

**Title:** “Building Competence and Confidence in Elementary Science Teachers”

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**Abstract:**

With increasing demands on elementary teachers, science is often neglected or rudimentary activities are conducted without a clear understanding of the concepts incorporated. Through a unique design of four courses required of preservice elementary teachers, standards-based concepts of life, earth, physics, and chemistry are delivered through inquiry based labs and classroom discussion. Environmental science is stranded throughout all four courses. Students are expected to apply these concepts in lessons developed in their methods course. Lessons are practiced at a campus-based science festival for elementary children, and again in an inner city neighborhood. Implementation of this program is in its fourth year and students are reporting increased competence, confidence, and enthusiasm for a subject many had previously poor attitudes toward teaching.