



Consortium for Research in Teacher Education (CRTE)

An article appearing in the April 2008 Curriculum and Instruction Newsletter (*C&I Spy*).

Graduate student interest in teacher education as a field of inquiry was the catalyst for the formation of the Consortium for Research in Teacher Education (CRTE). Leading educational researchers Drs. Ken Zeichner and Carl Grant, both of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, visited The University of Texas at Austin in Spring 2007 to discuss the impact of multicultural education on the preparation of teachers and education in general. That lecture attracted numerous graduate students and doctoral candidates from UT who shared a desire to concentrate their coursework and research on various aspects of teacher education. Inspired by their common interests, these graduate students held subsequent conversations about ways to support each other in their research and professional development throughout their years in graduate school and beyond. Soon, the initial enthusiasm of these gatherings morphed into formal goals and a mission statement for what would be CRTE. Over the course of only a few months, a constitution and bylaws were drafted, an executive committee was elected, and Dr. Sherry Field was named faculty advisor. By September 2007, the interdisciplinary graduate student organization known as the Consortium for Research in Teacher Education was born.

During the fall 2007 semester, CRTE held a Bagel Brunch for UT faculty members and researchers from across the campus whose work related to teacher education. The inaugural event was an opportunity for guests to learn about the broad aims of the consortium's founding members and to offer recommendations for producing fiscal and scholarly strength in the beginning stages of the organization's development. With the assistance of College of Education faculty members, it did not take long for word of this new research-focused graduate student organization to spread. To date, the Consortium has a membership of 32 from ten program areas, including Curriculum Studies, Social Studies Education, Language and Literacy Studies, Science and Mathematics Education, Cultural Studies in Education, Multicultural Special Education, Learning Disabilities and Behavior Disorders, Educational Psychology, Foreign Language Education, Bilingual/Bicultural Studies, and Instructional Technology.

The tremendous efforts of its members and faculty advisor has produced several events for this spring, including an induction meeting where Curriculum and Instruction Chair Dr. Larry Abraham spoke about the UTeach program and its national replication; a reading group devoted to exploring theory and its relationship to teacher education specifically; a research "jam" session where students informally converse about their interests in order to clarify their research questions, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies; and a presentation by Dr. Lisa Goldstein about how to navigate the upcoming American Education Research Association Annual Meeting in New York City. With support from the College of Education, CRTE is hosting a one-day teacher education symposium on April 12 in the Sanchez Building. The keynote speakers will be Dr. Susan Goldman and Dr. Jim Pellegrino of the Center for the Study of Instruction, Learning and Teacher Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The theme of this year's symposium is "Modern Challenges in Teacher Education." With their eyes toward long-term partnerships with future alumni and the production of a peer-reviewed publication, the members of CRTE are leading the way for more pronounced teacher education research among graduate students in the College of Education.