

SUPPORTING LEARNING IN AND FROM TEACHING IN K-12 SETTINGS: TOOLS, TASKS, AND PRACTICES

Tim Boerst & Meri Tenney Muirhead

TeachingWorks Journal Club

February 3, 2017



SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

READINGS AND TODAY'S AGENDA

- Ronfeldt, M. and S.L. Campbell (2016). Evaluating teacher preparation using graduates' observational ratings. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 38(4): 603-625.
- Burns, R.W., Jacobs, J., and D. Yendol-Hoppey (2016). The changing nature of the role of the university supervisor and function of preservice teacher supervision in an era of clinically-rich practice. *Action in Teacher Education*, 38(4): 410-425.

Guiding prompts:

- How can observational instruments be used, during teacher education programs and/or during program graduates' first few years of teaching, to support learning and program improvement?
- What important work do field instructors do to facilitate learning including, but not limited to, observation and providing observational feedback?

RONFELDT & CAMPBELL (2016) - ABSTRACT

Despite growing calls for more accountability of teacher education programs (TEPs), there is little consensus about how to evaluate them. This study investigates the potential for using observational ratings of program completers to evaluate TEPs. Drawing on statewide data on almost 9,500 program completers, representing 44 providers (183 programs) in Tennessee across 3 years, we investigate multiple models to estimate TEP quality. Results suggest that using observational ratings to evaluate TEPs has promise. We were able to detect significant and meaningful differences between TEPs, which were fairly robust across modeling approaches. Moreover, TEP rankings based on observational ratings were positively and significantly related to rankings based on student achievement gains.

RONFELDT & CAMPBELL (2016)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Do Teacher Education Programs (TEP) ratings based on graduates' observational ratings (OR) vary by modeling approach?
- Are there differences between TEPs in terms of average graduates' OR?
- How do program ratings that use Tennessee value-added scores compare?

RONFELDT & CAMPBELL (2016) - METHODS

- Sample: Statewide data on almost 9,500 program completers, representing 44 providers (183 programs) in Tennessee across 3 years
- Measures:
 - Observational ratings (on a 5 point) were made within each teaching domain on the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM).
 - Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) ratings were provided by the state for each teacher in the sample.

RONFELDT & CAMPBELL (2016) - METHODS

Analytic Approach

- Modeling effects
 - Ordinary Least Squares (OLS)
 - Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM)
 - School Fixed Effects (SFE)
- Groups modeled
 - Those certified between 2009-2013 to teach in Tennessee from the 39 TEPs that had more than 10 graduates,
 - Those certified in states other than Tennessee with 3 or less years of experience, and
 - Those certified in states other than Tennessee with more than 3 years of experience. (reference group for other categories)

RONFELDT & CAMPBELL (2016)

(SOME) FINDINGS

Do Teacher Education Programs (TEP) ratings based on graduates' observational ratings (OR) vary by modeling approach?

- Various modeling approaches produced estimates that were fairly consistent in terms of the directionality and significance levels.
- Different models also produced well-correlated rankings of institutions, with HLM and SFE producing the most consistent rankings.

RONFELDT & CAMPBELL (2016)

(SOME) FINDINGS

Are there differences between TEPs in terms of average graduates' OR?

- It is possible to see differences between TEPs using OR averages. 20% of institutions in the sample and 18% of programs were significantly different than the mean of all recent program completers.
- “Top-performing TEPs are graduating teachers who effectively have an additional year of initial teaching experience on the first day of class compared with graduates from the lowest performing TEPs,” (p. 617)
- Estimates for TE programs did not necessarily align with estimates from their home institutions.

RONFELDT & CAMPBELL (2016)

HEARING FROM THE AUTHORS

Insights into the research process

- What inspired you to investigate these questions or write this piece?
- What challenges or surprises did you encounter as you conducted this research?
- What challenges did you encounter when writing about this research?
- What do you feel are the key outcomes of your study?
- How are you hoping people will use this article?
- What are some next steps that researchers could take in this area?

SPEAKING OF OBSERVATIONAL TOOLS...

- How can observational instruments be used during teacher education programs to support learning and program improvement?
- What important work do field instructors do to facilitate learning including, but not limited to, observation and providing observational feedback?

BURNS, JACOBS, & YENDOL-HOPPEY (2016)

CONTEXT, METHOD, QUESTION, & FINDINGS

Given the movement to enhance clinical experiences and school-university collaboration, the field of teacher preparation would benefit from an understanding of the research related to preservice teacher (PST) supervision. This article uses qualitative meta-analysis to generate new knowledge about PST supervision focusing on research published from 2001 to 2013 to address the question: What are the core PST supervisory tasks and practices that support the developmental nature of PST learning within the clinical context? The authors identified five tasks and twelve practices of PST supervision. The tasks include (1) targeted assistance, (2) individual support, (3) collaboration and community, (4) curriculum support, and (5) research for innovation.

- What important work do field instructors do to support learning in and from clinical settings?
- Compare those ideas with the tasks & practices “findings” table from the article

Table 2. Definitions for Tasks and Practices of Preservice Teacher (PST) Supervision.

Term	Definition
Tasks	The areas that need to be addressed in order to create the clinical context needed to meet PST learning needs. These tasks include directive assistance, individual support, group development, embedded professional development, curriculum support, research and innovation. The routines used to actualize a task.
Practice	
Task: Targeted assistance	Practices that offer targeted support that focuses on specific aspects of PSTs' practice
Practice: Providing focused instructional feedback	Routines that provide PSTs with feedback on their teaching practices.
Practice: Fostering critical reflection	Routines that promote PST reflection on the impact of their actions as well as the larger sociopolitical and historical context.
Task: Individual support	Practices that support the psychological and emotional demands of learning in the clinical context
Practice: Balancing challenge and support	Routines that balance the need to promote learning and change with the PSTs' emotional needs.
Practice: Helping PSTs cope with stress	Routines that help PSTs socioemotional adjustment when learning to teach in a clinical context.
Task: Collaboration and community	Practices that cultivate the learning environment through establishing, building, maintaining, and renewing relationships
Practice: Developing quality placements	Routines that identify appropriate schools and school-based teacher educators who will assume partial responsibility for the growth and development of the PST.
Practice: Maintaining triad relationships	Routines that attend to and foster learning among the preservice teacher, school-based teacher educator, and the university supervisor.
Practice: Creating learner-centered PST communities	Routines aimed at the organizing and reorganizing groups of PSTs into learning communities.
Task: Curriculum support	Practices that facilitate the negotiation of a teacher preparation curriculum that reflects shared understandings of meaningful, relevant and coherent PreK-12 curriculum
Practice: Fostering theory and practice connections	Routines that move away from isolated theoretical and practical learning.
Practice: Strengthening curriculum planning	Routines that develop PSTs' understanding of instructional planning and situate planning within a larger curricular context.
Task: Research for innovation	Practices to engage in individual and collaborative efforts to study and/or change curriculum/instruction in order to enhance teaching and learning
Practice: Engaging in inquiry or self-study	Routines that involve intentional and systematic examination of one's practice through a cycle of posing questions, collecting and analyzing data, and generating claims.
Practice: Innovating to enhance supervision	Routines that explore new models and methods to enhance supervisors' roles and practices.

CIRCLING BACK TO OBSERVATION AND USES OF OBSERVATION INSTRUMENTS

- Conducting observations and providing feedback was the most prevalent task represented in their literature review. Why is this so central?
- How can the information be used beyond interaction with those observed?

Exceeds Standard	Meets Standard	Approaches Standard	Does not Demonstrate Standard	*Not Observed	Performance Standards for High Leverage Practices
					1. Explaining core content The intern describes and illustrates key aspects of content in ways that are sound from a content standpoint and accessible to students. *#
					2. Posing questions about content The intern phrases questions that elicit, probe, and advance students' thinking about the content being taught. *
					3. Choosing and using representations, examples, and models of content The intern chooses and uses representations and examples that are likely to build understanding and address misconceptions. *#
					4. Leading whole class discussions of content The intern builds collective knowledge in relation to specific goals by orchestrating the speaking and listening of many students, and making contributions of their own. *
					5. Working with individual students to elicit, probe, and develop their thinking about content The intern uses questions and tasks to draw out the thinking of individual students and makes reasonable interpretations of what students say and do.
					6. Setting up and managing small-group work The intern chooses tasks and provides clear directions for small groups, actively monitoring their work and holding them accountable for accomplishing instructional goals. #
					7. Engaging students in rehearsing an organizational or managerial routine The intern organizes time, space, materials, and implements routine ways of carrying out classroom tasks in order to maximize the time available for learning and minimize disruptions and distractions.
					8. Establishing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work that are central to the content By providing explanation, modeling, and/or repeated practice, the intern helps students learn the norms and routines that are used to construct and share disciplinary knowledge. *
					9. Recognizing and identifying common patterns of student thinking in a content domain The intern uses knowledge of common patterns of student thinking and development to effectively and efficiently plan and implement instruction and evaluate student learning. *

CONVERSATIONS TO HAVE: SUPPORTING LEARNING IN AND FROM TEACHING IN K-12 SETTINGS

Tasks and Practices

- Along with others, we have done much to take apart the intricate work that teachers do to make it learnable to novices
- What have we done or could we do to take apart the intricate work that teacher educators do to make practices learnable for novices?

Observational Ratings

- Researchers are developing insights into measures of outcomes of teacher education that hold the potential to provide meaningful/actionable information about effectiveness
 - How do we advance that work, including working toward the chance to do this in states where observational tools are not commonly used?
 - How do we advance what we do internally with information from our own observational ratings?