Trust Your Team: Our Journey to Embed Social and Emotional Learning in a Teacher Education Program Focused on Social Justice

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Abstract

This case describes one university's journey to embed social, emotional, and cultural learning (SEC) deeply into a three-semester combined multiple-subject credential and MA program centered on social justice. The authors describe stages of program development and point to key anchor competencies they believe essential for be-

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ginning teachers and critical to enabling them to teach social-emotional learning skills in culturally sustaining classrooms. The authors describe course activities, readings and assessments and the development of "throughlines" connecting key concepts and essential practices across courses, concluding with the challenges of integrating the many theories that inform this work.

Introduction

> Every year my family gathers for a exuberant game of charades. No quote is out of bounds and newcomers to the game quickly learn to recite the mantra "Trust your team;" within the group someone will be able to take the idea and run with it. As we wrote this article, I recalled my daughter, saddled with acting out an obscure concept from biology: "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" (the development of the fetus traces the development of the species). She was saved by the combined insights of Grandma (who continues to believe all children should learn Latin), her ability to reenact a hatching fish, and the historical insight of the emerging biologist on her team. This vignette captures two ideas that ground our story—first, the importance of trusting the diverse talents of your team, and second, the biogenetic premise of a slow and wondrous development from the simple to the magnificently complex.
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This case study is a story of our attempts to organically yet systematically embed social-emotional and cultural learning in all its complexity within a fifth year combined Masters and multiple subject teacher preparation program. Our story offers insights to other universities contemplating similar systemic curricular change.

The history of school reform documents a trail of failed reform movements that neglected to include teachers in their conceptualization (Cuban, 1993). As programs designed to embed social-emotional learning (SEL) in schools proliferate (Dusenbury, et al., 2011) research suggests that SEL integration should focus on developing teachers' ability to embed SEL in academic content instruction (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). The field, however, is in the nascent stages of understanding the role of teacher preparation in this regard. A recent national scan of teacher preparation courses reveals that while most programs explicitly reference building teachers' SEL skills, few attend to preparing teachers to build students' SEL skills, and emphasis appears to focus more strongly on relational and decision-making skills than self-awareness or management skills (Schonert-Reichl, Kitil & Hanson-Peterson, 2017). There is scant literature about how teacher educators develop SEL competencies in specific courses and no literature about how teacher preparation programs connect and develop SEL concepts across courses. This narrative seeks to address that gap.

We took a narrative approach to this inquiry into our work to integrate SEL throughout our program (Glesne, 2017; Ellis, 2007; Bruner, 1996; Polkinghorne,

1995; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Noddings & Witherel, 1991). We offer a window into the story of each author's course, and focus on narrative as the unit of analysis rather than phrases or keywords, with a goal to unearth more of the "fullness of human experience" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 8). This approach to uncovering the the less-than-tangible understandings of teaching is based on the view that when researchers conduct research with pre-defined reductive lenses in an attempt to reduce the unwieldy to something more readily described in a traditional research-report format, they often gloss over the subtleties of personalities and contexts that are key to a robust and situated understanding of a given phenomenon. Our hope is that affording each member of our team a chance to include their story might offer a way to avoid the kind of problems that often travel with a more inductive approach that at times can undermine one's capacity to appreciate the parts that make up the whole. This approach afforded us the opportunity to unearth and share our various and sometimes conflicting perspectives and to better encompass the complex nature of our disparate processes to uncover more holistic understandings of how a quite different group of trusted teammates came to revise their courses.

The goal of social-emotional learning (SEL) is to help children (and adults) "enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve important life tasks" (Zins et al., 2004, p. 6). This case describes our work to embed SEL deeply into the three-semester combined multiple-subject credential and MA program centered on social justice at San José State University. Our program graduates approximately 150 multiple subject candidates each year, and in the main, our candidates mirror the demographic makeup of the state's teaching force, which is about 63% white and about 20% Latinx, and overwhelmingly female (Teachers in California, n.d.). We describe key stages of our program's development chronologically, and point to key anchor competencies to illuminate how we help beginning teachers teach with both a social-emotional and cultural lens by connecting SEL and culturally sustaining teaching practices. In this narrative, each of us tells a story of our individual courses. Taken together, these individual stories illustrate the relationship between the parts and the whole and explicates the complex nature of our disparate processes better than other more reductive methods might (Glesne, 2017). Our purpose is to support a holistic understanding of how a diverse team of instructors revised our courses and, guided by a commitment both to SEL principles and each other, changed the nature of our program organically.

Historical Overview

In 2011, a dean and a professor at San José State University planted the seed for an organizational research unit dedicated to embedding social-emotional learning (SEL) into teacher education. Within two years, under Dr. Nancy Markowitz's leadership, this idea evolved into the Center for Reaching and Teaching the Whole Child (CRTWC). We trace the development of the Center's work with faculty, from

initial conceptualizations of SEL that leveraged the work of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), to the development of a conceptual framework of seven anchor competencies (Center for Reaching and Teaching the Whole Child, 2019) embedded throughout our teacher education program.

Course Redesign

Supported by CRTWC, seven of thirteen Multiple Subject Credential Program faculty and two of our most experienced student teaching supervisors committed to embed the teaching of SEL skills in their courses. We met monthly to discuss course innovations using the five CASEL dimensions: self-awareness, self- management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2013). CRTWC also partnered with the Acknowledge Alliance (formerly Cleo Eulau Center), an organization dedicated to improving mental health and resiliency in schools, to provide faculty with additional outside expertise. While we initially focused on helping our candidates teach SEL skills to their students, we quickly realized that we also were attempting to foster these skills in our candidates, and indeed ourselves.

We did not envision SEL as a stand-alone concept; rather, we saw it as embedded within our different courses highlighting various dimensions. For example, we situated teaching self awareness and cultural awareness in foundations classes, social awareness and relationship skills in classroom management, responsible decision-making in field placement, and self management and growth mindset as components of persistence in problem solving in mathematics. At each semester's conclusion, CRTWC sponsored a retreat where faculty reported on their work, received feedback, and planned next steps. Early work focused in mathematics and science methods, educational psychology, sociology, and language acquisition, ultimately extending to student-teaching seminars and other methods courses. Within two years seven courses had been revised, and CRTWC had revised the SEL acronym to call specific attention to our focus on teaching, adopting the acronym SEDTL to mean the Social-Emotional Dimensions of Teaching and Learning.

Mapping Across the Curriculum

By 2014, with the state's adoption of the Common Core Standards, our work shifted from examining individual courses to mapping the integration of SEL across our entire elementary teacher education curriculum as an essential foundation in preparing students to grapple with, among other skills, the rigors of open-ended problem-solving. Working retreats focused on identifying key "throughlines" that we might collectively adopt. One such throughline, for example, centered on creating classroom environments in which students feel safe asking for help and in which mistakes are recognized as part of the learning process. Watson's (2003) book *Learning to Trust* serves as a throughline to center developmental discipline and trusting relationships as core values in establishing caring classroom environments.

Other throughlines include instructional strategies practiced in many classes, and program-wide tools such as SEL-inclusive lesson plan templates and observation protocols.

Program Evaluation: Grounding SEDTL in Practice

In 2014 CRTWC partnered with WestEd, an outside evaluator, to assess the impact of our work. Through interviews, focus groups, and a survey of over one hundred current multiple subject candidates, WestEd confirmed what we suspected: candidates recognized the value in cultivating SEL skills and embedding them in their teaching but struggled to enact these values. We addressed this challenge by developing tools designed specifically to help our candidates (and ourselves) bridge theory to practice utilizing what CRTWC had started calling an "SEL lens." CRTWC produced videos of faculty, mentor teachers, and candidates modeling how to teach SEL skills, including emotional awareness and regulation in mathematical problem solving, skillbuilders to develop group work norms, discussions of case dilemmas, and analysis of multicultural children's literature. We also developed a classroom observation tool focused on key SEDTL strategies, and crafted a department-wide lesson plan template with specific prompts for teaching and assessing SEL skills. These tools pushed our conversation toward what we deemed high leverage SEDTL practices. By 2017, a qualitative evaluation (Diaz, 2017) of six program graduates teaching in a partnering district with a strong commitment to SEL, reported that not only did our recent graduates value SEL and talk about it, most were using specific SEL strategies in their own classrooms.

Adding a Cultural Lens

As we sought to link theory to practice, a troubling concern emerged: the CASEL dimensions, rooted firmly in psychology, did not explicitly address the broader lens of sociology to our satisfaction, paying scant attention to socio-political context and culture (Simmons, 2017). Although the literature acknowledged a tacit understanding—at best—of the role culture plays in creating and sustaining respectful interpersonal relationships, the CASEL heuristic did not acknowledge the cultural nature of identifying and working with emotions and reflected a color-blind approach privileging white middle-class American values of what constitutes SEL competencies (Hoffman, 2009).

The absence of the larger socio-political context became particularly jarring during the rise of the Black Lives Matter Movement (Watson, Hagopian & Au, 2018), which brought the persistent violence against Black youth to the national consciousness and heightened awareness of the importance of examining how societal and institutional entities define and act upon children. We were aware of critiques of SEL, including the individualistic, monocultural, and thus deficit-perpetuation of the approach (Gilles, 2010; Hoffman, 2009; Rabin, 2014). Authentic, caring

relationships can not be established if issues of social justice that directly impact children's lives are not engaged (Ladson Billings, 2014). Thus, we worked with CRTWC to explicitly connect SEDTL to core aspects of our teacher education program that define it as social-justice focused. Again, CRTWC grappled with the acronym to capture the nature of this work, ultimately landing on "SEC" to refer to the social, emotional, and cultural competencies that framed our work.

Developing a Conceptual Framework Grounded in Anchor Competencies

To help ground our efforts to focus on high leverage practices and SEC competencies essential for novice teachers, CRTWC developed the Social, Emotional, Cultural (SEC) Anchor Competencies Schema (2019) which integrates social-emotional learning and culturally responsive teaching. The schema identifies five broad goals for teachers: provide a safe and supportive learning environment; strive for equity in teaching and learning; build resilience and a sense of optimism; promote academic success; and develop responsibility for the greater good. These goals are embedded in a culturally complex socio-political context and give rise to seven anchor competencies (see Figure 1). Our vision is that candidates will develop these competencies via inquiry cycles that include exploring assumptions, modeling, practice, and reflection.

Table 1 Illustrates the sequence of courses in our program. In the following sections faculty in selected courses describe readings, activities, assignments and assessments designed to foster these core anchor competencies in our graduates.

Table 1
Course Sequence: Multiple Subject Credential Courses with MA in Curriculum and Instruction

Semester 1	*Semester 2*	*Semester 3*
Sociology of Education*	Qualitative Methods*	Special Topics in Ed. MA Inquiry Project*
Psychological Foundations	Classroom Learning Environments	
Literacy Development of Second Language Learners	Reading Methods	
Mathematics Methods	Science Methods	Social Studies Methods
Health and Special Education	Phase I Student Teaching	Phase II Student Teaching

*Indicates MA sequence leading to Inquiry Project

Figure 1
Social, Emotional, Cultural (SEC) Anchor Competencies Schema
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Center for Reaching & Teaching the Whole Child

Social, Emotional, Cultural (SEC) Anchor Competencies Schema

Examples of Teacher Moves
Anchor Competencies
SEC Lens
Context

Goals
- A safe and supportive learning environment
- Equity in teaching and learning
- Resilience and sense of optimism
- Academic success
- Responsibility for the greater good

Socio-Political
Family / Individual
Cultural
Community

Reflect
Explore Assumptions & Beliefs
Provide Practice
Model

Respond constructively across differences
Practice restorative justice
Build capacity to make amends
Identify & interrupt micro-aggressions

*Build trusting relationships
Develop rapport
Engage families
Practice reciprocal vulnerability
Employ trauma informed practices

Foster self reflection
Recognize & manage emotional reactions
Examine biases
Explore identity

Foster growth mindset
Articulate affirming counter-narratives
Shift to positive self-talk
Connect learning to the brain

Cultivate perseverance
Provide asset-based formative feedback
Set & monitor goals
Embrace productive struggles

Create community
Attend to status issues
Foster individual voice
Create a culture of engagement
Affirm each others assets

Promote collaborative learning
Practice building consensus
Engage in structured academic & social conversations
Practice reflective listening

*Building trusting relationships is essential to the development of all anchor competencies.

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Course Descriptions

Semester 1

Sociology of Education begins with exercises designed to stitch a group of strangers into a trusting cohort. First, we create a set of classroom norms—concrete and explicit but always open to revision if needed—to support candidates' exploration of the assumptions and biases they bring to teaching. This norm-creating process allows students to contribute meaningfully to what happens in their classrooms, and exemplifies a stance at the heart of the course and the program: an openness to collaborative reflection. This work spans several class sessions, and is critical to the development of a learning community that fosters personal and professional growth. We begin the process by reflecting on John Dewey's (1938) criteria for an educative experience: continuity, end-in-view, and interaction. With those themes in mind, candidates identify times in their own schooling that they would consider Deweyan educative experiences. Candidates also read Burbules' *Dialogue in Teaching*, a piece that highlights emotional factors—concern, care, trust, respect, appreciation, affection, and hope—that shape dialogue in profound and unexpected ways. Focusing on dialogue, candidates then make some notes about the sort of "moves" they made to foster successful dialogues: Did I listen? Did I ask questions? What sort of questions? What about my body language? How many people were involved? They also think about unsuccessful dialogues: What caused me to disengage or dig in my heels? Did my emotions play a role? What assumptions did I make that might not have been warranted? Did I make judgments about others? We then use a shared Google doc to create a first draft of class norms.

Early in the course, candidates also share personal narratives about how various aspects of their identity that they see as important—e.g. their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, family history, linguistic, social and cultural affiliations, and personal experiences—intersect with their decisions to become teachers. Many of the narratives are incredibly revealing—stories of arduous immigration journeys, abuse, homelessness, poor health, poverty—and their gravity always seems to compel a certain authenticity when we discuss them. As such, they present opportunities for us to test drive our norms. We ask ourselves, "In what ways did our norms support our discussions and dialogue? In what ways did they fail? What could we change to improve them?" And then we revise our norms. Candidates then read Nelson and Harper's (2006) *A Pedagogy of Difficulty* that points to the value of accommodating liminality—a transitional state between not knowing and knowing—in the learning process. We discuss our norms in this light, revising again until everyone is satisfied. Common threads include a commitment to challenge ideas but not the people who express them, to disagree respectfully, to assume that good intentions always underlie the words and actions of our colleagues, and to make amends when our words or actions cause harm.

A core assignment in the Sociology of Education course centers on the CRTWC

anchor competencies of creating community and fostering self-reflection. Candidates write ethical dilemmas, descriptions of complex school scenarios in which sets of competing values are at play—problems to be solved rather than situations to be managed. These dilemmas help candidates think about how they might handle in-the-moment classroom situations while also asking them to examine the relationship between instructional decision-making and their moral and ethical goals and about the values, beliefs, and biases from which they operate. We remind candidates to be patient with each other as they share their dilemmas, to see them not as stories that showcase successes and failures but rather as a way to put real life, messy, and complicated classroom interactions on hold so we have time to think together about how we might best respond to support our students.

From this perspective, the dilemmas candidates share can surprise even the experienced veteran teachers among us and open avenues for deep reflection. Candidate Joanna's dilemma, for example, involved a student with autism who routinely got left behind by her peers in group work. Joanna, a white woman in her mid-twenties, tried to intervene by asking the student's group partners to include her by having her be the group recorder, but the girls decided that her handwriting wasn't neat enough. Even when Joanna pointed out that handwriting was not critical, her peers were unmoved. Even as she attempted to structure her class to leverage the many benefits of group work described in the scholarly literature, she recognized a significant downside. Joanna noted differences in what she called 'hard' and 'soft' skills, writing, "Evelyn's exclusion could be causing damage to her sense of self-worth, intelligence, and self-advocacy. In turn, her peers are learning that it is okay to exclude people who you perceive to have lower academic or social status." She became increasingly aware that deep socialization forces were at work, and that the concept of intelligence seemed to lead her students to view themselves and each other in a hierarchy: "[t]he students understand intelligence with the fixed mindset model and judge each other's intelligence. They have been socialized to view each other using categories, labels, and other means of dismissing a person's value." Here, the child with autism was treated by her peers as less-than, perhaps because she did not engage in the group work in 'typical' ways and displayed few of the specific academic skills her peers had learned to value, and thus could not contribute with parity. By the end of the course, after much discussion with colleagues, Joanna planned to continue to explore this area of interest in the context of the action inquiry project all students must complete as part of the MA. Specifically, she planned to teach and model a growth mindset and strategically poise her students for success in academic *and* social roles. She also aimed to help boost the academic status of the child with autism as one step toward her ultimate goal of teaching her students to value each other not merely for what they might add to the group, but for their humanity.

Psychological Foundations of Education introduces many of the core

concepts rooted in SEC, as they intersect with areas of psychology concerning cognition, social context, emotional and relational experiences within learning environments, and student motivation. From the first day, candidates engage in activities that foster critical analysis of learning environments, and learn to pay close attention to whether educational experiences "humanize" or "dehumanize" learning (Freire, 1993). The course includes an overview of research that informs how SEC is commonly conceptualized with content that includes learning about affective social neuroscience and the impacts of emotions on learning, memory, and motivation (Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007). We also explore current controversies in education via debate team presentations, each of which requires candidates to explore SEC-related aspects of learning.

Early in the course, we note the broad conceptual overlap between the language of the SEC competencies and the psychological terms rooted in the literature on human motivation. For example, process-oriented theories embedded within Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems (1979) models find direct expression in SEC concepts. Acknowledging the difficulty in capturing a unified definition of "resilience"—a term often used synonymously with SEL in education—we explore conceptual underpinnings offered by Liu et al. (2017), who outline a number of related concepts including autonomy (Masten & Garmenzy, 1985), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986), achievement goal orientations (Ames, 1992), mindset (Dweck, 2006), and "grit" (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). We also read counter-narratives relative to controversial uses and misuses of SEL-related concepts, such as mindset (Sisk et al., 2018) and "grit," especially as they relate to the learning experiences of Black and Latinx youth (Tefera et al., 2019).

To help candidates bridge theory and practice and deepen their understanding of the psychological roots of SEC, candidates analyze the theories presented in the course within a "theory-to-practice" chart to determine appropriate practical applications that align with one or more of the six Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) outlined by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2016). Students work in groups to articulate rationales for why they would design lessons and learning environments with SEC in mind, based on what they learned about key tenets and research roots of each theory.

Classroom Issues in the Language and Literacy Development of Second-Language Learners prepares candidates to meet the content learning and language development needs of their students. While the course focuses on the emergent multilingual (English learner) student group, candidates develop a repertoire of practices useful for students with learning disabilities and others who are often marginalized in schools, guided by the anchor competencies of creating classroom community, fostering growth mindset, and practicing collaborative learning.

In the first course assignment, candidates create a learner profile—they share personal information with a classmate, and that classmate introduces the partner

to another pair, until we all know a little more about each other. During the assignment, we highlight the experiences of community building, cooperative learning in pairs, and using oral language through both speaking and listening, all of which are important in creating a learning environment in which candidates feel safe to express themselves in whatever language(s) they choose. We then translate the assignment for use in the K-8 context, which allows each candidate to plan how to implement the practice, perhaps with assistance from family members, at a target grade level.

We also practice another key collaborative learning skill: pairing each emergent multilingual student with a language buddy to provide native language support to emergent multilingual students to facilitate the latter's content learning. During various demonstration lessons throughout the course, candidates role-play, and because many of our candidates are native speakers of languages other than English, they have opportunities to experience situations quite similar to those that arise in actual classroom practice.

These SEC moves—and many others, such as exploring ways to contextualize lessons in students' background experiences, fostering growth mindset, scaffolding content, and experiencing content-specific discourse and literacy practices—connect to a Tier 1 framework (see Whitenack, Golloher & Burciaga, in press) of strategies designed to facilitate the content learning and academic language development of all students in general education classrooms. Candidates use these Tier 1 strategies in all subsequent methods and practicum courses.

Mathematics Methods is particularly well situated to link to key theories and SEC practices introduced in psychological and sociological foundations. While developing candidates' pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) we explore several anchor competencies: self-reflection through emotional awareness and regulation in problem solving (Swanson, 2013); teaching collaborative learning skills through group work norms and helping candidates to address classroom status problems (Cohen & Lotan, 2014); and fostering a mathematical mindset (Boaler, 2006, Dweck, 2006).

To explore the issue of emotional-awareness and problem solving in class we examine a particularly challenging "multi-step" story problem involving the density of an iceberg and ask candidates, "How did this problem make you feel?" While some react with enthusiasm and confidence, many express fear and trepidation. We discuss the importance of recognizing one's emotional reaction as well as the strategies that they, as successful graduate students, use to re-engage. Candidates describe how they slow down and search for parts of the problem they understand or take deep calming breaths and proceed with the problem step by step. We then explore how to translate these strategies into practice with children.

We examine a case study (Swanson, 2013) in which children were asked how they felt when faced with a particularly challenging multi-step story problem. The children's answers mirrored those of our teacher candidates. It was clear from the

case that asking children to recognize and air their emotional reactions to daunting math problems created a sense of safety as students recognized that many of their classmates felt the same way. However, children, unlike our graduate candidates, did not have strategies for talking themselves through the problem—they needed to be taught to recognize emotions and their impact, and to practice self-talk and coping strategies. We discuss the teacher's key role in this process. Candidates learn to avoid merely telling students how to do difficult problems, learning instead to provide the space for students to recognize their emotional reactions and practice coping strategies. Candidates practice cognitive scaffolding on both content and process. Asking candidates to consider opening a mathematical problem solving discussion not by jumping into the math, but rather by asking students to examine their emotional reaction to the problem is a novel idea for candidates and opens the door for them to consider how social and emotional factors affect mathematics learning.

In mathematics methods we teach group work specific norms—shared understandings between students as to their rights and responsibilities when engaging in group work. These norms, are outlined by Cohen and Lotan (2014) in *Designing Groupwork: Strategies for the Heterogeneous Classroom*. Using a series of cooperative skillbuilder activities we model and practice norms such as "you have the right to ask for help and the duty to give help," "look out for what other group members need," "explain by telling how," and "ask questions."

We use the skillbuilder Master Designer to focus on one norm particularly important to students' social-emotional well being in mathematics—asking questions—a powerful tool for clarification and an essential tool for strategically taking initiative to secure help when needed in school. Master Designer is played with a set of seven geometric shapes called tangrams. Students make a shape with their tangrams (hidden behind a folder) that they then must describe for group members to replicate. Group members are encouraged to ask questions and to help the master designer explain. However, students cannot touch one another's designs, and must "explain by telling how." During wrap-up we discuss the many powerful ways a skilled master designer can explain, however, it is often the students who ask questions who most help the group. We note that specific questions like, "Show me which way the triangle points" as opposed to general exclamations like "I don't get it!" lead to answers that help not just the individual, but the group. Specific questions, posed thoughtfully, also have the potential to guide the teacher to respond specifically and modify instruction as needed. In our debriefing we talk about using this skillbuilder to teach our students to be strategic and specific in their questioning, and that by doing so they enable both the teacher or their peers to better help them. For both our teacher candidates and their students, asking good questions and insuring they get the help they need is one of the smartest things you can do in school, and often one of the most helpful things you can do for your group.

Even when group norms are well established in a classroom, candidates recognize that group participation is seldom equal. Some students dominate while others

are ignored. These status problems usually stem from students' expectations for one another's competence at the task. While race or language background certainly operate as status characteristics, often academic status is most influential. Select children—frequently strong readers or those who are quick with computations—accrue status as classmates assume these children are "smarter" than others. These students, in turn, often dominate, while others are excluded. In mathematics methods we use group work videos of status problems to help candidates recognize and interrupt these status inequities by publicly and specifically pointing out the intellectual contributions of low status students and discussing the many different kinds of abilities and skills mathematics requires (e.g. reasoning, explaining, visualizing, modeling).

To explore this idea further we use Boaler's (2006) conceptualization of *mathematical mindset*— the belief that mathematics is multidimensional, creative, and conceptually interconnected and that with experience and a willingness to grapple with challenge we get "smarter" in mathematics (Dweck, 2006). We examine number sense (using numbers flexibly, strategically and conceptually rather than procedurally) and mastery of basic math facts. Students engage in Number Talks (Humphreys & Parker, 2015; Parish, 2014), structured discussions in which the teacher poses a computational problem and students explain and justify solutions and strategies. Candidates prepare a number talk leading to basic fact strategies, and then lead number talks with colleagues. We want our candidates to have their students generate basic facts strategies, practice these strategies through engaging tasks and games, and use self-assessment to focus their practice on the specific facts they find difficult. Students chart their own progress toward fluency, which fosters a growth mindset. Candidates conclude this segment of the course by generating assessment, grading, and homework policies to foster students' mathematical mindset.

Semester 2

Classroom Learning Environments operates from the premise that students and teachers are socially, emotionally, culturally, and academically complex. Core to the course are the practices of reflecting on funds of identity (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014) and critically examining personal and institutionalized folk psychologies and pedagogies (Olson, & Bruner, 1996). The course explores tensions between the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and the pedagogies developed in the first semester. We use a transformational learning (Mezirow, 1990) approach to develop our SEC lens, reflecting on our experiences as learners, discussing how theories and experiences from first semester courses reframe our perceptions, then exploring how to put the SEC lens into practice. Through collaborative discussion and critical reflection, we explore our assumptions about children and what motivates their behavior with the goal to make visible the practices that we might leverage to create learning communities that exemplify developmental discipline, SEC competencies, and care ethics (Watson, 2003).

As we explore the tensions between our experiences and research-based pedagogies, we recognize that there is often a disconnect between what our candidates see in their placements and what we teach in our classes. To explore these tensions and to model the SEC practice of building community, we begin each session with a "morning meeting." We start with a brief mindfulness activity to develop self-monitoring and reflection skills, followed by a community-building activity to foster collaboration. As a debrief, candidates identify how the activities support SEC development. We then dedicate a part of each session to candidate "success-sharing and peer problem-solving." Leveraging the concept of the teaching dilemmas from the sociological foundations course, candidates share daily dilemmas that arise from their student teaching placements (which also start in semester 2). Candidates practice reciprocal vulnerability, celebrate successes, pose problems, and collaboratively share suggestions and solutions. In these sessions, candidates sit in a circle so everyone can see one another, and we operate under three agreements: (1) the instructor speaks only when addressed directly, (2) candidates self-monitor to ensure equity of voice, and (3) confidentiality. These conversations build candidate community, independence, and always include connections to multiple SEC competencies and practices.

Course and program throughlines are the core of this course and present significant challenges for implementation. The course is designed to take the complex theories, social justice and SEC challenges, and impetus for institutional change developed in first semester courses, and ground them in practice. To this end, there are philosophical and temporal challenges facing the instructors. How do we align our practice, while maintaining academic freedom? How do we find the time and space to engage with our colleagues to ensure the throughlines stay supportive? Through dialogue with colleagues, we determined there should be a "skeleton syllabus" we all follow to ensure all students receive the preparation necessary for success on the CalTPA and the TPEs. The skeleton contains 5 assignments and supporting materials we all agree to teach, several of which overlap with supervision or literacy methods. Those of us who teach the course at the elementary and secondary levels meet regularly to co-plan common lessons, and share independently constructed lessons with one another. We also share our work with colleagues from other courses to re-align schedules and overlapping assignments.

The assignments in the skeleton syllabus include candidates conducting critical, empathetic, low-inference observations and inquiries in their placements, videoing themselves teaching, and using a video annotation platform to share their thinking and highlight key ideas from both coursework and supervision experiences. They practice strategies introduced in their courses as frames for reflecting on their own developmental trajectory, identify moments and moves that make visible how they build trusting relationships with and between students, connect practice to complex theories, and explore how to create safe, culturally sustaining environments. These integrated video assignments are also discussed in field-supervision groups and in

the literacy methods course. In this way, candidates learn to deconstruct the complex work of teaching and view it through different lenses. The video lessons and reflections also serve as concrete practice opportunities leading into the CalTPA, our program's teacher performance assessment.

The course culminates with candidates creating a substitute teacher folder, outlining their plans for creating their own safe and supportive classroom environment fostering SEC practices. Supporting discussions delve into the importance of having a detailed and well-articulated plan for SEC practices in order to maintain consistency. Throughout the course, candidates revise and refine their plan of action to include descriptions of routines, norms, and restorative practices they plan to use. Many of our graduates report that they continue to develop and use their sub-folders to help them articulate their SEC practices and communicate them to children, parents, and colleagues within their school communities.

Language and Literacy for Diverse Classrooms (Reading Methods) deepens candidates' self-awareness, social awareness, and evolving understanding of cultural complexity. The course begins with a "literacy capital bingo" activity in which candidates explore whose literacy capital (Yosso, 2005) is valued in schools. Bingo cards contain family literacy activities traditionally valued by schools, such as "my parent/caretaker reads to me most nights" and "I was taken to the library often as a child." Reflecting on semester 1 readings on cultural capital (e.g. Yosso, 2005), we quickly see that white, middle-class family values are typically championed in school while other values are marginalized. Candidates reflect on their own literacy capital, backgrounds, learning experiences around reading, and then try their hand at writing more inclusive bingo cards.

Candidates read about literacy capital and watch *The Danger of a Single Story,* Adiche's (2009) glowing account of the power and importance of counter story. They then extend the personal narratives they wrote in semester one's Sociology of Education to include a Language and Literacy Autobiography, exploring the connection between language and literacy, identifying preconceived notions that might entrench classroom status issues in unhelpful ways, and reflecting on how their journeys likely differ from their students' journeys. As candidates write and reflect, their values and beliefs begin to reveal themselves, opening opportunities to further develop proficiency with anchor competencies such as identifying and interrupting micro-aggressions, attending to classroom status issues, practicing reflective listening, and articulating affirming counter-narratives (see Figure 1).

Another assignment asks candidates to evaluate the classroom libraries and language arts curricula in their field placements, looking specifically for representation of diversity in any form (culture, gender, disability, etc.). Some candidates return to class with wonderful examples of diversity. Most, however, return with grim concern. We discuss problematic aspects of texts using "Ten quick ways to analyze children's books for sexism and racism" (Council on Interracial Books for

Children, 1985) as a scaffold and add other underrepresented topics, such as gender fluidity and ability/disability. In *Chato's Kitchen* (Soto, 1995), for example—the story of the cholo gangsta cat, Chato, preying on a Latinx mouse family new to the neighborhood—candidates quickly see a variety of problematic portrayals of a minoritized group. Avoiding these problems, however, is never straight-forward. Some candidates wonder if *not* using diverse literature is preferable to *mis*using it. Other candidates familiar with *Chato's Kitchen,* for example, often point to the fact that many of their students personally connect to the book's characters—the cat and his gang or the mouse family. We probe how one might use *Chato's Kitchen* within a liberatory curriculum, and candidates begin to see that understanding books means understanding people and the world around them. As our discussions progress, we arrive at the insight that literature can support important discussions about decolonialization, democratization, and cultural representation in developmentally appropriate ways, even among kindergarteners. We also deepen our awareness that decisions about what gets included in or excluded from curricula often pit competing values against one another, and thus constitute teaching dilemmas identical in structure to the dilemmas candidates wrote in semester one. This awareness, in turn, helps candidates navigate the range of curricula and assessments they often encounter in their field placements—varied instructional approaches and often confusing reading comprehension strategies—with an overarching purpose: to help develop understanding and empathy.

Candidates also work in groups to co-author children's books of their own (Rodriguez-Mojica, n.d.) that seek to fill a representation gap. Each group contains at least one member who is 'inside' the group's chosen topic; the group also interviews at least one other person who is a member of that group. Candidates leverage significant SEC competencies as they share personal details and grapple with complex, often painful ideas in ways that are appropriate for young children, with the anchor competency teacher moves affirming counter-narratives and practicing reciprocal vulnerability notable among them. Candidates have produced books on an astonishing range of topics including the experiences of first-generation students, mental illness, ADHD, border-crossing and immigration, Ramadan, gender fluidity, mixed-race and non-traditional families, and child abuse. Candidates often self-publish these works for use in their own and others' classroom libraries, and the program keeps a copy for use by its student teachers. The range, quality and power of these candidate-created books reveals the depth and degree to which candidates have internalized SEC-related ideas over two semesters and across multiple courses, from sociology, psychology, and language acquisition courses, to content methods and classroom management. This is as it should be; the work of building a strong SEC classroom environment and supporting candidates to do the same in a TK-12 environment is complex, difficult, and requires consistency and collaboration across the program.

Student Teaching (semesters 2 and 3)

Integrating social emotional competencies in classroom practice is at the core of supervision and student teaching at SJSU. University supervisors have engaged with CRTWC in ongoing collaboration and professional development and their work has led to significant revisions in our two-semester student teaching courses, with the goal of integrating SEC anchor competencies to increase conceptual and practical coherence in supervision as well as field-based assignments and practices. Consistent with our adoption of the co-teaching model (see Bacharach et al., 2010) and the CRTWC Framework, we prioritized relational aspects of mentoring and positioned the first anchor, building trusting relationships*,* as foundational.

Supervisors observe candidates a minimum of six times each semester and hold bi-weekly student teaching seminars with their candidates. In seminars, supervisors focus on what candidates are experiencing in their classroom placements and often refer to the "teacher moves" that foster reflection, cultivate perseverance, and promote collaborative learning. Candidates are typically concerned with management, which is critically intertwined with SEC. By modeling and giving examples of these strategies, supervisors support candidates to implement them and to create their own ideas as to when and how they should be applied. It is the collaborative nature of the seminars, based in part on student needs at a given time, and the trusting relationships built through assets-based debriefs of observations that allow for SEC to be integrated into this aspect of the program.

In this way, over the two semesters of student teaching, supervisors support candidates to shift from being a student of teaching to a teacher of students as they take on increasingly challenging tasks. Coaching sessions are designed to foster anchors such as self-reflection and a growth mindset. For example, rather than supervisors merely telling candidates about their teaching, they first ask candidates to self-reflect—an intentional choice that conveys trust and supports the development of important analytical skills. Mentors and supervisors then build on these candidate reflections to offer targeted feedback and to reinforce a growth mindset that affirms that with effort, formative feedback, and practice, candidates can successfully embrace the challenges, dilemmas, and complexity of teaching.

Recent program innovations include an observation protocol that highlights key SEC anchor competencies, and a series of integrated course and student teaching seminar assignments requiring candidates to observe and practice specific SEC strategies in their placements. Supervisors support candidates specifically to plan and teach lessons that demonstrate how they build empathy and use multicultural literature to both reflect their students' experiences and deepen cross-cultural understanding.

California's Teacher Performance Expectations (2016) also guide supervision, of course, and the SEC anchor competencies allow our field supervisors to help candidates consider them through an SEC lens. For example, TPE 1.1 asks the question, "how does the teacher use knowledge of their students to engage them?"

A focus on SEC competencies fosters candidates to design meaningful instruction by viewing this question broadly as an invitation to build trusting relationships, consider cultural connections, seek out engaging curricular materials, and leverage funds of identity (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Notably, this approach also positions candidates to succeed in Cycle I of the CalTPA Teacher Performance Assessment, which candidates complete during Phase I student teaching.

Recently, we developed a set of online modules, *Co-Teaching for Mentor Teachers***,** to support mentor teachers with candidate supervision and prepare co-teachers to model SEC competencies explicitly. Mentors teachers who elect to participate receive CEUs in lieu of the mentor stipend. Course topics include fostering "an equity-minded teacher," " a resilient teacher," "a mindful teacher," and "reflecting on your just and caring classroom environment." Other module topics pair with methods courses, addressing important pedagogical strategies, for example, math talks and math norms. We anticipate these modules will support candidates and mentors to develop a strong and supportive co-teaching relationship (Murawski & Dieker, 2013). Some candidates and mentors explore these modules together, and meet to consider possible responses to teaching dilemmas similar to those candidates explored in Sociology of Education, and as prompt-guided dialogue unearths their values and beliefs about teaching, co-teachers come to understand each other better.

One of the challenges we face in integrating SEC competencies with supervision is the somewhat transitory nature of the position. Most of our twenty-two supervisors are adjunct lecturers, many of whom are post-retirement. This poses opportunities and challenges in the development and maintenance of shared practices and knowledge related to SEC competencies. We include awareness of SEC competencies in the hiring process but still there is a range in how these practices are named and put into the work. In part, it means that we must regularly re-introduce the core ideas while we develop and refine practices. We strive within the two semester teaching sequence to provide coherence for teacher candidates while allowing sufficient flexibility for supervisors to individualize their section and respond to the needs of their candidates. To address the need for coherence, we recently transitioned all student teaching syllabi, resources, and assignments to an integrated online course shell within our Learning Management System.

This year ten supervisors are meeting monthly to study the revised social, emotional, and cultural competencies and related teacher moves and reflect on supervision practice. Their current work focuses on (1) cataloguing existing supportive practices, (2) updating the debrief protocol with prompts that focus more specifically on culturally sustaining pedagogies, and (3) sharing videos of debriefs for feedback and development. They envision a ring in the current wheel (see figure 1) between competencies and teacher moves that articulates field-specific practices, tentatively referred to as "supervision moves." Our intention in the work we do with district partners and induction providers is to ease candidates' career transition from student to teacher.

The Masters Course Sequence (semesters 1-3)

Our three semester MA program is anchored by three courses: Sociology of Education (semester 1), Qualitative Research in Education (semester 2), and Special Topics in Education (semester 3). In the first two semesters, candidates define an area of interest, pose an inquiry question and review relevant literature in preparation to conduct action research centered on that question in their third semester field placements. While candidates begin to think about an area of interest that might define their MA projects in their first semester, work toward their MA begins in earnest in the second semester Qualitative Research in Education course. Course assignments include framing an action research question, developing a theoretical framework, and with that framework in mind, writing a literature review to support the action research projects they conduct in the third semester Special Projects course. The path candidate Joanna traveled, from developing her question, to articulating a theoretical frame, to reviewing literature, to doing an action research project—illustrates how we help candidates explicitly attend to SEC competencies throughout the MA project.

Joanna, wrote her teaching dilemma in semester one's *S*ociology of Education course about the challenges of helping an elementary student with autism and her peers navigate group work. In the Qualitative Research course, she was joined by Maria, who was interested in a topic both candidates saw as similar—how positioning a learning task can sometimes dramatically shape students' perceptions of that task, and thus their capacity to engage with it. Together, they developed an inquiry question specific to the teaching of math that focused explicitly on SEC: "what can we notice about students' self-efficacy and math anxiety when we create a caring community for math group work?" Notably, this is not where they started. Initially, they asked, "what can we notice about our students' performance in math when we work to reduce math anxiety?" As they worked to articulate a theoretical framework, however, they found themselves returning to prior course readings about the importance of social and emotional safety for members of a learning community. They (re)read writings by Noddings, which explicate how to foster care ethics in the classroom via modeling, practice, dialogue, and confirmation. They drew on Dweck's mindset and Watson and Ecken's (2003) *Learning to Trust,* a text that details a developmental discipline approach to classroom management and then re-examined Cohen and Lotan's (2014) work on addressing classroom status problems. Joanna and Maria grappled with melding their understanding of status with their deep commitment to an ethic of care. They once again reoriented their thinking to align with their reasons for wanting to be teachers in the first place—moral and ethical reasons—and sought to manage math group work in ways that were consistent with their ultimate goal of helping students learn to think of each other not merely as academic performers but as individuals with inherent value regardless of their academic contributions. Reflecting on Noddings' (1995)

observation that "we should want more from our educational efforts than adequate academic achievement, and we will not achieve even this meager success unless our children believe that they themselves are cared for and learn to care for others" (p. 676) they leveraged this idea in the third semester's action research project. They wrote,

> We need to make clear the goals for academics as well as the goals for how to care for one another. The students should understand that when they set out to learn a math lesson, they work towards a specific math goal and a specific goal about how to care. But we also need to facilitate dialogue during group work to help students develop SEL… perseverance, managing math anxiety, and SEL need to be scaffolded, just as math learning is scaffolded.

As they refocused their efforts toward SEC while attempting to level the playing field for participation, Joanna and Maria noticed complexity they had not expected. As Joanna wrote, "[we] anticipated that students with low academic status would struggle with group work the most. In fact, my students with the highest academic status struggled because they seemed to have difficulty releasing control." This insight led them to realize that although it is important to interrupt status issues by recognizing the varied intellectual contributions of everyone, they were inspired by a more fundamental ethical and moral imperative: to teach students to value each other *for* their differences rather than despite them, and in so doing to teach how to operate as a caring learning community. The challenge of trying simultaneously to address an academic status issue that excluded a group member while cultivating a care ethic as a fundamental moral imperative speaks to the challenge of integrating the many theories that inform an SEC lens into classroom practice. Candidates' MA projects rarely lead to definitive answers. Indeed, that is not their purpose. Rather, their projects represent first steps on a contextualized and complex journey to creating both equitable and caring classrooms.

Challenges

The preceding sections describe many of the course assignments and innovations we have developed to build social-emotional learning and culturally sustaining pedagogy into our teacher education program. As with any work involving this level of complexity, we have had to address many challenges in the turbulent contexts that accompany educational reform—changes in faculty, university priorities, available funding, competing goals and initiatives, and the ever-changing contexts of the schools and communities we serve. While our work has often mirrored the ebb and flow of opportunity, we wish to highlight two challenges that continue to shape our work and push us deeper.

First, we recognize that our work with CRTWC to integrate culturally sustaining pedagogy and SEL is in its nascent stages, and some of us have pointed

out that this work seems to require us to integrate seemingly incommensurable theoretical frameworks. In our search for a pathway through this complex terrain, we have chosen to frame various aspects of social-emotional learning as features of caring classroom communities in which trust and courage are paramount and relationships play central roles, rather than as a collection of discrete competencies to be measured, or decontextualized tools designed to manage classroom behavior. This view emphasizing the relational aspects of classrooms rejects pre-defined and decontextualized notions of what it means to care for others. This view also asks us to keep in mind that if our candidates are to learn to build caring classroom communities, they must grapple with a wide range of complex personal, cultural and socio-political perspectives that shape learning opportunities. In many ways, this choice of framing defines our challenge. The need to scaffold practice for beginners through the use of anchor competencies gives rise to a fear that we have voiced: that sacrificing depth of understanding may lead to misunderstandings about what it means to work toward social justice. This is, in fact, our own messy ethical dilemma, and it has led to many hours of discussion and reflection.

A second related issue has characterized our work since its inception, and continues to push our work deeper: often, we do not agree with one another. The Master's inquiry project described in the preceding section illustrates this point and provides an excellent example of some of our faculty discussions.

Our mathematics instructor found this case deeply troubling:

> I honor their commitment to an ethic of care, but they seem to believe that this moral stance is incompatible with addressing a status problem. When we address status problems we publicly affirm the important intellectual abilities *all* students bring to the group. I'm not talking about narrow academic skills, but rather instances of creativity, problem solving, persistence, innovative explanation or modeling—all possible with a rich multiple ability task. An ethic of care includes recognizing the rich diversity of gifts all students bring to the task. They could have used this truth to foster both equity and an ethic of care, and ultimately to see that the two are inextricably related.

Our sociology of education instructor and the students' MA project advisor framed things differently:

> We worry that without first building a solid foundation of care, by seeking to raise the academic status of a student by amplifying her contributions or trying to reshape her peers' awareness and perceptions of those contributions, candidate Joanna could have telegraphed a dangerous message: that one's value accrues from one's ability to contribute—academically, creatively, or otherwise—rather than from one's essential humanity. Yes, status issues must be addressed if one is to enact care ethics, but one must also address the more fundamental misunderstanding that a child's ability to contribute to a group determines the child's inherent worth. Imperatives of care include open-ended process-oriented approaches such as modeling caring and providing opportunities for children to practice it. Indeed, this is exactly what

our students tried to do with their attempts to help their students recognize that speedy correct responses are not the only currency in a classroom. In this case, our students were not entirely successful in this regard, but that is understandable; they were novices attempting a complex thing. But we are heartened by their attempts.

In writing this article, this case has been the focus of hours of discussion. We have argued, discussed, reached agreement and then diverged again at the intersection of these two theories—care ethics and expectation states theory—and their implications for classroom practice. From one another we have forged a stronger understanding of the theories that guide our work. Indeed, this is the difficult complex work of integrating the many theories that inform teaching; if we ask it of our students, we must also engage in it ourselves.

Conclusion: Learning and Next Steps

We began with a theme: *trust your team*, referencing something essential about our organic and ongoing efforts to infuse SEC into our teacher education program. Each of us trusted that our colleagues would address SEC competencies appropriate to their course, compatible with our mission, and that reflected their deepest beliefs on the purposes of education. We collaborated to create throughlines around key anchor competencies to allow candidates the developmental space required to move from theory to practice, and created integrated video assignments linking coursework to supervision and illuminating our candidates' developing competence in teaching with a SEC lens. And of course, we are far from done. We continue to debate how to prioritize SEC competencies in our coursework, we strive for continuity in an ever changing educational context, and we struggle to place our candidates in classrooms where SEC practices are well-modeled. Nonetheless, our work in this area has situated us to align better with newly adopted teacher performance expectations (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2016) and the state's teacher performance assessment, the CalTPA. Our candidates consistently demonstrate their sensitivity to classroom context, their ability to enter into caring relationships with their students, and build on students' funds of identity as novice teachers. Of note, since its implementation, no student in our program has failed the CalTPA.

Although our work is certainly just beginning, we believe that we are on a path that will help us prepare teachers who practice empathy and introspection, who understand the complexity inherent in teaching, and who seek to teach in ways that reflect a commitment to social, emotional, and cultural learning, underpinned by social justice.

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