Early Educator Preparation Program Collaborative Meeting Minutes
May 5th 2017 8:30-11:30am SH 106

8:30-9:00am  Welcome, Breakfast, and Introductions
Special thank you to our Lurie College of Education Interim Dean and Associate Dean, the Department of Child and Adolescent Development Chair, and the Student Success Center Coordinator and Specialist.

Brief introduction and discussion of the Early Educator Preparation Program goal to “offer ongoing support for prospective, pre-service, and practicing early childhood educators”.

9:00-9:15am  Large Group Discussion: Values and Objectives of Early Educator Preparation Programs
What is our vision and mission for early childhood care and education?
appropriate student-to-adult ratios | developmentally appropriate practice | child advocacy | contribution to society and science public appreciation and respect for the profession | strength- or asset-based mode!

As future early childhood educators, what do our students need to know/know how to do to achieve this mission?
patience | respect for diversity | empathy | academic knowledge and background | higher-order thinking | parent engagement communication skills | self-advocacy | an ability to articulate and apply knowledge about child development professionalism and professional vocabulary

9:15-10:00am  Small Group Discussion: Developing an Action Plan
Group 1: Commitment
Students need to take responsibility and initiative. Students should be encouraged to explore and evaluate their commitment to the field. Opportunities for exposure and experience are offered through Service Learning assignments, but Service Learning assignments are difficult for students and students tend to avoid them if possible.

Possible Action Item: Include Service Learning as part of the transfer requirement.

Possible Action Item: Develop a plan to ensure that student receive accurate and consistent information from academic advisors/counselors.

Possible Action Item: Develop additional activities to illustrate the importance of professionalism and commitment.

Group 2: Social Emotional Development and Support
Students lack instruction and support throughout their own development. Students need to learn about their own biases and develop appropriate emotional language in order to facilitate children’s development. Opportunities for learning include self-reflection and activities to help students understand others that can be integrated throughout college curriculum.

Possible Action Item: Develop additional curricular activities that help students understand themselves and their own social and emotional development.

Group 3: Communication and Relationship Building
How can we help students develop skills to engage in productive parent communication? Some community colleges offer courses to develop these skills whereas others have very few opportunities to provide such experiences because students are working full time and taking classes at night.

Possible Action Item: Develop opportunities for students who are working full time to engage in parent outreach and communication.

Group 4: Professionalism
Students must learn what professionalism in the early childhood workplace looks like. This should be introduced and modeled by instructors.

Possible Action Item: Creating opportunities for student/pre-service teachers to engage in professional development activities and professional networks.
A Side Note: Family or Home-Based Centers
How do we support students interested in starting their own home-based center?

*Possible Action Item:* Develop coursework and identify curricular pathways to build administrative skills unique to this career path.

10:00-10:45am Small Group Discussion: Supporting Students

*How are our programs supporting the following groups of students?*

**Group 1: Returning to College**
*Imagine you are an adult with a BA in software engineering. You have been working in the tech industry for 10 years but you’re ready for a change. You’d like to earn your child development permit and pursue a career in early education but you have not taken any courses in child development.*

*Challenges:* Difficult and unclear how to advise these students.

*Possible Solutions:* Develop a clear pathway for these students to move forward in their educational trajectory. Encourage students to explore the field before committing to the career. Create a student group/cohort who share this experience/background/trajectory.

**Group 2: English Language Learner**
*Imagine you immigrated to the US just before you entered high school. You recently graduated from high school but continue to struggle with English. You enroll at a nearby college to earn a child development permit and pursue a career in early childhood.*

*Challenges:* Many ELL students pursue only the minimum permit because they are self-conscious about their language skills. Students do not pursue available opportunities for ESL support because it is not required.

*Possible Solutions:* Faculty and advisor support and incentive to pursue ESL support. Providing additional opportunities to practice English language skills (specific to interactions with children and parents) to develop confidence. Highlight other second language speakers in the field who can serve as a model for these students. Develop a curriculum for all students, but include a targeted approach for ELLs.

**Group 3: Working Full- or Part-Time**
*Imagine you are a student who works over 30 hours a week at a job with unpredictable shift schedules. Your current job is unrelated to your anticipated career in early education but you rely on this income to support your family.*

*Challenges:* Carving out time to engage in observation and field work.

*Possible Solutions:* Partnering with daycare and school sites that are open late and on weekends. Offer online courses that are supplemented with weekend classes. Fund mini-scholarships to cover lost wages. Provide child-care for full-time parents.

10:45-11:30am Individual Reflection and Group Share: Establishing Consistency

*With regards to offering a consistent and predictable student experience across colleges and universities, what is working well and what can we improve?*

**What is working well?**
Faculty advising (within the department); student experiences (through practica, observations, etc.); CAP 8 alignment; faculty engagement and reflection (followed by revision and improvement to courses).

**What is going okay?**
Communication, collaboration, and consistency across colleges; mutual appreciation and understanding across colleges; more practical experience followed by meaningful reflection; clearer expectations for student workload; more advising on BA and MA trajectories at the community college level; availability of ECE courses and student networking

**What needs work?**
More available practica experiences for students; more consistency in support across 4-year and 2-year colleges; more practical application and self-reflection; encouraging students to go beyond the 12 unit certificate; academic freedom in relation to CAP 8 courses.