

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 458 300

TM 033 477

AUTHOR van Landingham, Ava Pugh; Groves, Fred; Washington, Jerrilene
TITLE An Analysis of Elementary Pre-Service Teacher Attitudes toward Two Different Methods Course Formats.
PUB DATE 2001-11-15
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association (30th, Little Rock, AR, November 15-17, 2001).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Course Organization; Curriculum; *Elementary Education; *Methods Courses; Preservice Teacher Education; *Preservice Teachers; *Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine if there were any differences in the opinions of preservice teachers about the effectiveness of a new block structure for elementary education and methods courses and opinions about the previous course structure. The new structure implemented in the 2000-2001 academic year reduced the courses in elementary education and methods from four to two and decreased the time for on-site field experiences. A total of 144 elementary education preservice teachers participated from fall 1999 through spring 2001. In general, attitudes about the degree of preparation for teaching dropped during the 2000 academic year but rose to equal or exceed those of fall 1999 by spring 2001. This pattern may reflect a period of adjustment for instructors or uncertainty on the part of students. The reduction in the number of courses apparently had only a temporary negative effect on student attitudes about preparation for the subject content areas. (SLD)

TM

An Analysis of Elementary Pre-service

Teacher Attitudes Toward

Two Different Methods

Course Formats

by

Ava Pugh van Landingham

Fred Groves

Jerrilene Washington

University of Louisiana at Monroe

Department of Instructional Leadership and Counseling

Monroe, Louisiana 71209

A paper presented to the Mid-South Education Research Association Convention

in Little Rock, Arkansas, November 15, 2001.

ED 458 300

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

F.H. Groves

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

TM033477

The concept of the Professional Semester in the College of Education at The University of Louisiana at Monroe (formerly Northeast Louisiana University) originated in 1975 when the need was recognized for more practical application of what was being taught in the required methods courses of the elementary education degree program. At that time, five instructors taught five separate three-hour courses: methods in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and children's literature. An examination of course outlines of these courses and subsequent discussions with involved faculty revealed much duplication of generic activities such as lesson planning, unit planning, and writing instructional objectives. In addition, it was recognized by the instructors that the students needed an opportunity to apply the theory and teaching techniques in actual classrooms.

In 1976, the instructors redesigned the methods classes to be three hours long and included a generic class. This arrangement also included a practicum where students were in the schools for four hours each day for four weeks. From a single section of only 25 students in 1976, the Professional Block had grown to have two sections with 20-30 students per section by the year 1999. At first only one school was used; the elementary practicum now utilizes approximately 8 schools.

From 1976 to 1999, the Professional Block consisted of four methods classes (mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts) and a generic session of common topics. Each methods class was for three hours of credit while no credit was given for the generic session. The professors shared the responsibilities for covering the course material. Students were assigned to a teacher under whom they performed 80 hours of practicum work in the classroom at the end of the semester.

Beginning in the fall of 1999, students were assigned to a teacher earlier in the semester and were allowed to visit the classroom 5-6 times before the continuous four week field experience assignment at the end of each semester. Feedback from students revealed a need for the additional hours of observation and teaching experience. The Louisiana Blue Ribbon Commission on Teacher Quality recently created sweeping

changes to the state's requirements for teacher education programs. Due to these new state regulations the number of courses in elementary education and methods courses have been reduced from four to two courses beginning with the Fall 2000/Spring 2001 academic year. Due to collapsing these courses, the potential loss of in-depth instruction became a concern because the Elementary Block structure decreased time for on-site field experiences. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to ascertain any differences in opinions of preservice teachers concerning the effectiveness of this new elementary block structure as compared to the previous one.

A 31 item questionnaire was completed anonymously each semester at the conclusion of the elementary block, after students had received their grades. For this particular study, only the questions pertaining to the students' sense of having been well prepared for the four content areas (science, social studies, language arts, math) were analyzed.

- ◆ The block students feel well prepared for teaching science.
- ◆ The block students feel well prepared for teaching social studies.
- ◆ The block students feel well prepared for teaching language arts.
- ◆ The block students feel well prepared for teaching mathematics.

A total of 144 elementary preservice students participated from fall 1999 through spring 2001. The means and standard deviations were determined for each question, for each semester, and t-tests were conducted to compare data on the previous course format with the new course format. Several significant differences were found (Table I). In general, attitudes dropped over the 2000 academic year, but rose to either equal or exceed those of Fall 1999 by the Spring 2001 semester (Figure 1). This pattern may reflect a period of adjustment for the instructors, and/or a period of uncertainty on the part of the students.

Responses to question #4 regarding Science dropped only during the Fall 2000 semester. Attitudes toward the Social Studies part of the elementary block dropped significantly for two semesters, but then returned to the Fall 1999 level by the last semester.

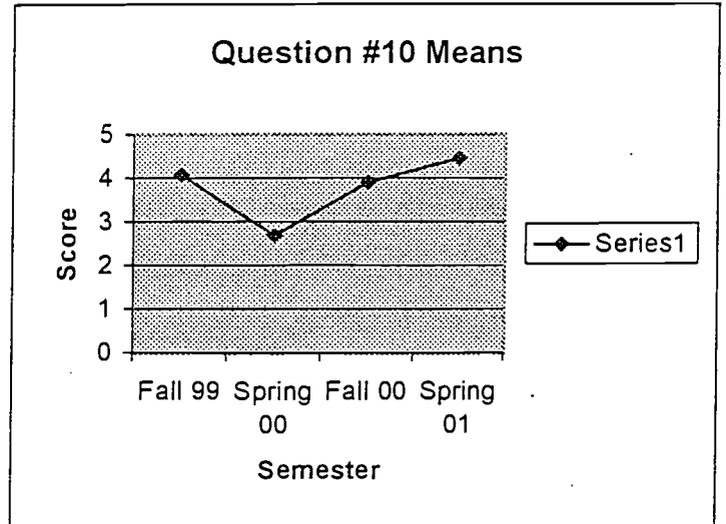
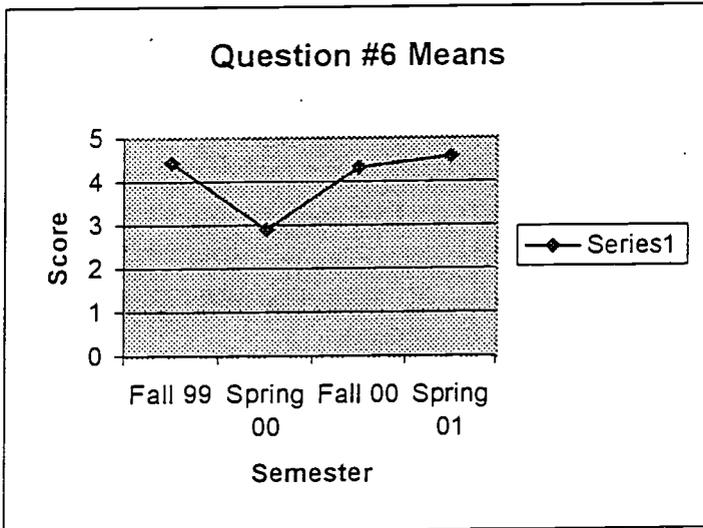
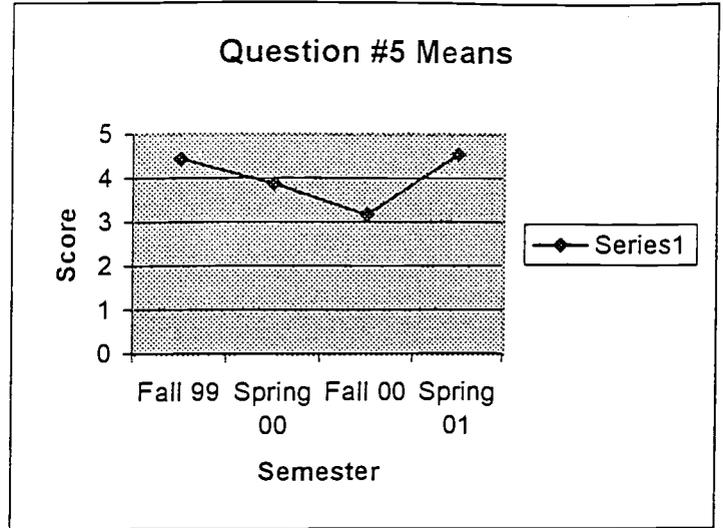
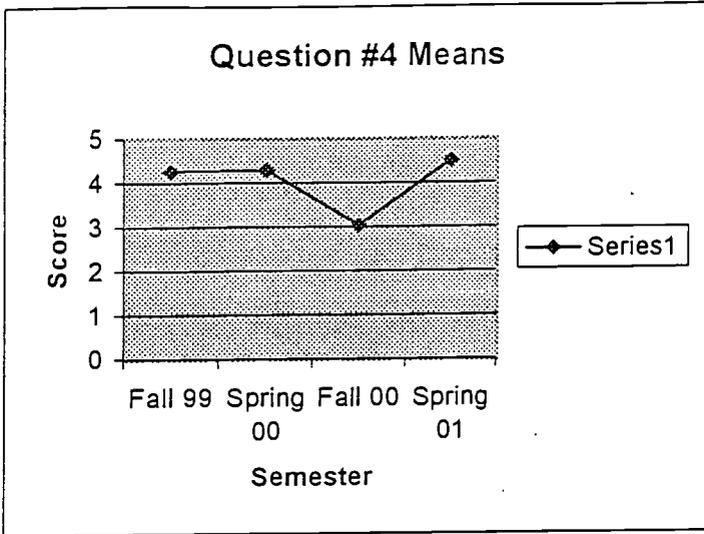
Responses to questions #6 (Language Arts) and #10 (Math) moved in reverse to that of #4 and #5. Both scores dropped dramatically over the Spring 2000 semester, but moved back up to Fall 1999 levels by the Fall 2000 semester, and edged a bit farther up in the Spring 2000 semester. These data show that as of the last semester for which data is available, student attitudes as reflected in these four questions have returned to their pre-program change level. Thus, this reduction in number of courses from four to two appears to have had only a temporary negative effect on the sense of preparation for these subjects. However, data from additional semesters will be required in order to determine if the recent rise in scores represents a trend.

Table I

T-Tests Across Four Semesters

	SPR 2000 (Q4-Q10)	F 2000 (Q4-Q10)	SPR 2001 (Q4-Q10)
F '99: Q4	0.900 (NS)	0.0001	0.077
Q5	0.01	0.0001	0.274 (NS)
Q6	0.0001	0.220 (NS)	0.217 (NS)
Q10	0.0001 (F '99>SPR '00)	0.283 (NS) (F '99>F '00)	0.035 (SPR '01>F '99)
SPR '00: Q4		0.0001 (SPR>F)	0.128 (NS)
Q5		0.007 (SPR>F)	0.002
Q6		0.0001 (F>SPR)	0.0001
Q10		0.0005 (F>SPR)	0.0001
F '00: Q4			0.0001
Q5			0.0001
Q6			0.088
Q10			0.018 (SPR '01>F '00)

Figure 1





U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



TM033477

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: <i>AN ANALYSIS OF ELEMENTARY PRE-SERVICE TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARD TWO DIFFERENT METHODS COURSE FORMATS</i>	
Author(s): <i>AVA RUGH VAN LANDINGHAM, FRED GROVES, JERRILENE WASHINGTON</i>	
Corporate Source: <i>UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT MONROE</i>	Publication Date: <i>15 NOV, 2001</i>

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 1

↑

Level 2A

↑

Level 2B

↑

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, →

Signature: <i>Fred H. Groves</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title: <i>FRED H. GROVES, PROFESSOR</i>	
Organization/Address: <i>COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT MONROE</i>	Telephone: <i>318-342-1280</i>	FAX: <i>318-342-3171</i>
	E-Mail Address: <i>EDGROVES@ULM.EDU</i>	Date: <i>15 NOV, 01</i>



(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

**University of Maryland
ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation
1129 Shriver Laboratory
College Park, MD 20742
Attn: Acquisitions**

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

**ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
1100 West Street, 2nd Floor
Laurel, Maryland 20707-3598**

Telephone: 301-497-4080

Toll Free: 800-799-3742

FAX: 301-953-0263

e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov

WWW: <http://ericfac.plccard.csc.com>

EFF-088 (Rev. 9/97)