PILOTING A SERVICE-LEARNING OPTION IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS’ FIELD EXPERIENCE

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To investigate service-learning as a viable method to cultivate deeper understandings of course objectives

Purpose

Service-learning is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995).

Population

P-5 Curriculum Methods Course
Two 75-minute class periods weekly;
20 hours field experience

25 Juniors
8 students chose the Service-learning option (SL)
17 students chose the traditional field experience (NSL)

Analyses

Comparing the Experiences

- Set goals
- More focus on select activity
- Richer experience
- More critical reflection
- Focus on the students’ success

BEGINNING, MIDDLE, AND ENDPOINT RATINGS

Understanding

Contribution

Comparisons of Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series</th>
<th>Pre-Test</th>
<th>Post-Test</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>8.58</td>
<td>21.38</td>
<td>95.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSL</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>23.55</td>
<td>93.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflections

"There is no better feeling than knowing you helped a child change for the better." SL2

References


Conclusions

Students participating in the service-learning (S-L) option demonstrated attainment of the course objectives, reflected upon their desire to continue using service-learning with their future classrooms, and demonstrated civic awareness and responsibility.

- Continue implementing S-L in the course
- Provide more instruction/training in the theoretical basis/understanding of S-L
- Establish S-L partnership schools for future classes

Reflections

“A bonus I have gotten to see towards the end of my time with him is watching his AR scores improve” SL7.

“I met my goal of getting(student) to better understand math and be able to complete a worksheet without getting an answer wrong” SL6.

“I am excited to get help a student reach a goal that may not have been reachable to them before” SL8.

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