EVALUATION REPORT OF THE 1968–69
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
CULTURAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST
AND ASSOCIATE PROGRAM:
INDIAN AMERICAN AND AFRO-AMERICAN
ASPECTS
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Introduction

Bringing a sense of relevance and vitality to course work dealing with community problems presents an interesting challenge to the concerned faculty member. A major problem in all on-campus courses concerned with the community and its problems resides in the absence of minority faculty to teach these courses.

In the fall of 1968 interested faculty at the University of Minnesota discussed the possibility of using New Careerists as consultants in course work in which social problems, poverty, and race were studied. It was assumed that New Careerists, properly chosen for personal knowledge of inner-city life and for the ability to express this knowledge to students would be able to contribute a fresh and vigorous component to the conventional presentation of many on-campus courses. Out of the discussions held by faculty and others came a project known as the Cultural Educational Specialists Program. The program was funded on a trial basis by the University of Minnesota Center for Curriculum Studies, and provided that selected New Careerists be bound to the University by a letter of agreement and paid $100 per month (or $300 per quarter) for their services to a particular class or research project. In every case, it was understood that New Careerists operating as Cultural Education Specialists (CES) would cooperate with faculty on an equal status basis - that is, Specialists were not to be seen as teaching assistants or the like, but as tandem teachers or tandem researchers working with faculty in an egalitarian manner. It was assumed that this kind of relationship was necessary for the full utilization of Specialist experiences and talents. In the past, many professors at the University of Minnesota have utilized community speakers and consultants for their classes and research projects. But a major problem with this style of utilization has been the episodic nature of community involvement with the classroom and
with research projects. Therefore, the CES program was designed to provide continuity in community relations to the University on a pilot basis.

In the fall of 1968, school administrators in the Minneapolis Public School System were asked to provide the University of Minnesota Center for Curriculum Development with application forms from interested New Careerists who might wish to become Cultural Education Specialists. School administrators and supervisors of New Careerists were asked to recommend "persons who are qualified to provide services based upon their life experiences as minority persons or non-minority persons who have experienced poverty." From this application process about twenty forms were secured which were placed on file for review by interested professors in the offices of the Center for Curriculum Development. Of these twenty applications, five were selected by interested faculty for teaching and research projects under letter of agreement for the fall quarter, 1968. The twenty New Career aides who provided applications were asked questions pertaining to age, sex, marital status, number of children, ethnic background, identification with the ethnic community, and community activities.¹ From these twenty respondents, 18 strongly identified with an ethnic or poverty community; 16 were very active in residence groups; and all but one expressed an intention to pursue a career in teaching (9), social work (6), or some related means of reaching the poor with social services. Most of the applicants were at least 30 years of age, were or had been married, and in three quarters of the cases were black.

The first two Specialists were chosen to work in education courses: The School and Society for undergraduates (numbered H. Ed. 90 in the College of Education) and Intercultural Education: Indian-American Populations (numbered H. Ed. 110a in the College of Education). Three major criteria were employed for Specialist selection for these two courses: ethnic background, sympathy

¹See the Appendix for the complete application format.
with minority communities, and ability to communicate and articulate ideas to students. Later Specialists were selected to work with social work students participating in a community live-in project; in the School of Dentistry in a course concerning the effects of environment on dental hygiene, and the attitudes of poverty residents to dental care; in sociology in a course on crime and delinquency; and in General College courses in social studies classes dealing with Indian history, art, literature and music.

This pilot project was evaluated by Nanceye Belding through the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, which also had an interest in the project. From the experience of the fall quarter of 1968, Miss Belding stated:

It appears possible to conclude that the idea of employing community people for active participation in the educational process at the University of Minnesota can be and was successfully instituted, in that professors were stimulated to creative uses of Specialist talents; undergraduate education students responded positively to the learning experience; and Specialists themselves felt that the experience was enriching and broadening for them personally.

It was expected by Miss Belding that the use of the particular talents and insights of New Careerists would be expanded into other teaching and counselling roles, and that the cooperation of other employing agencies would be sought to enlarge the possibilities for further participation of New Careerists in various University projects. Since the research project funded by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs was only sustained for the first quarter of the Cultural Education Specialist Program, much of the material contained in this report and several of the suggested findings will be based upon two quarters of less carefully researched and codified project experience. But in essence, the quoted findings from Miss Belding's fall research project hold essentially true for the remaining two quarters of the project which could not be funded for research. In this brief report, we will expand upon Miss Belding's fall quarter findings, relate these research findings to the experiences of the winter and spring quarters, suggest tentative conclusions regarding the project, and provide suggestions concerning the possible future of the project, particularly
in the academic year 1969-1970. The report will conclude with a section of appendices which will provide the interested reader with details about the research format, questionnaires and interview schedules, and certain findings in data form.

The Fall Quarter, 1968 Use of Cultural Education Specialists

In recent years certain programs have been designed to bring people from "low income communities" into jobs as paraprofessional trainees in teaching, social work, and related occupations in education and social service. It was hoped that many of these people would eventually gain entry into full-fledged professional careers, through various types of training and education. This hope was tied to planned institutional changes leading toward the development of "new careers", especially in human service occupations. This goal is still far from realization. However, in the Minneapolis New Careers Program there are people who have spent over a year working for the public schools as teacher and social work aides while attending classes at the University of Minnesota. Administrators of the New Careers Program have noted that there are many New Careerists in this group who feel a strong identification and empathy with the minority community in which they live, and yet at the same time possess remarkable verbal abilities which they are eager to use in helping professionals to interpret the needs and attitudes of the poor.

A group of professors at the University who have followed the New Careers Program with interest decided that these people had something to contribute to the university classroom in which problems of poverty and of minorities were studied. For some time certain professors have episodically drawn upon the professional resources of the community to give guest lectures. It was now felt, however, that such experiences should be rewarding and cumulative for the community person. The person ought to feel that he played a vital part in the structuring of the course and the generation of student response;
he ought to enjoy equal status with professors; he ought to be paid for his
services; and, if possible, he ought to obtain a partial work release from
his demanding role as New Careerist.

In the fall of 1968 a small number of New Careerists were selected by
professors to work with them throughout the quarter on a consultant basis
rather than as teaching assistants. The combined efforts of University and
Minneapolis public school administrators resulted in the securing of sufficient
funds for 1968-69 in which to pay a maximum of twelve people for one quarter
each, the sum of $100 per month. The schools agreed, with permission of the
immediate supervisor, to allow a work release with pay of up to 5 hours per
week. Although it was originally hoped that twelve persons could be hired
during the first quarter, this did not work out. The funds were not secured
until early September, and by this time many professors had already planned
their fall course schedules. A total of five aides were selected, and con-
tracted to work for four professors. This report is a documentation of their
experiences during the Fall Quarter, 1969.

Use of Specialists in H. Ed. 90, School and Society

The professor listed the functions of the two Specialists as:
modification of the curriculum, organization of class materials, participation
in class discussions, presentation of lecture, and discussing course problems
outside of class hours. The usual approach to the class was a lecture,
dominated by the professor, and a discussion period in which the Specialists
were heavily involved. They answered questions relating to various kinds of
inner-city school problems - discipline, communication, community involvement.

Use of Specialists in H. Ed. 110a, Intercultural Education: Indian American
Populations

The lecture generally was given by the professor and took up about half
of the class period. It dealt with sociological concepts which relate to the
problems of urban Indian populations. The professor listed the areas of
Specialist participation as: modification of curriculum, organization of class materials, participation in class discussions, presentation of lecture, advising students or discussing course problems outside of class hours, and administering or grading tests. The usual manner in which class proceeded was a 75 minute lecture, followed by 90 minutes arranged by the Specialist in which one or several community persons acquainted with problems of city Indians would address themselves to a topic planned by the Specialist, and answer the questions of the class.

Use of Specialists in the Community Live-In Project

Eight social work students, four men and four women, lived in a south Minneapolis ghetto community during fall quarter in an attempt to learn first-hand what the problems and life experiences of the resident poor were actually like. The Specialist, a middle-aged Black male who had resided in Minneapolis for years, served as interpreter to the students, as community liaison. He tried to get them involved in meetings of community action groups, and to explain some of the feelings of southside residents. The kinds of formal work done frequently were listed by the professor as: organization of class materials, participation in class discussions, and advising students or discussing course problems outside of class hours.

Use of Specialists in the Dentistry Course

A professor in the School of Dentistry was planning a course to be given in the spring quarter concerning the effects of environment upon dental hygiene. She enlisted the services of the same Specialist who worked in the community live-in project, and described his work as "consultation" and "providing information about the low-income community." In planning the course, the professor felt that the Specialist's comments were of use in several ways which could be utilized further by the School of Dentistry: helping the faculty to contact minority group persons, sensitizing them to minority group attitudes regarding dental care, and reaching the community with information regarding
the "values, needs, and opportunities available" in dentistry.

Evaluation of Specialist Roles by Participating Professors

Each of the three participating professors was asked, "What do you see as the primary value(s) in utilizing Specialists at the University?" Although the responses varied in specific content, there was unanimous agreement that the greatest educational asset of the Specialist was his ability to serve as a two-way bridge between the academic community and the minority or poverty community. One professor noted in addition that his liaison role could lead to a lessening of the racial and class biases (partly unconscious) held by the professor himself, thus enriching the knowledge of both students and professors. Also, each of the professors felt that the Specialist had broadened his own horizons and developed his abilities through his service. The only exception to this occurred when the Specialist who was "shared" felt that he deserved double payment for the time he put in. Because of a misunderstanding he did not, however, receive extra money. Such situations can be prevented in the future by assigning each Specialist only to one person in any given quarter. New Careerists already have a heavy work load as students and aides, but most are willing to contribute maximally if the Specialist role is clearly defined and maintained within reasonable time limits.

The professors praised the competence of their Specialists highly. Mrs. A in Dentistry stated, "His help was very valuable and worthwhile."
The other professors ranked each Specialist on the kinds of work performed. The social work Specialist was rated as excellent in class discussion, and good in organization of class materials and advising students (possible rankings were: excellent, good, average, fair, poor). Specialists in the School and Society class were rated excellent on all categories except organization of class materials and presentation of lecture, which were "good." The Specialist in Intercultural Education: Indian American Populations was rated excellent in all categories except presentation of lecture ("good")
and advising students ("average").

In sum, all participating professors were enthusiastic about both possibilities and results in this sustained attempt to confront students and the educational process with persons from low income communities. And given the articulateness and humanism of the Specialists chosen, it appeared that the more challenging the role assigned, the more rewarding were the results for professor and Specialist alike.

Student Response from H. Ed. 90, School and Society

At the time of the final examination in this undergraduate education course a brief questionnaire was administered to the students. It contained questions on the demographic makeup of the class, on opinions concerning the value of the Specialists in the class, on how the class perceived overall Specialist utilization, and how the class perceived overall Specialist competence. The findings are summarized below.

Demographic Makeup of the Class

Most of the thirty-six class members were young, middle class white adults. Persons ranged in age from twenty through thirty-nine years; the mean age was 23.5 - over half of the class was just 21 years old. About seventy-eight percent of the class was female, with only eight males enrolled. Sixty-nine percent of the class was single, with eleven married students. No one was divorced, separated or widowed. These breakdowns are in sharp contrast to corresponding figures for a class made up of New Careerists, where most persons fell into the last four categories. Everyone in the School and Society class was of European descent, again in contrast to the New Careerists pool from whom Specialists were chosen. Nearly half of these persons were black. On a question regarding "your occupation or intended occupation", all student responses fell into the "professional" category. Since this was a course in education, most of the students intended to be teachers.
Perceived Value of the Program to Students

All respondents felt that Specialists did have a unique contribution to make to this course. In terms of the area in which the Specialists contributed, only two persons felt that the area was "textbook or lecture materials." Thirty-one persons - eighty-six percent of the respondents - felt that contributions were made through the Specialists' "sensitivity to human behavior." The same number of persons felt that Specialists had knowledge to contribute concerning "a cultural or ethnic group in this country." One person also wrote that he felt another contribution made by Specialists was the "improving of education in the inner city schools."

Perceived Utilization of the Specialists in Class

The greatest concurrence of opinion was that Specialists frequently participated in class discussions. On the other items, "curriculum planning or overall course design", "organization of class materials or lecture notes"; and "advising students or discussing course problems outside of class hours", about half of the responses indicated that the Specialist did work in these areas, and most of the remaining responses were in the "don't know" category.

Perceived Overall Competence of the Specialists

Over half (fifty-two percent) of the class rated the overall competence of Specialists as "excellent." Another thirty-eight percent rated competence as "good." Only two persons rated competence as "average", and no one rated competence as "below average". In addition, one person wrote in that he felt the Specialists were making a unique contribution to the educational system.

Recommendations from the Fall Quarter Research Project

From experiences in the fall quarter of 1968, it appears possible to conclude that the idea of employing community people for active participation in the educational process at the University can be successfully instituted, in that 1) professors were stimulated to creative uses of Specialists' talents;
2) undergraduate education students have responded positively to learning experiences where Specialists were involved; and 3) Specialists indicated that the experience was enriching and broadening for them personally.

An important factor in these initial successes was undoubtedly the impressive qualifications of the Specialists who were selected. They were leaders of their own communities who came highly recommended by the professionals with whom they worked as teacher aides: they were able to adequately articulate the problems of the poor community. This is not to say that there are very few community people who could be functional Specialists. In fact, the hurried application process conducted early in the fall turned up over a dozen, in addition to those selected, who showed equal promise. Yet, while it is important to remember that the above selection criteria are not possessed in equal measure by all poor people, it is astounding to discover that such a hurried canvass could produce so many undoubtedly qualified persons!
Winter and Spring Quarters

The Cultural Education Specialist Program continued on the same basis during the winter quarter as in the preceding quarter. About the same number of Specialists were employed, and about the same duties were performed by Specialists. In the winter quarter a new experience for Specialists began when they came into contact with large numbers of graduate students for the first time. Most of these graduate students were concentrated in one class. Two Specialists were assigned to this class, and from the beginning it was evident that their adjustment problems would be different and perhaps greater than in previous experiences.

Social Class Structures and Latent Racism

Two fundamental goals of the Cultural Education Specialist Program have been to acquaint students and Specialists with social class and racial backgrounds different from their own experiences. The graduate students who encountered the two black Specialists in the winter quarter class just noted offered a formidable challenge. How could the learning process be enhanced through the use of two black Specialists trying to "teach" approximately forty masters and doctoral candidates specializing in education? This question was never adequately resolved. From the first, the Specialists associated with this class were nervous about the formidable problem presented to them. The graduate students themselves were also confronted by a situation that was entirely new to them. Unfortunately, many of the graduate students in the course reacted with bewilderment and irritation to the idea that two uneducated black men had anything of particular importance to say to them about formal education. These attitudes were made apparent early in the quarter and were sustained through the remainder of the quarter. As the Specialists became more aware of the pervasive feeling of the graduate students, they became less will-
ing to take an aggressive role in communicating with the students. One
Specialist solved his problem by working with a "splinter group" of CLA
undergraduates who were members of the course. This group met apart from the
larger class and discussed the class lecture and reading material in a seminar
environment. Here, the Specialist was able to find a role for himself and to
be accepted by a number of students who wished to hear of his experiences and
to consider his suggestions for school reorganization and change.

The second Specialist, finding himself alone in the class dominated by
graduate students, ended on a note of quiet withdrawal from the class but for-
fortunately not from the instructor. The difficulties of the Specialist were dis-
cussed many times in private, and he realized that the communications barrier
had nothing fundamental to do with his own personality, but instead was rela-
ted to the graduate students' perceptions of a "properly qualified" college
teacher. The class instructor and the Specialist agreed that the graduate
students did not see ample virtue in the fact that the Specialist was black, of
a poverty-level background, and able to articulate his life experiences. They
found him to be unacceptable because he was unlicensed as a professional in-
structor, and perhaps further unqualified because of his ethnic and social
class background. It is important to note that many of the graduate students
in the course were full-time principals, assistant principals, and superinten-
dents in various Twin Cities metropolitan area school systems.

Overall, the Specialists who worked with this class did not come away
embittered by their experience. They were, like the instructor, the wiser for
their involvement. A third Specialist, a black woman, also met resistance in
an undergraduate course where some highly vocal students regarded her as over-
ly militant. This woman, who enjoys a reputation for moderate and pleasant
emotional relationships with others, found herself startled by the responses of
some students. As she attempted to probe the responses throughout the quar-
ter she remarked increasingly that she found "some of these students to be im-
possible". The end of the quarter found her to be somewhat more militant in
her outlook on race relations than she had been prior to the start of the win-
ter quarter. Again, some students in the class where the Specialist worked
found themselves unable to accept her because of her "lack of qualifications"
and, we assume from private talks with some of the students, her "low class"
background. These kinds of student impressions should not be unexpected and do
reveal the very core value of the Cultural Education Specialist Program itself:
the uncovering and delineation of social class and ethnic barriers that oper-
ate at all levels of formal education to prevent effective teaching and learn-
ing. Therefore, the "negative" experiences of some Specialists and some stu-
dents should only serve to point up the need for more, not less, contacts of
the kind that the Specialist Program made possible. The drawing together in a
dialogue context of minority people, and students from the white, middle class
majority society offers one avenue for the resolution of class and race differ-
ences that manifest themselves devastatingly in formal education, especially in
the early school years.

Continued High Spirit of Specialists

Despite the problems just sketched, the general feeling of the Cultural
Education Specialists in the program has been a positive one from beginning to
end. The professors who have worked with the Specialists, as well as the stu-
dents who have been in classes with Specialists generally feel that the program
has been useful and beneficial. Moreover, many Specialists, professors, and
students agree that there are some useful devices for improving the program:

Orientation: Orientation is necessary, especially for upper
division and graduate students who find it difficult to
relate to minority persons in the role of the teaching specialist. Some orientation might also be necessary for the less open-minded younger students, although this is not regarded as a serious problem.

Publicity: The publicity procedures which operated during the first year of the program were inadequate for provision of full information to faculty. A center should be clearly identified where a file of interested professors, a list of eligible persons for Specialist roles, and reports from experienced professors should be kept. Such an information bank would be useful to professors and community persons alike who might wish to become involved in the Specialist program.

Building a Specialist Progression Ladder

As the title of this document indicates, the program did provide for an escalation of position based upon experience and previous training. One Specialist did become a Cultural Education Associate in the spring quarter of 1969 because he was able to share equally the full lecture duties with a professor. This was tandem teaching in the fullest sense, and indicated that non-degreed persons (the Associate was, in this case, in his final quarter of the sophomore year) can provide high-quality intellectual services for classroom students despite their own incomplete formal educations. The same Specialist was instrumental in the formulation of plans for a new ethnic studies department on the campus of the University, and is currently engaged as a staff member of the General College. His example is a fairly singular one in the history of the Specialist and Associate program, but it is assumed that further opportunities for the emergence and development of persons such as this would
result in more gratifying discoveries of highly exceptional individuals.

Program Continuation

On the basis of the formal research conducted during the first third of the Cultural Education Specialist Program, and on the basis of two succeeding quarters of experience upon which impressionistic data were gathered, it is strongly recommended that the Cultural Education Specialist and Associate Program be provided with funding for a second pilot development year. It is further recommended that each major division within the University be contacted at an appropriate level for acquaintance with the past year of the Program, and that central administration funding be provided on a pilot basis for those division wishing to participate in a second program year. Finally, it is recommended that a twelve-month ongoing research program of adequate scope and depth be funded so that complete data may be gathered over the full operating span of the second pilot year.

Should the program enter into a second pilot year, it would seem advisable to expand the input of Specialists beyond the Minneapolis Public Schools New Careers or 89-10 Elementary and Secondary Education Act aide-pool. An expansion of the Aide reservoir beyond the Minneapolis Public Schools would tap a considerable population of adult poverty-level persons who may have had up to several years of experience in such agencies as law enforcement, welfare, housing, health, and the like. An expansion of the input of Specialists and Associate applications would seem to favor the developing interest of departments not directly concerned with formal education.

Budgeting

Funds on the order of five thousand dollars were expended by the Center for Curriculum Development and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs to support the program last year. A recommendation has been made by members of
the Center for Curriculum Development to increase the amount paid to Specialists and Associates over the present level of one hundred dollars per month. This suggestion is based upon an assessment of Specialist reaction to the funding level set for last year's program. Funding for the 1969-70 proposed program should therefore be seen in the light of an expanded salary level. While no firm suggestions have been made for the level of expansion, it has been proposed that a sliding scale of from between $150 and $200 per month be considered. This scale would enhance the salary picture for Specialists and Associates in two ways: it would raise the base level of pay, and it would provide for an increment of salary based upon experience and performance.

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