

3 **Negotiating Differences: Early Field Experiences in a Diverse Middle School**

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ABSTRACT

Institutions of teacher education face a challenge of preparing teachers with the capacity to provide high-quality instruction to the increasingly diverse student populations in our nation's schools. In an effort to better prepare our middle level preservice students to teach in diverse settings, we engaged in a case study of one group of students enrolled in two general pedagogy courses in our middle school teacher preparation program. Analyzing course assignments and interview data through a critical lens, we explored both the change and lack of change in our students' understanding of diversity over the course of one semester. We also describe the factors we believe contributed to the changes and lack thereof and how these findings inform our practice as teacher educators.