

Preparing Teacher Candidates in Family and Consumer Sciences to Integrate Indian Education for All

Holly Hunts
Jioanna Carjuzaa
Montana State University

The Montana Indian Education for All (IEFA) initiative is an unprecedented reform effort 38 years in the making. Teacher preparation programs statewide are charged with preparing teacher candidates in all endorsement areas to integrate IEFA in a culturally responsive manner. We review the evolution of the IEFA legislative mandate, summarize the history of Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS), describe the Montana FCS 5-12 curriculum guidelines, outline the Montana Seven Essential Understandings and share practical teaching strategies that can be employed in Methods of Teaching FCS classrooms. Reflections on the success of these strategies are also shared.

Montana is the fourth largest state in the United States in terms of land mass and has a population of 974,989 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Most counties in Montana are *frontier* counties according to the National Center for Frontier Communities (2003) with a sparse 6.2 persons per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). By contrast, the U.S. average is 79 persons per square mile.

Montana is a local control state which means that local school boards have autonomy in determining the curriculum and policies of their own school district (Montana School Board Association, 2008). For such a sparsely populated state, it is surprising that there are 427 different school districts in Montana (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009). To give a comparison, Illinois has a population of 12,901,563 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009) and has only 144 school districts (State of Illinois, 2010).

History of Indian Education for All in Montana

Montana has taken a leadership role in American Indian education issues with its unprecedented reform effort known as Indian Education for All (IEFA). This landmark legislation requires all classroom teachers to integrate curricula focusing on the histories, cultures and contemporary issues facing American Indians (Carjuzaa, 2009). This precedent-setting education legislation is reverberating throughout Indian Country and stirring hope among Indian educators nationwide that they might win similar victories in their home states (Pember, 2007).

Indian education was first addressed in 1972, when the Constitutional Convention met in Helena, MT to revise the state's constitution. The delegates revised the state's constitution, to emphasize preserving the cultural integrity of Montana's 12 tribal nations. Article X, Section 1 (2) pledged, "The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity," (Juneau, 2001; Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2007). By adding this clause to Montana's constitution, delegates ensured that the state would have to honor the mandate.

In 1973, an Indian Education Master Plan laid out how the state was expected to implement Article X. This legislative document encouraged teacher education programs across

the state to provide coursework to prepare teachers to teach Indian culture, assist in the creation of culturally appropriate curriculum and provide professional development opportunities for classroom teachers. The corresponding House Bills also required that all Montana teachers complete Indian Studies coursework (Erickson, 1996). The Office of Public Instruction and the teacher education programs across the state were not prepared to provide said coursework in Indian Studies for the 3,400 teachers affected by the Indian Studies Law. Regrettably, the requirement was repealed and the circumstances led many to think of this legislation as an exercise in futility (Erickson, 1996).

The Montana State Accreditation Standards, which were developed in 1989, included recommendations that schools value the contributions of American Indians as well as address the needs and validate the unique abilities of American Indian students. Unfortunately, as legislative researchers confirmed in 1995, little was being done to realize these recommendations (Erickson, 1996).

In an effort to reinvigorate the provisions of Article X, in 1997, the Montana State Legislature designated the fourth Friday of September as ‘American Indian Heritage Day.’ Then in 1999, the state constitution was codified when the Legislature passed House Bill 528 into law -- MCA 20-1-501 which has become known as IEFA.

Montana Office of Public Instruction House Bill 528 (1999) states:

It is the intent of the legislature that in accordance with Article X, section 1(2) of the Montana constitution: every Montanan, whether Indian or non-Indian, be encouraged to learn about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians in a culturally responsive manner...all school personnel should have an understanding and awareness of Indian tribes to help them relate effectively with Indian students and parents. ... Every educational agency and all educational personnel will work cooperatively with Montana tribes ... when providing instruction and implementing an educational goal. (p.1)

Once it was decided that all educators would be held responsible to integrate IEFA, decisions had to be made about what aspects of American Indian cultures and histories should be covered. Representatives from all the tribes in Montana met and created the Seven Essential Understandings (EUs) (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 1999). These seven guidelines form the basis for all the IEFA curriculum efforts and initiatives. The EUs cover, but are not limited to the following: EU 1: Reservations Tribal Groups; EU 2: Diversity of the American Indian; EU 3: Ideologies of Native Traditional Beliefs, Spirituality, and Oral Histories; EU 4: Lands Reserved by the Tribes; EU 5: Federal Policy Periods; EU 6: Indigenous Perspectives of History; and EU 7: Tribal Sovereignty.

It was not until 2005 when the Montana Quality Education Coalition sued the State of Montana asserting that its educational funding scheme was unconstitutional, that quality education was defined. Consequently, IEFA became a funded reality since the definition of quality included the integration of IEFA in all content areas, in all classrooms, in all assessments, in all professional development programs, and in all teacher education programs.

Governor Brian Schweitzer (2006) announced that in the first two years of his being in office (2004-2006) the state of Montana appropriated more than \$13 million to implement Indian Education for All in each and every Montana classroom. Additional funding was provided to the seven tribal colleges to write the histories of their tribes in a manner that makes the material accessible for K-12 classrooms (Schweitzer, 2006). This multimillion dollar funding effort has enabled Montana teachers, schools, and communities to fully embrace the intent of the

legislation ensuring that all K-12 students have the opportunity to explore the rich cultures of the tribes of Montana.

In addition to the review of the evolution and requirements of the IEFA legislative mandate, we highlight the role teacher educators are expected to play in preparing teacher candidates to integrate IEFA, describe the Montana Family Consumer Sciences (FCS) 5-12 curriculum guidelines, and share strategies to embed IEFA in Methods of Teaching FCS and Program Planning in FCS classrooms.

Teacher Preparation and IEFA

Integrating IEFA across the curriculum at all grade levels is a multi-pronged, comprehensive endeavor. The Montana Office of Public Instruction has spearheaded these collaborative efforts by hiring Indian Specialists, redesigning their website to reflect all of the available curricular resources and materials, recruiting teachers and American Indian cultural experts to develop curriculum in a variety of core content areas, distributing funding for K-12 teacher professional development and scheduled institutes, workshops, and conferences. Some of the suggested lesson plans available through OPI can be modified and implemented in FCS courses; however, the resources provided are not comprehensive across all FCS areas. In higher education, the responsibility of preparing future K-12 classroom teachers to implement IEFA in a culturally responsive manner falls on the shoulders of instructors of multicultural educational foundations courses and the respective methodology instructors in their content areas. For this study we focus on the integration of IEFA in FCS.

Family and Consumer Sciences 5-12 Curriculum and IEFA Standards

With 427 different school districts, each of which retains local control, there are significant differences in FCS curriculum offerings statewide. While not all school districts offer FCS, most do, and most adhere to the Montana guidelines for FCS secondary education (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2002). Montana guidelines for FCS encompass the mission statement from the Association of Career and Technical Educators Family and Consumer Sciences Division (2010) and the National Standards for FCS (National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences, 2008).

State standards for FCS teacher education in Montana are inclusive of the National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences (Erickson, Fox, & Stewart, 2004) and, additionally mandate that successful teacher candidates must “create and implement a safe, supportive learning environment that shows sensitivity to diverse needs, values, and characteristics of students, families, and communities, including American Indians” (Montana Board of Public Education, 2007).

Given the broad offerings statewide in FCS-specific state standards for FCS teacher education and the mandated IEFA for all Montana educators, teacher educators have a myriad of responsibilities. Family and Consumer Sciences teacher educators are challenged to provide a holistic university program that prepares teacher candidates to teach across the many areas of FCS offered within Montana and to integrate IEFA. Specifically, teacher candidates must be able to combine pedagogy, FCS content and IEFA in a culturally-sensitive way to public school classrooms statewide.

Resources for FCS Teacher Education

In Family and Consumer Sciences teacher education, the first step is to educate teacher candidates about American Indians in both a historical and contemporary context. Teresa Veltkamp, Indian Education for All Implementation Specialist in the Indian Division of OPI, simply stated at the April 2009 Montana Indian Education Association Conference, “Before we teach it, we have to learn it”. Once the content is learned, the next step is to help teacher candidates devise instructional strategies to present information to a middle/high school audience that is accurate and takes into account multiple perspectives.

Resources for integrating Indian Education with FCS Content Areas

Background readings. A simple beginning to teaching content about American Indians (AI/AN) is to assign readings. *American Indian Contributions to the World : 15,000 years of Inventions and Innovations* (Porterfield & Keoke, 2003), *Native Roots: How the Indians Enriched America* (Weatherford, 1992) and *American Indians: Answers to today’s questions* (Utter, 2001) are three excellent reference books to help students understand the enormous contributions of American Indians to the modern world and to give them some basic background understanding. National statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau (Ogunwole, 2002; Ogunwole, 2006) provide information about contemporary differences between AI and non-Hispanic whites and make for excellent undergraduate conversations about the differences and possible causes of those differences. Native Languages of the Americas (n.d.) is a non-profit group committed to preserving American Indian culture and their website is excellent in that it provides beginning level questions about American Indians. Because there is no such thing as a homogenous group of American Indians it makes sense to have teacher candidates read about local tribes and/or invite local tribal members and elders to come to class. While some areas of the U.S. are more densely populated with American Indians making access to tribal members and elders easier, American Indians do live throughout the U.S. *Native American Languages of America* (n.d.) has an excellent interactive map that explains where different American Indian tribes in the U.S. are located.

Family life education. More specific to Family and Consumer Sciences, another highly recommended reading would be *Excerpts from Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* by David Wallace Adams (1999). For many undergraduates this may be the first time that they are reading more than just a paragraph or two in an American history textbook regarding American Indian boarding schools. The article outlines U.S. policy attempts to eliminate American Indian culture and the cruel consequences of that policy for American Indian children and their families. Additional readings about boarding schools include those written by Smith (2007), and Trafzer, Keller & Sisquoc (2006). These sources link the historical experience of boarding schools with contemporary issues in the family life of American Indians. The long-term consequences of boarding schools can explain, at least partly, the substance abuse and domestic violence issues that plague reservations today.

On December 16, 2010 President Barack Obama (2010) gave a powerful speech addressing a wide range of disparities between American Indians living on reservations and the rest of the U.S. as a whole. His speech highlights the need for changes in public policy as they apply to Indian health, food, nutrition, crime, housing, education and the need for American Indian representation in the development of these policies. Any family law and public policy course would be ripe for discussing government programs as they relate to American Indians. The following are a few examples of topics. The *Indian Health Service* (2010) is an excellent

place to review the efficacy of a current public health care system in America at the dawn of major health care reform nationwide which promises to create a public health care system for everyone to be a part of. An omnipresent item in treaties across the U.S. is the legal obligation of the U.S. Government to provide food for American Indians living on reservations. Hunger in America between the years of 2006 and 2010 has increased by a sobering 46% (Mathematica Policy Research Incorporated, 2010). The Food Distribution on Indian Reservations is an example of a massive feeding program that differs from the food bank system. For FCS students not familiar with reservation life learning about this service might be useful in helping them more fully understand political policy and hunger in the U.S. (Nutrition.gov, 2010). Across America there has been a focused effort to improve the percentage of minority persons in the federal work system (Bersentes & Harvard, 2010). The American *Indian Program Council* in Denver, Colorado is in place to encourage promoting the recruitment, retention and visibility of American Indians as federal workers. Understanding the experience and perspective of minority federal work is the first step in appreciating the necessity of giving all minority groups a voice in the political arena of federal agencies. Living in a healthy environment is a priority for all Americans. A branch of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2010) is the *American Indian Environmental Council*. This branch deals with the unique obstacles faced by tribal nations as they try to find a balance between making use of their natural resources and at the same time preserving the limited land that they have for generations to come.

Personal and Family Finance and Housing. During these times of economic downturn, it is an especially important to put financial education and literacy on the priority list for all FCS classrooms. A well-balanced financial education curriculum should include many topics; one of which is the financial profile of Americans. Statistics about the disparities between American Indians and other races abound in government reports (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000; Ogunwole, 2002; Ogunwole, 2006). A less well known issue about American Indians is the extreme sub-standard housing available on reservations. For example, the non-profit group National American Indian Housing Council (NAIH) reported in 2005 that 12% of Indian houses had no kitchen facilities and 11% had no bathroom facilities (these are compared to the national average which is below 1%). The NAIHC (2005) also reports extreme overcrowding in Indian houses with 20-30 people living within a single two or three bedroom home. Eleven percent of Indian homes do not have running water and 16.9% do not have telephone access. Many teacher candidates in FCS before researching the financial well-being of AI/AN populations may well have not even imagined that there were American homes without running water or telephone access in the 21st century.

A very interesting area to discuss within finance is federal and state taxation and the concept of sovereign nations within the United States. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (U.S. Department of Interior, 2010) provides a website explaining the plethora of issues related to Indian taxation.

Studying unemployment rates among American Indians is fascinating yet frustrating because of the lack of available up-to-date, consistent and accurate published information. An unpublished report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Department of Labor, 2008) reports AI/AN unemployment to be at 13% while the national average is 9.3%. This estimate is consistent with the idea that unemployment of AI/AN is close to twice the national average (Taylor & Kalt, 2005). A study conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis researchers (Gerber, Woodrow & Grover, 2008) found that unemployment on the Blackfeet reservation in Montana was 22.6% in 2000. Interestingly, American Indian research groups

report a grimmer picture of AI/AN unemployment than do non-native researchers (NAIHC, 2005; Navajo Nation Council on Office of the Speaker, 2007). For example, NAIHC (2005) estimates the unemployment rate of American Indians living on reservations at 42% which is similar to a report by The Navajo Nation Council Office of the Speaker (2007) which states unemployment rates for American Indians living on reservations is around 40%. Both of those studies report unemployment rates as being nearly twice as high as those reported by non-native researchers. An interesting demographic and economic publication from three different government agencies regarding the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana (Census and Economic Information Center: Montana Department of Commerce, Research & Analysis Bureau: Montana Department of Labor & Industry & State Tribal Economic Development Commission: Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, 2006) reports that according to the Montana Department of Labor unemployment in 2008 was 13.2%. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the unemployment rate in 2000 was 22.6%, while a report from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 2005 indicates that the unemployment rate was 68.5%.

Food and Nutrition. Food and nutrition content is also well-suited for integration of American Indian information. American Indian traditional diets, contemporary diets and use of U.S. Department of Agriculture commodity programs are all areas that are interesting to any student studying food and nutrition. Information about American Indian traditional and contemporary diets is abundant. Two examples that look at general American Indian diets include: *American Indian Health and Diet Program* out of the University of Kansas (Miheuah & Price, 2010) which provides pre-reservation traditional recipes and the *Native American Food Pyramid* (United States Department of Agriculture, 2010) which depicts traditional foods in a culturally responsible manner. The two glaring issues in American Indian nutritional health are diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The Centers for Disease Control (n.d.a) has a simple fact sheets like *Native Americans and Type II Diabetes Fact Sheet* and *American Indian and Alaska Native Heart Disease and Stroke Fact Sheet* (n.d.b) as well as more formal reports like *Diabetes Prevalence Among American Indians and Alaska Natives and the Overall Population – United States, 1994-2002* (2003) all of which indicate rates for diabetes (and related cardiovascular disease) of two to three times that of the average non-AI/AN American.

Fortunately, to balance the alarming statistics of nutrition related diseases are exciting programs for nutritional reform such as the documentary *My Big Fat Diet* (Wortman, 2008) which looks at an Indian village in Maine that returns to a native diet high in fat and protein and low in carbohydrates with amazing health results. Another program from the Centers for Disease Control (n.d.c) is *Promoting Physical Activity and Nutrition in an American Indian Community*. Perhaps the most powerful American Indian educational site for diabetes is the *Diabetes Education in Tribal Schools* (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, 2009) which provides excellent and thorough K-12 classroom materials that could be adapted for any cultural group in the U.S.

Another area in food education would be exploring American Indian recipes and ingredients. The quintessential cookbook for Crow recipes is *A Taste of Heritage: Crow Indian Recipes & Herbal Medicines* (Snell, 2006). An excellent all-around resource for American Indian gardening, harvesting and recipes is a web-site entitled *American Native Foods* (Tahtonka, 2010). A fun resource for any classroom is the *National Geographic's Thanksgiving Myths and Facts* published each year (Handwerk, 2010). This resource debunks myths about the original Thanksgiving dinner consisting of turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, parker house rolls

and pumpkin pie and instead delves into the sorts of American ingredients the Wampanoag Indians would have helped the Puritans plant and harvest in the New World.

Textiles, Fashion and Interior Design. Textiles/fashion and interior design/housing content areas can also draw from American Indian materials. For example, the *Native American Clothing and Regalia* website (Native Languages (2009) provides information on traditional costumes. Macginnis (2008) is the author of the *The Costumer's Manifesto* website which provides a wealth of information about traditional garments. Wilke (2009) writes on the importance of minority voices, including American Indians, in terms of both contemporary design and in terms of contemporary designers in an article for The American Society for Interior Design.

Montana FCS Teacher Education

FCS teacher candidates at Montana State University are required to participate in multiple service learning projects associated with their methods and curriculum development coursework. These service learning projects lend themselves easily to integrating IEFA into lesson plans, unit plans, block plans, teacher work samples and assessment plans.

For example, in 2006 the class members of Methods of Teaching FCS developed three unit plans for secondary FCS students. These unit plans were presented to the participants of the Montana Association of Career and Technical Educators annual conference. The first unit plan addressed the traditionally well balanced diet of Montana Indians and the imbalanced diet today that is evidenced by epidemic levels of obesity and Type II diabetes. Hands-on activities included the recipes for several traditional foods (i.e., elk jerky, tea, berry soup). The second unit plan featured the history of star quilts and numerous quilting activities ranging from simple to complex were provided. The third unit plan featured storytelling and information about 12 different tribal languages spoken in Montana. Resources about how to find and tell appropriate stories were included along with several ideas on how to use storytelling within Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) projects. The unit plans were well received not only because they were original and interactive but because the unit plans highlighted specific tribes and used authentic information. The unit plans were authored by Hunts, Bruce, Diemert, Ellis, Estes & Stoltz (2006) and are available for public use.

Another service learning project had FCS curriculum development students design and implement a 4-H Food Project lesson plan that emphasized Montana heritage foods with recipes from the Crow and Blackfeet tribes. Part of the 4-H lesson plans included a traditional Blackfeet book *The Buffalo Jump* (Roop, 1996) and made use of one of many IEFA lesson plans available on the IEFA (OPI web-site. The 4-H lesson plan is also available for public use. Beyond service learning, teacher candidate assignments in Methods of Teaching FCS, Curriculum Development in FCS and Student Teaching all require students to submit lesson plans that include authentic IEFA content. Students have expressed that they enjoy integrating IEFA into their planning work because it offers a unique aspect to all FCS content areas.

Conclusion

The Indian Education for All initiative sets a valiant national precedent for k-12 education across the nation (Juneau, 2006; Pember, 2007). This landmark legislation challenges all educators to be more inclusive. Since IEFA became funded in 2005, teacher educators across Montana were challenged to uncover places to incorporate American Indian perspectives, content, and worldviews in their respective disciplines. Consequently, by following the Seven

Essential Understandings, content in all courses in teacher preparation programs has changed which has had a dramatic effect on the K-12 system. As Superintendent of Education Denise Juneau has shared on many occasions, these are historic times in Montana. Students who started kindergarten after 2005 will learn about the history, culture and contributions of Montana Indians in all their classes, throughout their educational journey.

By exposing teacher candidates in FCS to background knowledge on American Indians and specifically Montana Indians, they were able to find methods to integrate their knowledge into instructional plans in a culturally responsive manner. When teacher candidates examine the way they think about American Indians and their place in our collective culture and history, then there is an opportunity for a dramatic ripple effect.

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About the Authors

Holly Hunts, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor, jointly appointed by the Departments of Education and Health and Human Development at Montana State University (MSU) in Bozeman, MT. She holds a Ph.D. in Consumer Economics from Cornell University. Her current responsibilities at MSU include the program leader for Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Education and teaching a wide variety of courses. Her research is focused on innovative teaching techniques in FCS, Indian Education for All and service learning.

Jioanna Carjuzaa, Associate Professor at Montana State University-Bozeman, holds a Ph.D. in Multicultural, Social and Bilingual Foundations of Education from the University of Colorado-Boulder. She has over nineteen years teaching experience as a multicultural teacher educator, diversity trainer, and English for Academic Purposes-Business instructor. She teaches multiple sections of Multicultural Foundations of Education, a wide range of graduate courses and serves as co-advisor to the American Indian Council and team-teaches Powwow Leadership Fundraising. She assumes a leadership role in professional development initiatives in Montana to integrate Indian Education for All across the curriculum, at all grade levels and in all disciplines.

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