



Winter 2012

Watson School of Education

# First Years of Teaching Newsletter

## Impact of Poverty on Learning by Dr. Susan Catapano



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**Have you registered to be a part of the First Years of Teaching Support Program? Check us out on the web:**

**[www.uncw.edu/ed/teach1](http://www.uncw.edu/ed/teach1)**

Each semester, students at UNCW get to see what it *might* be like to live in poverty. The Poverty Simulation, developed by the Missouri Association for Community Action, gives participants an opportunity to learn about the day-to-day realities of life with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress (2012). Faculty in the Watson School of Education (WSE) wrote a small grant to purchase the simulation in 2010 and so far, have offered it to over 800 students and teachers in six schools in New Hanover County. Collaboration with UNCW's Nursing and Social Work programs add another dimension to the simulation and debrief that follows each two-hour session.

Poverty is on the rise. The US Census Bureau reports that North Carolina has seen a 32% increase in poverty for individuals between 2000 and 2009. A report from the Institute for Emerging Issues at North Carolina State University notes that, "North Carolina is one of eleven states with the largest number of rural children living in poverty. One in five children in rural North Carolina, nearly 42,000 total, are

considered to be living in poverty. That's 26.4% of all individuals living in poverty in North Carolina. There are only five states — Texas, Kentucky, Georgia, Mississippi and Missouri — with a higher percentage of rural children living in poverty." Many new teachers find themselves assigned to a rural or urban school with a majority of their students living in poverty.

The Poverty Simulation requires participants to role-play a variety of real-life situations that families living in poverty face everyday. Up to 70 participants are grouped in families that include single, elderly people living alone to single mothers to large families with disabled members. Each family must figure out how to provide food, shelter and other basic necessities for their members during four, 15-minute weeks, while interacting with various community resources staffed by volunteers. The simulation is not a game and the atmosphere of the room quickly shifts from nervous excitement to desperate despair as family members struggle to survive from week-to-week in a system that does not always support their

needs. During the debrief participants share powerful reflections about their frustrations and the realization of how difficult it is for families living in poverty to survive. Suddenly, the perspective shifts from "they should just try harder" to "I tried so hard and then I just wanted to give up."

Faculty in the WSE hope this simulation will better prepare their students to help the children and families they will encounter as classroom teachers to access community resources. Faculty point out the priorities of families living in poverty may not be the homework assignment or field trip that requires additional money. Rather, families need teachers to recognize the impact living in poverty may have on their child's education and success.

### REFERENCES

Institute for Emerging Issues. (2012). Poverty on the rise in North Carolina. Retrieved from <http://www.ncsu.edu/iei/index.php/poverty-on-the-rise-in-nc>.

Missouri Association for Community Action. (2012). The Poverty Simulation. Retrieved from <http://communityaction.org/Poverty%20Simulation.aspx#>.



**UNCW First Years of Teaching Support Program**

## Beginning Teacher Professional Development Day

On February 24, 2012, over 70 beginning teachers gathered in the Watson School of Education at UNCW to take part in this year's second Beginning Teacher Professional Development Day.

Session topics ranged from Using Games to Enhance Classroom Instruction to Infusing Arts for Engaging Learners. Presenters also shared ways to Build the Classroom Library with Culturally Relevant Children's Literature and how to Choose Choice to Challenge Children's Achievement.

The final Beginning Teacher Professional Development Day is scheduled for April 20, 2012. The day will feature the presentations of this year's 12 Promise of Leadership Award recipients. Topics will include Strategies for Struggling Readers, Discovery Learning in Science, Arts Integration and many more! POL recipients will also be formally recognized on this day for their success and contribution to this year's sessions. BTs can still register for the final session! Visit <http://www.uncw.edu/ed/teach1/>



FYTSP beginning teacher snapping a QR code during the technology session.

## 1,244 Teachers Achieve National Boards in 2011

In December, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards announced the 2011 class of National Board Certified Teachers. NC maintains the highest number of National Board Certified Teachers in the country, gaining 1,244 in 2011 for a total of

19, 193. NB Certification is a rigorous 10-part performance assessment that includes video portfolios, analysis of classroom practice and evaluation of content knowledge. While the certification is for veteran teachers who have at least three years of experience,

there is a *Take One!* option for educators at all levels. *Take One!* is professional development organized around the National Board's professional teaching standards and core propositions. Teachers prepare and submit one pre-selected portfolio entry from their

certification area. The entry is scored and a teacher can later transfer the score if he/she decides to pursue National Board Certification. For more information, go to [http://nbpts.org/products\\_and\\_services/take\\_one1](http://nbpts.org/products_and_services/take_one1)

## Considering a Graduate Program?

The Watson School of Education offers a Master's Degree (M.Ed.) in Elementary Education, Curriculum/Instruction Supervision, Language and Literacy Education, Middle Grades Education, and Secondary Education. The programs in these areas address the need for conceptual and procedural foundations for decision-making and for specific alternatives within the stu-

dent's area of professional practice. The M.Ed. programs address the North Carolina Masters/Advanced Competencies requirements. Designed for individuals who have "A" level teaching licenses.

Watson also offers a Master of Science degree (M.S.) in Instructional Technology. The program focuses upon the applica-

tion of research and best practices in instructional technology. The courses provide a balance of product development and utilization of technology with theoretical basis for design, development, implementation, and evaluation of educational and training programs. The program is designed for individuals seeking

advanced technology training.

To obtain further information about any of our graduate programs, including the doctoral program in Educational Leadership, visit: [http://www.uncw.edu/ed/degree\\_grad.html](http://www.uncw.edu/ed/degree_grad.html)

