidate:				
1. dresses and grooms appropriately	1	2	3	4
2. demonstrates punctuality (e.g. submits lesson plans on time, completing assignments, returning resources, arrives on time as per direction of Associate Teacher)	1	2	3	4
3. attends to duties (with the Associate Teacher) for the duration of the activity (e.g. this duty, lunch duty, yard duty)	1	2	3	4
4. engages in respectful and professional relationships and interactions with students, colleagues, parents, and other community members	1	2	3	4
5. accepts and assimilates constructive feedback in a positive manner	1	2	3	4
6. shows initiative (e.g., demonstrates leadership qualities, demonstrates helpfulness without prompting, participates in extra activities)	1	2	3	4
7. volunteers assistance when needed (e.g., assist Associate Teacher or students)	1	2	3	4
8. attends professional development activities and staff/department meetings with Associate Teacher	1	2	3	4
9. upholds the Ontario College of Teachers Standards of Practice and Ethical Standards	1	2	3	4
10. demonstrates openness to new and diverse perspectives of teaching and learning	1	2	3	4
11. engages in ongoing reflective practice informed by research to foster professional growth	1	2	3	4

