

Beginning Teachers Study: The Development of Inclusive Practice



Issue 2 || Summer 2016



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What Is the Beginning Teachers Study?

Classrooms singularly create possibilities for Canadian society to shape the values of the next generation. By including and valuing all members of the classroom, educators can foster caring communities that appreciate the unique contributions and diversity of all people. The **Beginning Teachers Study** brings a variety of scholars from multiple disciplines related to education (i.e., equity and diversity, human rights, advocacy, disability studies, and special education) across Canada to collaborate on the important issue of creating competent and confident teachers for the inclusive classroom. In addition, we will provide a high-quality research training experience for students in faculties of education across the country and put the findings into the hands of those who can act on them (educators and policy-makers).



What We Are Studying

We are interested in the self-efficacy, beliefs, and instructional practices of beginning teachers, identifying the factors that shape their development over time and in the context of their initial teaching experiences. Our intent is to follow beginning teachers throughout their teacher preparation program and beyond into their first years of teaching to determine how new teachers develop their practice to teach in our increasingly diverse classrooms.

What We Have Done

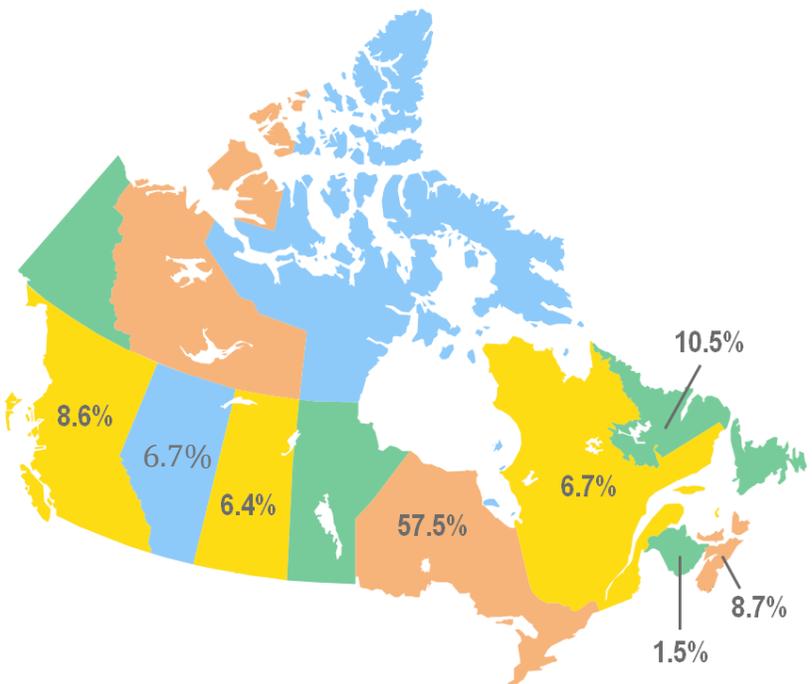
To date, we have collected surveys from 1093 teacher candidates from 11 faculties of education across Canada. Thank you to all that have participated and to those of you who have agreed to continue with this research study as you develop your practice.

Teaching Resources

Inclusive Education Canada at:
www.inclusiveeducation.ca

Universal Design for Learning at:
www.threeblockmodel.com

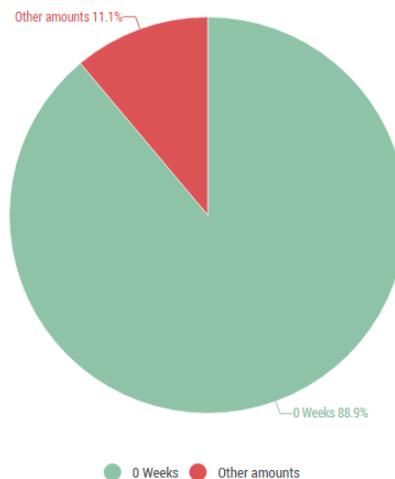
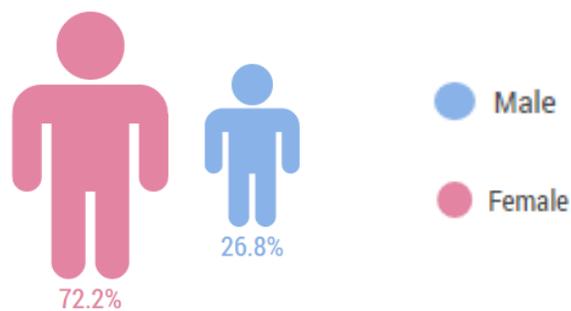
Differentiated Instruction from Edugains.ca at:
www.edugains.ca/newsite/di/index.html



Percentage of participants in each province across Canada

What We Have Found

Because we are in year 1 of the study, we have only been able to get a broad understanding of who has participated in the research. We have a good mix of grades that our participants intend to teach in with about 54% at the elementary level and 46% at the secondary level. Gender demographics are as follows: 72% of our sample identifies as female; 27% identifies as male; and 1% identifies as other or did not complete this section. In terms of prior experience teaching diverse learners, 33% indicated no experience; 32% indicated 1-30 days, and 34% indicated more than 30 days. Interestingly, many more indicate personal experience with diverse learners. Only 7% indicated that they didn't have any personal experience with diverse learners, while 58% indicated moderate or extensive experience.



Weeks on Practicum (at time of initial survey)



Personal Experience With Diverse Learners

What's Next?

We will survey a new group of incoming teacher candidates during the 2016-2017 academic year. For those who began in 2015, we will send an invitation through email to participate in a second round of surveys. This continual sampling will show us whether self-efficacy and beliefs change as preservice teachers progress through their teacher education. In addition to the surveys, we will invite a random sample of beginning teachers from each participating university to spend about 30 minutes talking to us about their experiences to date in shaping their practice for inclusive classrooms.

Thank you again for your support in this project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the principal investigator, Dr. Jacqueline Specht at jspecht@uwo.ca.

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