

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Disciplined Inquiry in Education Seminar Series

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117 Satterlee Hall

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Unmasking the Script: Voices of Pre-service Teachers Navigating Mandated Instruction

Abstract: As teacher preparation programs increasingly align with mandated curricula and standardized pedagogical frameworks, a critical tension emerges: the friction between institutional compliance and the organic development of professional identity. This collaborative inquiry, conducted alongside a cohort of pre-service teachers, explores how rigid, "top-down" curricular requirements act as a constricting force during clinical experiences. Through a qualitative lens, we investigate the specific ways these mandates can "strip" future educators of their agency, often reducing the complex act of teaching to a series of scripted deliveries. Our narrative data suggests that when the curriculum is overly prescribed, pre-service teachers struggle to cultivate a unique professional voice, leading to a sense of identity fragmentation. By centering the voices of the students themselves, this presentation moves beyond theoretical critiques to provide a grounded look at the lived experience of "becoming" a teacher within a restrictive system.

