

Abstract

Defining equity is an essential component of a teacher's tool-kit, especially in the current socio-political climate surrounding education. The purpose of this SoTL qualitative study was to understand how graduate teacher education students defined equity in special education teaching practices. The study was equity-minded with a dual purpose, as it was naturally situated in the inquiry of teaching and learning with the participants as practicing educators and graduate students. The participants completed an open-ended survey. Data was analyzed for themes about defining equity in special education teaching practices. Gilpin & Liston (2017) wrote, "SoTL represents an opportunity to support transformative education in pedagogical practices" (p. 7). The findings from the study will inform the transformation of future course planning in how special education teaching practices are presented to promote equity and continue to have far-reaching implications to inform equitable teaching practices in multidisciplinary fields.

Methods

Participants were graduate students who were enrolled in teacher education and/or special education courses at UWS. They were invited to take an open-ended 4 question Qualtrics survey to answer the research question: How do you define equity in special education teaching practices? Data was analyzed for themes and patterns using thematic analysis.

Findings

Half of the participants taught 5 or less years in total. The rest of the participants had taught from 6-20 years in PK-12 settings. Themes include, **"everyone gets what they need"** and **"all students get an education."** This has implications for both teaching and learning in UWS classes and in K-12 settings.

Equity in Special Education Teaching Practices

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“All students are getting what they need to be successful and all teachers have access to what they need to help their students be successful.”

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