

CAREER SERVICES QUALITY OF TEACHING CREDENTIAL GRADUATES

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The President's Office requested the assistance of Career Services of **evaluating the quality of Cal Poly graduates from a school district perspective**. Initially, Career Services elected to collaborate with the College of Business and College of Engineering to pilot an employer survey to evaluate the quality of their graduates. After meeting with the respective colleges, the survey instruments were developed, requiring careful tailoring to match the unique and distinctive nature of each college. The surveys were expanded to evaluate Cal Poly's learn-by-doing philosophy, experiential education, and extra-curricular/leadership activities. The survey focused on student learning outcome areas, and the specific skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities employers' value when hiring Cal Poly graduates. The results from the employer surveys represent a "quick pulse" from employers that could assist Cal Poly and the academic programs.

Based on the success of the project, Career Services contacted the University Center for Teacher Education (UCTE) to continue the collaborative efforts to evaluate the quality of teaching credential graduates. UCTE saw this as an opportunity to support existing evaluative efforts by the State of California in measuring the quality of CSU recent graduates. In the process, the survey was expanded to focus on student learning outcome areas that are certified by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The surveys were given to the school districts that participated in the Teacher Job Fair 2004. This report will define the major objectives of the survey and present the major findings to date.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives were established for this report:

1. Quality of Graduates – Measure the quality of teaching credential graduates.
2. Student Learning Outcomes – Measure the degree to which specific student learning outcomes areas were attained in areas aligned with accreditation criteria.
3. School District Values – Identify the specific skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities each school district values when hiring teaching credential graduates.
4. School District Input – Secure school district feedback on improving the quality of graduates and academic programs.

STUDY PROFILE

The school districts surveyed have recruited and hired Cal Poly graduates. Surveys were collected from thirty one (31) school districts during Spring Quarter 2004 in coordination with the Teacher Job Fair and email distribution lists. The surveys were completed by district personnel, including superintendents, assistant superintendents and human resource specialists.

Refer to Appendix A for a detailed breakdown of school districts that participated in the survey.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Career Services collaborated with the UCTE to develop a survey instrument that matches the unique and distinctive nature of the college that would evaluate the quality of teaching credential graduates and learning outcome areas. UCTE identified learning outcomes related to the standards certified by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

While the survey form distinguished between graduates of single subject instruction and multiple subject instruction, many of the respondents did not answer the question. Therefore this aspect of the survey was not addressed in this report.

Refer to Appendix B for a copy of the UCTE Survey Form.

PROJECT FINDINGS

1. QUALITY OF GRADUATES

OBJECTIVE: Measure the quality of teaching credential candidates.

METHODOLOGY: Surveys were conducted with school districts to evaluate the quality of Cal Poly graduates, using a 5-point scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree*).

FINDINGS: School districts reported the following findings:

The percentages reported below show how school districts responded in each of the survey categories. There were not any scores of 1 or 2 (strongly disagree or disagree). 93% of school districts agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the quality of Cal Poly teaching credential graduates, with a scale score average of 4.6.

QUALITY OF UCTE GRADUATES	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Scale Scores
<i>Scale Categories & Scores</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Average</i>
<u>Quality of Graduates</u> - My school district is satisfied with the quality of Cal Poly teaching credential graduates.	7%	23%	70%	4.6

2. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

OBJECTIVE: Measure the degree to which specific student learning outcomes were attained in areas aligned with accreditation criteria.

METHODOLOGY: Surveys were completed by school districts to evaluate specific student learning outcomes aligned with criteria from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, using a 5-point scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree*).

FINDINGS: School districts reported the following findings:

The percentages reported below show how employers responded in each of the survey categories. There were not any scores of 1 or 2 (strongly disagree or disagree), and scale scores averaged between 4.30 and 4.61.

LEARNING OUTCOME AREAS – UCTE	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Scale Scores
<i>Scale Categories & Scores</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Average</i>
<u>Subject Curriculum</u> - Cal Poly graduates know and understand the subject curriculum at grade levels.	0%	38%	62%	4.61
<u>Preparation</u> - Cal Poly graduates are able to prepare lesson plans and students for class activities.	7%	30%	63%	4.57
<u>Classroom Management</u> - Cal Poly graduates manage a class and use classroom time effectively.	3%	47%	50%	4.30
<u>Behavior</u> - Cal Poly graduates manage behavior and discipline satisfactorily.	7%	56%	37%	4.30
<u>Instruction</u> - Cal Poly graduates use an effective mix of teaching strategies and instructional activities.	3%	44%	53%	4.47
<u>Mathematics</u> - Cal Poly graduates are prepared to teach mathematics according to California Content Standards.	10%	31%	59%	4.48
<u>Science</u> - Cal Poly graduates are prepared to teach science according to California Content Standards.	11%	32%	57%	4.46
<u>Reading</u> - Cal Poly graduates are prepared to teach reading according to California Content Standards.	7%	43%	50%	4.43
<u>Communication</u> - Cal Poly graduates are able to communicate effectively with parents or guardians of students.	11%	41%	48%	4.31
<u>Needs</u> - Cal Poly graduates are able to meet the instructional needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds.	7%	47%	46%	4.40
<u>Technology</u> - Cal Poly graduates are able to employ appropriate technology in their instruction of students.	3%	54%	43%	4.40

Subject Curriculum and Preparation received the highest average scale scores of 4.61 and 4.57. Of particular interest are the results for the areas of teaching science, mathematics and reading according to California Content Standards, with respective scores of 4.48, 4.47, and 4.46. California has placed a high demand and need for quality teaching credential graduates in these areas.

3. EMPLOYER VALUES

OBJECTIVE: Identify the specific skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities each school district values when hiring teaching credential graduates.

METHODOLOGY: Respondents were asked to list the specific skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities that their school district values.

FINDINGS: School Districts reported the following values, which were compiled in numerical order based on frequency.

Values	Total	Percent
Knowledge/Technical Teaching Skills/Competency	12	25%
Child/Student Centered	9	19%
Experience	5	10%
Deal with diverse students/ethnic diversity	4	8%
Enthusiasm	3	6%
Personable	3	6%
Credentialed/BCLAD/Bilingual	2	4%
Communication (listen, ask questions)	2	4%
Team player	2	4%
Creative	1	2%
Human relations skills	1	2%
Presentation skills	1	2%
Role Model	1	2%
Teachable	1	2%
Technology	1	2%

The top values were knowledge/technical skills, child/student centered, experience, and dealing with diverse student populations.

4. EMPLOYER INPUT

OBJECTIVE: Secure school district feedback on improving the quality of graduates and academic programs.

METHODOLOGY: School districts were requested to provide suggestions on how Cal Poly might improve its teaching candidates and/or academic program.

FINDINGS: There was limited school district response to this objective. The results, as stated by school district respondents, are categorized below into three areas: Abilities, Credential Types and Other.

ABILITIES

1. *"Making sure that teachers have the ability to endure/embrace change."*
2. *"Ability to adapt to changes in the future."*
3. *"Paramount to the future of education is the ability of teachers to work as a team and not as private practitioners."*
4. *"Ability to be a "good" employee is an ever increasing need."*

CREDENTIAL TYPES

1. *"Push more math/science/AG credential candidates."*
2. *"Strongly encourage candidates in the hard to fill areas (math, Science and special education)."*

OTHERS

1. *"UCSB has a masters degree, a CLAD and have achieved their CTAP II tech equivalent. This puts them ahead to begin with. You might want to have similar requirements for credentialing."*
2. *"Urban school experiences."*

5. SUMMARY & FUTURE PLANS

SUMMARY: Career Services collaborated with the University Center for Teacher Education to evaluate the quality of teaching credential graduates. The results of this survey represent a “quick pulse” from employers on the quality of our graduates and programs.

School districts reported they are very satisfied with the quality of teaching credential graduates. School districts also reported a high level of satisfaction with the graduates that they hired in their level of attainment of the learning outcome areas of subject curriculum, preparation, classroom management, behavior, instruction, science, mathematics, reading, communication, needs and technology. In addition, school districts identified specific skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities they value when hiring teaching credential graduates including knowledge/technical skills, child/student centered, experience, and dealing with diverse student populations. School districts also provided suggestions on how to improve Cal Poly graduates and academic programs through a focus on abilities, credential preferences, and specific program changes.

This final report potentially provides valuable and useful information to the academic college in the following ways:

- ◆ Information can be shared with faculty to strengthen the curriculum.
- ◆ Information can be shared with the academic colleges and departments in supporting accreditation efforts based on student learning outcomes.
- ◆ Information can be shared with industrial advisory boards to continue on-going dialogue with the academic colleges.
- ◆ Information can be shared with students to help them understand the skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities employers’ value and how this impacts hiring.
- ◆ Information may be shared with the University in assessing institutional effectiveness and performance.

Overall, this study supports the claim that teaching credential graduates are of good quality. The study has also promoted on-going dialogue with school districts and the academic colleges about improving and strengthening academic programs serving students.

FUTURE PLANS: UCTE is interested in continuing and expanding the survey process. Future plans would increase the range of school districts surveyed and distinguish between graduates of single subject instruction and multiple subject instruction. UCTE is considering the use of focus groups to conduct a more thorough investigation of perceptions to provide fuller meaning to their responses related to curriculum development, student preparation and other areas that would strengthen the academic program.

Career Services will continue the same collaborative efforts with the College of Architecture and Environmental Design in surveying employers. The college has five separate departments, each under different accreditation boards. The Architecture Department has committed to collaborate with Career Services and will be approaching accreditation. The results of this investigation can be used to support their efforts at evaluating the quality of architecture graduates and programs.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

1	Campbell Union High School District
2	Coast Unified School District
3	Conejo Valley Unified School District
4	Corcoran Unified School District
5	Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School Dist.
6	Delano Union School District
7	East Side Union High School District
8	Eastern Sierra Unified School District
9	Economic Opportunity Commission
10	Franklin Mckinley School District
11	Fresno Unified School District
12	Fresno Unified School District
13	Fruitvale School District
14	Lompoc Unified School District
15	Los Angeles Unified School District
16	Los Olivos School District
17	Madera Unified School District
18	Manteca Unified School District
19	Morgan Hill Unified School District
20	Orcutt Union School District
21	Pacific Unified School District
22	Panama-Buena Vista Union School Dis
23	Paso Robles Joint Union School Dist.
24	River Delta Unified School District
25	Sal Luis Coastal Unified School District
26	Santa Ynez Valley Unified School Dis
27	Soledad Unified School District
28	Sylvan Learning Center
29	Ventura Unified School District
30	Whittier Union High School District
31	William S. Hart Union School District

APPENDIX B
SCHOOL DISTRICT SURVEY



EMPLOYER SURVEY (2003-04)

<p><i>The thoughts and opinions of our school districts are important to us in evaluating the quality of our credential programs and effectiveness of our teaching graduates. Your responses will be treated confidentially. Thank you for your participation.</i></p> <p align="right">Sponsored by UCTE and Career Services</p>							
School District:			Phone Number:				
School Contact:			Email Address:				
Single Subject Instruction			Multiple Subject Instruction				
Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with the statements below:		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
1. Cal Poly graduates know and understand the subject curriculum at grade levels?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Cal Poly graduates are able to prepare lesson plans and students for class activities.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Cal Poly graduates manage a class and use classroom time effectively.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Cal Poly graduates manage behavior and discipline satisfactorily.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Cal Poly graduates use an effective mix of teaching strategies and instructional activities.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Cal Poly graduates are prepared to teach mathematics according to California Content Standards in math.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Cal Poly graduates are prepared to teach science according to California Content Standards in science.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Cal Poly graduates are prepared to teach reading according to California Content Standards in reading.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Cal Poly graduates are able to communicate effectively with parents or guardians of students.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Cal Poly graduates are able to meet the instructional needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Cal Poly graduates are able to employ appropriate technology in their instruction of students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. My school district is satisfied with the quality of Cal Poly teaching credential graduates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please list specific skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities your school district values when hiring teacher candidates.

Do you have any suggestions on how Cal Poly might improve its teaching candidates and/or teaching credential program?

Please feel free to add any additional comments.