Student Feedback
Summary

The panels used in this session were asked to respond to two questions: What does the College do right? What areas could the College do better? The responses below were collated from notes that 10 faculty members submitted following the session. It should be noted that the 15 students participating on the panels were nominated by faculty and do not represent the full cross section of COE students.

College/Student Interaction
• Student advisory council enhances learning –connection with college SAC. Great that students have a council…an entity to make students' experiences better also great opportunities for students to present their work…symposiums, etc

• A lot of opportunities and support to present at outside conference and meet and get feedback from authors of the texts she is reading

• Feel connected to departments not college as a whole, need a better connection to COE

• Many full time grad students have jobs during the day and do not spend time on campus. COE needs some way to embrace new student to feel part of the bigger college. Have college do more to embrace new students (reception?),

• Case in point. Master's student drawn to FAU from Ohio…"what brought you to FAU?" She visited the campus and students had positive things to say about the program. Up-beat friendly environment that encourages learning - opportunity to explore different possibilities within the field - website one of the tools that drew her in with Detailed descriptions of courses.

• COE needs to be more agile to what is going on in the real world---be more flexible to change to respond to this new context. Forward thinking is needed.

Faculty/Student Interaction
• Diversity of faculty and their input as well as classmates is special to FAU… Experience of culture and thought and background…   A lot of diversity –faculty & students

• Faculty genuinely care about our education and are also good mentors. Students feel like they are part of a community.

• Mentoring within the program areas by fellow students and faculty mentoring within the program areas makes a difference - this college does better than others.

• Like Faculty that have expertise in discipline area and faculty who are well-connected

• Undergraduate experience. Extensive office hours. Professors very responsive and very available….even gave cell phone numbers.

• Master's student: faculty is amazing, advisors make themselves available..took her under his wing showed the ropes of the program; providing opportunities for educational and career development…finds professors love what they do…they enjoy teaching

• Professors very responsible about responding to email and keeping office hours.

SOME COURSE CONTENT

- <u>Undergraduate level</u> - Conceptual framework is used in establishing goal, examination of texts. Too much overlap in some courses. Do not see how to be the agent of change in their classes. Taught more to fit in. UG level not intellectually taxing for Elem Ed majors. More critical thinking and process of learning. Need to know how to teach with standards and assessments - the what and the how. Critical thinking is not emphasized in the process of learning via modeling—all college classes are testing but not using the critical thinking processes of assessments. Make the right decisions and the why. Would love to see and work with master teachers or other high level teachers who can manage new challenges in classroom. Tech courses not useful; Redundancy, Lack of critical thinking. Assignments are projects that are time consuming but not cognitive/reflective. Faculty disconnect with "real classrooms." Adjuncts better in this regard. Need more experience learning with special populations.

  - At least one overview of Early Childhood education be provided to those who are seeking an undergraduate elementary degree. "I know through my practice as a teacher that early childhood concepts such as developmentally appropriate practice need to be examined and discussed in detail so that teachers who leave FAU to begin teaching in K-3 would be well versed in subjects such as brain development, brain based research, DAP, early learning strategies, play-as-academics, multiple intelligences, and the like that create the base of early learning experiences."

  - Importance of ESE and ESOL - Reality is that we are going to have majority of students as ESE and ESOL learners. Main disappointment is that there is a little bit lacking in preparation for these future educators. One class in ESE. ESE and ESOL prep not very good or practical as need some speakers who are challenged to talk about their experiences, Need more exposure to ESL and ESOL training. Need another class---need some ESL adults to speak to students—real-life-not just as an "add-on." Integrate the curriculum throughout the experience. Classes that should give you a ton of information: we lump them all together and do not differentiate students….need to integrate into classes more info on diverse learners. Unique multicultural program, love flexibility, support by faculty, mentoring, diversity of students and faculty,

- <u>Masters level</u> - More opportunities to explore specialty areas - Would like to see more opportunities for master's level research in her program and more opportunities to explore specialty areas in program - new electives Research opportunities - want more opportunities for master's research and more electives, Some disconnect with "Real World". More learning than memorizing at grad level. Some use of experiential learning. Give practical experience and have students armed with materials to use later. Some Flexibility

- <u>Doctoral level -</u> Rigorous, thought provoking and includes critical thinking. For some, more on how to be a professor - Would like more opportunity to learn more about how to teach as a professor/best teaching practice for a college teacher. Need more instruction as to how to be a "promotable" faculty member. More involvement in professor's research.

SOME COURSE DELIVERY

- Like - when professors had former students as class speakers to share their experiences—connect and relate opportunities. Easier to relate to these students. Encourages and lends confidence. = Translators.

- Helpful when professor has relationship textbook authors

- Reflective activities have helped in all the classes

- Instruction flexibility is important since some students still working

- Dislike - Buying a book and never using it is ridiculous---some of the reading assignments may not be required or reinforced

- Statistics need teaching assistants to aid with the class

- Some faculty and programs have disconnected with "Real World" Over past few years pace has speeded up. Departments need to be more connected to what is going on now. And to push students. Rather than "this is what it is… this is what it could be"…need to connect content knowledge to practice. (i.e., RTI). Professor need to learn RPI (response to intervention, which is a behavior management protocol used by the schools). Ensure that professors are relevant in the field and support those that provide relevant-real life exposure.

- Many professors still assess students in a traditional way. What have we been modeled? Very traditional assessments being modeled although we talk a lot about alternative methods of assessment, want more.

- Career and Technical Academy—need more teachers-opportunity to train new peoples

- Feel we are not quite as prepared as we need to be—the semester length exposure may not be enough—need to go more in depth with content.

- **Grads** need to be able to go out into this new environment and be able to operate. How do you adapt as a leader? As a teacher regardless of what the issues area push to become active engaged leaders. "I have a lot of experience but need more implementation of the processes."

- Undergraduate level - Conceptual framework is used in the classes. Use of adjuncts is good---appear to be valuable because it is real world. Wonderful to have professors who are also clinicians...Gives perspective you wouldn't just get from the textbook, very hands on…a lot of experiential learning is very valuable. More use of class speakers who are students or adults who had gone through program as students…would also like more guest speakers of people with disabilities…so much could be gained if you had adults or parents of student come in to talk...make it more real…with ESOL. Do you feel as though you know math, social studies, and science? **Student Answer:** Yes at the level we are teaching but there is a significant difference between delivery systems of the course you are taking. It depends on the professor.

- Masters level - Like school-based adjuncts, like Saturday courses and fast track scheduling (but don't overlap fast track courses), Great job on focus giving practical experience to the students…professors need to give tools and materials not just learning the text. Fast Track and varied schedules help. Over lapping of FastTrack classes can be a problem—scheduling issues

- <u>Doctoral level.</u> - One of the best parts is working with the cohort at the doctoral level. Cohort allows for in depth involvement and support. Opportunities and encouragement to create and present research. Keep the focus on cohorts and serving adults on weekends and evenings

RIGOR

- They are receiving a quality education and are generally well-prepared, especially when compared with students from other local institutions. FAU -" Cheaper and harder."

- Rigor of the online and face-to-face classes - Is there a difference in the delivery system—online versus face-to-face? OL was as in-depth as FTF. There may be a difference in experiences between face-to-face, versus online, versus Fast Track based on program levels and based on who delivers the instruction. The delivery may not be the issue.

- Some say, rigor is dependent upon the instructor. Others say, rigor is a function of what student brings to class - some dig deep and others don't - professor has a role in this.

- A Redo climate: if work is not done correctly. Some faculty allow redo - others say it's a learning experience.

- 9 of 12 students gave us a low score (4 – 6 out of 10) for rigor. "To my mind, this is not an issue of making the courses *harder* for the sake of making them harder. Rather, as articulated by one student, the issue is allowing the student to be challenged and reach his or her potential. "

- Several students expressed frustration specifically with the Ed research and statistics classes. . . There are more than a few students each semester who are ill-prepared to handle the challenge of these classes and, as such, it limits or inhibits the level of instruction." Personally, I'm concerned when the title of the textbook for a graduate statistics class is "Statistics for people who hate statistics" The issue of rigor notwithstanding, what kind of message does this send? Some of the methods courses were not as rigorous. Need a mixed methods course.

- Several students also stated that there is too much "overlap" in some of their other courses, with material being repeated.

- Education may not be intellectually taxing—there is a heavy creation of projects in teacher education.

- Elementary Ed majors could have stronger content

- Finally, students expressed a desire to be more involved with their professors' research.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

- Frustration with the existing technology infrastructure at FAU in general. FAU laptops in tech classrooms don't work well enough. Blackboard is awful and awkward. Blackboard is not the best platform. Evaluate the other options-Moodle better and less expensive.

- Some on-line classes allow students to take exams twice while providing answers for the second exam (the one that "counts", I assume). This is not just a problem with technology but with the instructors of record.

- Ensure our faculty is provided relevant in service in technology and that our technology courses are current. Professors aren't technically savvy enough to use smart classrooms to full advantage so students don't learn how, "I Never seen SmartBoard used---"

- Cell phones and Skype and net books should be used.

EDUCATIONAL TECH PREPARATION

- Tech courses not useful as could be: undergrad tech class not very helpful as it is a rehash of the 2000 level, largely redundant, repetitive. The courses in Educational Technology appear to be at a very basic level and students felt they were not really learning much that they didn't already know. Basics of technology need to be expanded-give the practical aspect. Book and lecture same thing

- A technology course should move you beyond Excel and creating Word documents and PowerPoints Need new Tools

- Skype via Netbook—PDAs for teachers to play catch-up to the students
  - iPad
- SmartBoards
- Image boards
- Podcasts/videos

- New course needs
  - to teach instruction in a virtual environment
  - students need to learn to use equipment and teach in smart classrooms,

DISTANCE LEARNING DELIVERY

- Is technology embedded in the classroom? No, but this should be part of what is being taught in the classroom.

- Over lapping between courses of assignments—some overlap of required work where an assignment can be used for several courses.

- Issues of cheating in online classes, i.e., Distance learning "tests." Ability to copy questions and answers then go back in and redo. While test items may be rotated they are still the same items.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

- Did not see a lot of what is in the job market when we are in field placement and internships—not as much in class Reduce frustration and exiting from the field. Need more information as to how to deal with barriers.
- "Having come from a profession that is less than professional, and going into a field where I work closely with colleagues and parents, it would have been helpful to have a course that focuses on topics such as these: work place conduct, colleague interactions, ethics in the work place and in the field of education, writing skills for a public school environment, parent contact and interactions, and the like" "I find that it would be essential for this university to create a course that focuses primarily on professional conduct in the workplace."

Resource people: Undergraduate: Rachel Currie, Julie Parrish, Molly Mueller, William Gow, Christi Parkinson. Graduate: Naomi Feigenbaum, Debora Robinson, Jennifer Ann Mullhall, Rachayita Shah, Fran Kamin, Tommy Tucker, Iveline Metellus. Graduates: Patrick Walden, Jennifer Freeland, April Slavin