**Anthony Ellis** 

Political Science Honors Thesis Spring 2017

Dr. Giersch, Mr. Gartlan

## Assessing the Effectiveness of Teacher Professional Development throughout Charlotte Teachers Institute (CTI)

Evaluating outcomes of professional development (PD) for teachers within Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) is an important goal related to teacher growth, a core education policy issue. Policymakers are seeking ways to improve outcomes for teachers aimed at increasing content knowledge, improving pedagogical practices in the classroom, and the accurate evaluation of student progress. The purpose of PD in CMS according to its mission statement is to: improve teaching and learning through research-based professional learning that coalesces with the district's strategic goals (CMS, 2017). Teachers ongoing development allows for a culture of learning to manifest and ultimately reach students in the classroom. In 2002, North Carolina passed Session Law 2002-178 which required that teachers during every fiveyear cycle receive continuing education credits (CEUs) which the legislature believed would allow teachers to increase their instruction abilities and ultimately improve their skills. Through the utilization of regression models and teacher-level responses from an annual questionnaire from the Charlotte Teachers Institute (CTI), I analyzed which independent variables were leading to the greatest impact on the two outcomes measuring teacher attitudes towards their (1) application of skills towards knowledge gained, and (2) confidence in students' abilities. After analyzing impact that attendance at a given number of seminar sessions has within CTI, I found the number of seminars attended to be valuable in producing beneficial results to teachers toward eliciting higher expectations in their students and greater knowledge gain and confidence.