



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

A Modern Philosophy of Immersion for Teacher Preparation



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Introduction:

The National Center for Education Statistics reported that school enrollment by race/ethnicity in 1991 was 67.4% white; 2011 enrollment reported a decrease in white student population to 51.7%.

The changing demographics of the student population create a need for cultural immersion in preservice teacher training (Waddell, 2011).





Introduction:

Preparing agriscience teachers to meet the needs of a changing global environment in the 21st century is critical for their career success.

A Modern Philosophy of Immersion for Teacher Preparation (Whittington, 2014) was implemented to address the need.

Merriam-Webster (2015) defined immersion as, “complete involvement in some activity or interest.”

For the purposes of this study, “a 21st century curriculum of immersion in agriscience teacher preparation, is one that mixes non-traditional context-setting with traditional, tested teaching approaches like problem-solving, and adds delivery strategies like experiential learning (Whittington, 2014, p. 1).”³



Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study was to describe preservice agriscience teachers' perceptions of a cultural immersion experience during the autumn 2014 semester prior to student teaching.

The findings of this study will frame future educational experiences for preparing preservice teachers for 21st century global agriscience education classrooms.



Objectives of the Study:

Describe a cultural immersion experience for preservice agriscience teachers.

Assess preservice teachers' self-perceptions of their preparedness to teach in a 21st century agriscience classroom.

Assess preservice teachers' self-reflections of their cultural immersion experience.





Conceptual Framework:

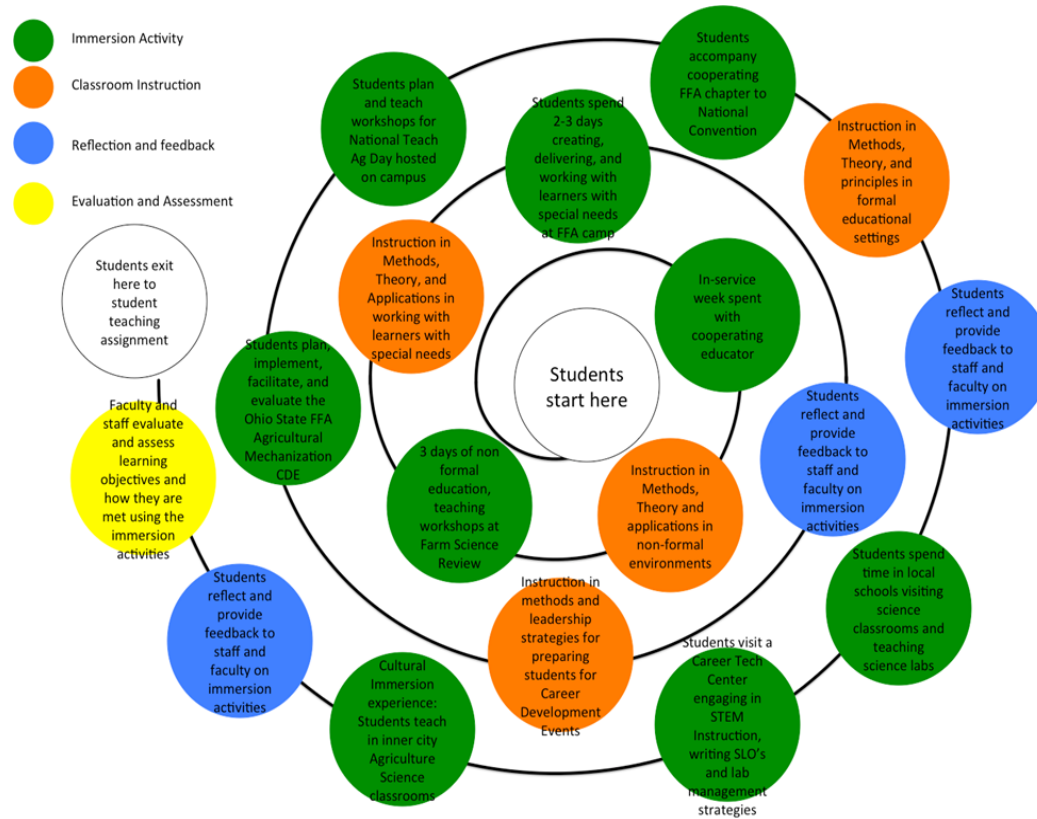


Figure 1. A Conceptual Image for a Modern Philosophy of Immersion for Teacher Preparation (Ray & Whittington, 2014).



Population and Methods:

Census of preservice agriscience teachers
($N=10$)

Caucasian population of
four females and six
males

Seniors

Descriptive study

Survey

Focus group



Findings:

- Objective 1
 - Nashville Academy
 - Career Tech x academic core
 - Global 21st century environment
 - Ethnic origins represented
 - Shadowing
 - Planning
 - Teaching
 - Reflecting



Findings:

Objective 2

Although preservice teachers felt prepared to teach in a 21st century agriscience classroom, one said, “I was well prepared, but I could have made sure I understood how the teacher dealt with classroom discipline so I could do the same.”

Another said, “We need to understand the kids we will be teaching beforehand better.”





Findings:

- Objective 3

“Got to see how ag is put into inner city”.

“Gave me a different perspective on the way ag can be taught”.

“Gave me experience on how it is to be in a non-traditional ag classroom”.

“Urban Agriculture teaching is very different compared to rural teaching.”



Conclusions and Recommendations:

- Implementing a Modern Philosophy of Immersion for Teacher Preparation provided an experiential learning opportunity unmatched by traditional classroom instruction.
- Preservice teachers gained valuable experience before entering student teaching and are better prepared to meet the growing diverse needs of their students.
- It is recommended that the preservice teacher curriculum continue to be examined for further immersion opportunities.



Questions?

