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THE PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT TEACHERS, COOPERATING TEACHERS,
AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS REGARDING THE ASSESSMENT OF
STUDENT TEACHER PERFORMANCE

A Thesis in

Curriculum and Instruction

by

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ABSTRACT

This case study focuses on the perceptions of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors, from a small rural university, regarding assessment during the student teaching experience. A sampling from each study population shared their views, thoughts, experiences and recommendations for assessment. The participants were selected from a pool of student teachers that were identified by a methods instructor from each of the four majors. Each methods instructor was asked to identify all of the student teachers, from within their particular major, that performed well in their professional methods courses and could articulate well. From those students selected, the researcher attempted to choose an equal number of males and females while covering a wide geographical area. Once the student teachers were selected, the cooperating teacher and university supervisor that were assigned to each student teacher were identified.

Data were collected by an interview method immediately after the conclusion of the student teaching semester. Eight student teachers, eight cooperating teachers and five university supervisors participated in the study. All of the participants responded to a series of semi-structured questions and audio-recordings were transcribed to provide a rich description. Reoccurring themes were present among the triad members and documents were analyzed to validate information that was provided.

Methods of assessment that were described by the participants included; observations, conferences, formative and summative competency forms, journaling, video-taping, portfolios, PDE 430 forms, and letters of recommendation. Other graded assignments that were mentioned included; unit plans, lesson plans, and bulletin boards.

The most referred to method of assessment was the formative and summative assessment form. All triad members agreed with the need for and importance of the document but most agreed that the document could be improved upon.

None of the participants recommended eliminating any of the current forms of assessment, except for the PDE 430 form which was believed to be repetitive of other forms of assessment. Participants understand the value and importance of assessment and find each form helpful when executed in a consistent manner.

The study revealed an agreement between the triad members when asked what they perceived to be the roles of each triad member in assessment during the experience. The role of the student teacher was very concise as all triad members cited self reflection as the most important role in assessment for the student teacher. It was noted that the cooperating teacher's role was viewed as a mentor and providing feedback. The university supervisor is the gate-keeper and liaison between the school placement and the university; as well as the role of assigning the final grade.

The most popular response was attitude, when cooperating teachers and university supervisors were asked what factors affect the assessment outcomes. They saw this as a very big obstacle that would affect everything about their participation.

Communication is the key to every aspect of assessment. It is the researcher's recommendation that each major invite a group of cooperating teachers to sit down to share their experiences and philosophies in order to explore changes to the process. As well, student teachers might be asked to contribute in a separate meeting. A small forum would allow the participants to feel more comfortable to share their thoughts.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Preparing teachers for the rigors of teaching in our present school systems is a challenging task for every institution (Mason, 1997). Fourteen years ago, both the Holmes Group and the Carnegie Commission Task Force proposed a new model for teacher education and the teaching profession. The Holmes Group (1986) proposed to develop competent teachers empowered to make principled judgments and decisions on their students' behalf. Teachers would possess a broad and deep understanding of children, the subject they teach, the nature of learning and schooling, and the world around them, and would exemplify the critical thinking they strive to develop in students. The Carnegie Commission Task Force (1986) made assertions that teachers must be able to learn all the time. The Commission stated that teachers would not come to school knowing all they have to know, but knowing how to figure out what they need to know, where to get it, and how to help others make meaning out of it. These are the same standards that present accreditation agencies, such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), require of teacher education programs. Today, universities are held accountable for the academic knowledge that preservice teachers must demonstrate and how it is assessed. Strict standards not only require student teachers to demonstrate an expertise in teaching methods and subject content but they must also show evidence of student learning (NCATE, 2002).

Assessment plays a vital role within the student teaching practicum. Student teachers experience a variety of assessment methods in order to demonstrate pre-determined skills that evaluate teacher behaviors in an effort to place students on a continuum of competency levels. Assessment practices are outlined by the teacher education university and implemented by the university supervisor and cooperating teacher. Formats and guidelines of the assessment methods are influenced by accrediting agencies and the university's educational philosophy.

Each student teaching placement is unique in environment, facilities, culture, staff, and personal philosophy. Each student teacher, cooperating teacher and university supervisor experiences the student teaching practicum through their own individual lens. Each participant internalizes their experience by observing the behaviors of the members involved in the student teaching experience while responding with what they perceive to be "appropriate" behaviors. The behaviors from each of the participants are molded from previous experiences and their understanding of what is expected of them. Their thoughts and behaviors are guided by their understanding of student teaching expectations. These expectations are multi-dimensional. They may derive from national and state standards, and university philosophy, university teacher education standards and philosophy, and the philosophy of the triad members. Although the assessment methods are usually the same within a teacher education program, the contexts in which they are experienced are unique. This study investigated the perceptions or thoughts, feelings and understandings that the triad members formulated in order to make sense of the roles, purpose, tools, and process of student teaching assessment. Exploring the perceptions of

student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors may provide considerations for improved assessment procedures and student teacher preparation.

Statement of the Problem

Today local, state and national education agencies are focused on increasing student academic achievement in K-12. One initiative that has affected teacher education programs is higher teacher certification requirements. The premise is if we employ higher quality teachers then we should expect to see higher quality teaching skills and the impact that we would expect to see is an improvement in student academic achievement. If this outcome is to be successful, a critical component would include meaningful and valid methods and procedures of assessing preservice teacher performance. Assessments are the tools that provide valuable information of student teacher performance in order that an evaluation can be made. Assessments provide information of student teachers' strengths and weaknesses and their potential as a beginning teacher.

Ross et al. (1998) state, one of the most significant, but as yet under-explored issues in relation to the practicum has been assessment practices and procedures. Although assessment methods provide critical feedback, are a requirement of the university and accrediting agencies, and are essential to the evaluation and grading process for the student teaching field experience, little has been documented about the perceptions of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors regarding how they experience assessment during the student teaching practicum.

Assessment drives instruction for pre-service teachers as they identify their own performance levels from the criteria that are established by the teacher education program. It is important that pre-service teachers are evaluated by meaningful assessment methods and by procedures that are valid.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study is to explore and describe how student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors (triad members) perceive assessment methods that are implemented during the student teaching practicum. This study will result in a rich description of perceptions of assessment among triad members. Findings from the study will provide information concerning teacher education program assessment for the university participating in the study and a blueprint for other universities seeking a qualitative assessment method of their teacher education programs.

Assessment is defined as a comprehensive and integrated set of data collection measures that provides information for use in monitoring student teacher performance and compiling a final grade. Student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors are defined as the triad of the student teaching experience. Each student teacher, cooperating teacher and university supervisor serves some role in completing, administering and/or interpreting assessments during the student teaching practicum. Comparing perceptions of the triad members may identify limitations and inconsistencies in the assessment methods, perceptions of the assessment tools, meaningful and valued assessment practices, and factors affecting assessment outcomes. It is the intention of the

researcher to offer a rich description of the study methodology and analyzed data in order that other institutions seeking accreditation may replicate this study to serve as a teacher education program assessment model within their own university.

Significance of the Study

The student teaching experience is often thought to be the most important part of teacher education programs (Cruickshank & Aramalin, 1986, Tannehill & Zakrajsek, 1988). Darden, Darden, Scott, and Westfall (2001) state that many teacher educators believe that preservice teachers begin to develop their values, beliefs, and teaching skills during this experience. The purpose of this study is to determine how student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors perceive or make sense of the assessments implemented during the student teaching practicum.

The findings of this study will be of interest to: directors of teacher education programs, university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and faculty of teacher education programs. Study data will contribute to university documentation of teacher education program assessment for accreditation purposes. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2002) requires that teacher education programs “design, establish, and maintain a structure and governance system for planning, delivering, and evaluating programs that include school practitioners as well as faculty and administrators in other units of the institution. A key element of that system is the development and implementation of an assessment system that includes the gathering and use of candidate performance data, as described under Standard 2, to ensure the

candidates meet standards.” (NCATE, 2002) NCATE also requires that the teacher education program “conducts thorough studies to establish fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its performance assessment procedures. The program also makes changes in its practices consistent with the results of these studies.” Analyzing perceptions of the study populations may identify limitations or inconsistencies of practices implementing assessment methods. By identifying these limitations or inconsistencies, potential changes in the methods of implementing assessment may be offered. Student teachers may be better prepared for assessment methods resulting in achieving higher levels of competency. Cooperating teachers and university supervisors may be better prepared to administer assessments and increase consistency in evaluating. Improved practices between the triad can improve communication and foster a relationship that is congruent. Liebhaber (2000) recommends that the cooperating teacher should sit down with the student teacher at the beginning of the experience and map out specific expectations and mutually defined goals, then review the initial expectations and goals regularly, make adjustments when necessary, and help the student teacher stay on track. Triad members will have an opportunity to understand how other vital members of the student teaching program perceive the assessment experience and consciously decide to change their behavior on the basis of improving practices.

Data collected and analyzed by the researcher will inform university directors, teacher education faculty, university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and student teachers of current perceptions of assessment methods among the triad members. It is the intent of the researcher to inform the reader of common perceptions and incongruent

perceptions that have impacted the triad within their lived-experiences during the student teaching practicum.

Research Questions

Primary Research Question

- What are the perceptions of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors of assessment during the student teaching experience?

Secondary Research Questions

- How do the triad members comprehend the various assessment methods that are utilized during student teaching?
- How do triad members view the advantages and disadvantages of various assessment methods?
- How are the roles that each triad member plays in assessment perceived?
- How is the purpose of assessment viewed by all triad members?
- How do triad members view factors that are perceived to impact assessment?

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Chapter 2 focuses on a review of relevant literature including; the purpose of student teaching, assessment methods, factors that affect assessment, and characteristics of the triad. The chapter opens with the purpose of student teaching and provides a brief overview of the historical events that guided the mission and goals for quality teacher education programs, as well as an overview of the roles of the triad members and why this culminating experience is vital to teacher education students. The chapter then proceeds to reveal not only the design and intent of the assessment tools but also the process for implementation. The structure, perceptions and potential problems within the triad are characterized among factors that affect student teacher performance and potentially assessment outcomes. A summary concludes the chapter.

The Purpose of Student Teaching

The student teaching experience is often thought to be the most important part of teacher education programs (Cruickshank & Aramalin, 1986, Tannehill & Zakrajsek, 1988). Darden, Darden, Scott, and Westfall (2001) state that many teacher educators believe that preservice teachers begin to develop their values, beliefs, and teaching skills during this experience. Henry (1989) suggests that this may be due to the fact that

student teaching gives novice teachers a chance to experience an actual teaching setting, the “emotional involvement” of the student teaching experience, the “growth-producing” outcomes that often occur as a result of student teaching, and the opportunities for “one-to-one” teaching encounters” (pp.74-75). Clark (2002, Spring) lists 4 differing conceptions of the purposes of student teaching; the laboratory component of a teacher education program, a long performance examination, a scaffold apprenticeship in classroom teaching, and a practicum in inquiry-oriented teaching.

Traditionally, though not unanimously supported, the student teaching practicum has been viewed as critical to the development of preservice teachers' pedagogical skills, socialization into the teaching profession, and as the most effective preparation for teaching and learning the professional role of a teacher (Carnegie Task Force, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986; Locke, 1979; Zeichner, 1980). Preservice teachers and practicing teachers alike rate their student teaching experience as their most important professional experience (Karmos & Jacko, 1977; Taggart & Wilkinson, 1985). Although the student teaching practicum has been the focus of considerable research efforts, little attention has been given to the organization and implementation of this student teaching practicum. Experience tells us that once students complete content specific coursework, pedagogical training, and early field experiences they are shuffled into the university system for placement and supervision of this most vital component of their preparation. The university has had ultimate responsibility for the logistics of student teaching; arranging placements, selecting cooperating teachers, assigning university field supervisors, scheduling on-campus conferences, dealing with problem students, and reporting grades to the university (Tannehill & Goc-Karp, 1992).

The process of supervision helps preservice teachers progress from their present skill level to a level that is needed to efficiently carry out the necessary duties and behaviors of teaching (Metzler, 1990). The process consists of monitoring and communicating with teachers to help them achieve the goals and objectives of the program (Macdonald, 1996). According to Coulon and Byra (1995), the process of supervision should help future teachers to develop competent pre-active and interactive decision making and instructional behaviors. Pre-active behaviors are those that occur prior to actual contact with the learners (e.g., lesson planning), whereas interactive behaviors are the pedagogical behaviors that occur during the teaching of the lesson. Taggart (1988) agreed by stating that supervision is the process of teaching pre-service teachers the teaching skills, strategies, techniques, and ideas about effective teaching, and then observing them while they demonstrate the skills, strategies, techniques and ideas.

In order to determine teaching competency levels, strengths and weaknesses, and growth, it is essential that methods for evaluating student teacher performance are in place. Methods of assessment provide critical feedback and help to drive instruction. The next section describes common forms of assessment found in a student teaching practicum.

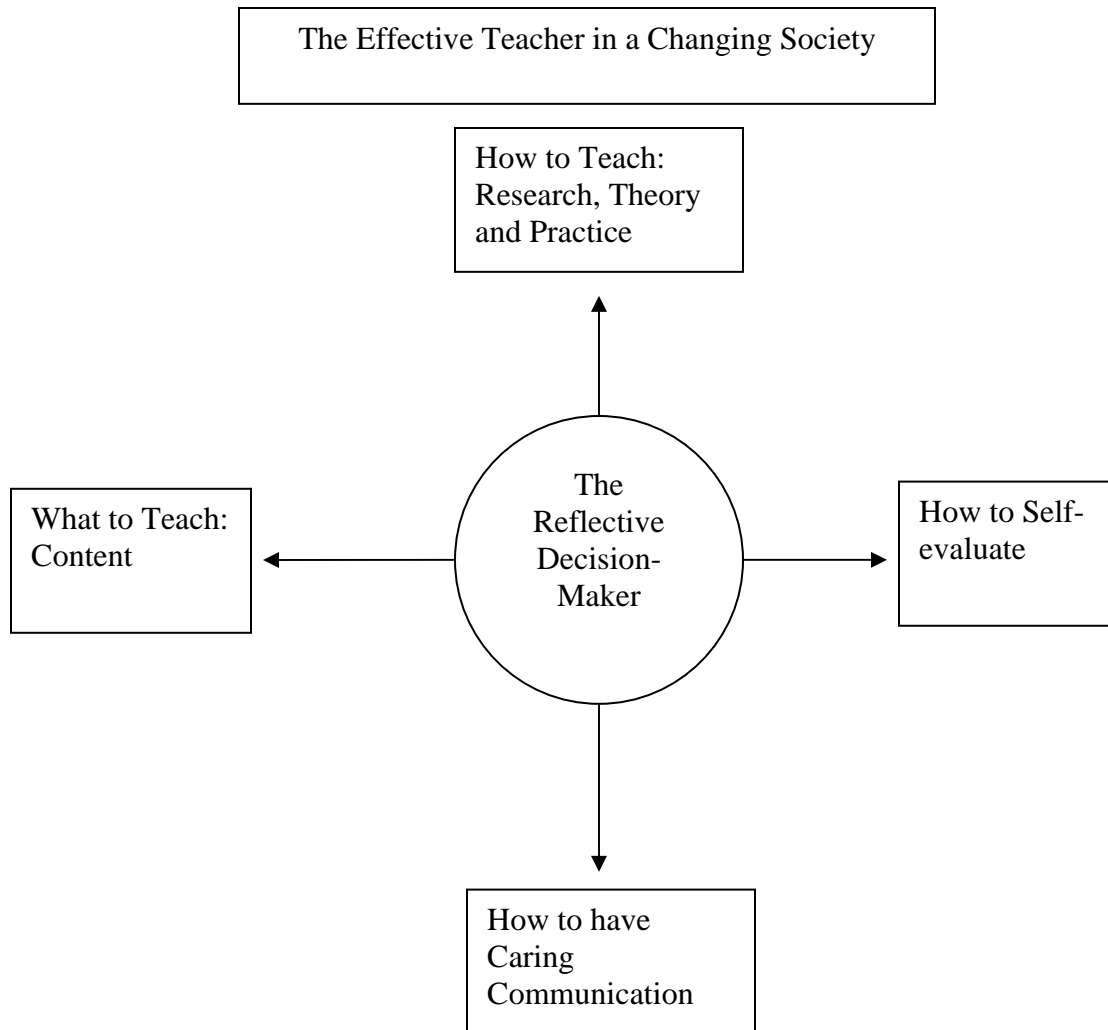
Assessment Methods

Defining Assessment in Student Teaching

Assessment defined in this study is any method implemented for the purpose of evaluating and/or measuring a student teacher's performance. A variety of assessment

methods are implemented during the student teaching experience. Commonly we see a combination of all or some of the following assessments: written and/or oral feedback based on observations focused on set criteria, videos, portfolios, references from the cooperating teacher, journaling, products reflecting learning of the student teacher's students, written tests, peer-assessment, and self-assessment.

Assessment plays a vital role within the student teaching practicum. All members of the triad are a part of the assessment process and contribute to the success of its implementation. Nolan and Hoover (2004) affirm that each institution must develop its own set of assessment standards that is compatible with the philosophical framework and knowledge base that undergird the teacher education program. Riverview University developed the conceptual framework below. This model provides the framework for the assessments implemented during the student teacher practicum. Below is an example of a conceptual framework from Riverview University where the study took place. The five components of the conceptual framework; what to teach, how to teach, how to self-evaluate, how to have caring communication and a reflective decision-maker, represent the criteria headings for the foundation of the university's assessments. (Appendix C)



Barrett (1986) describes 3 purposes for assessment; screening, program improvement and accreditation data.

1. Screening. Used to identify areas of weakness and provide information to help the student teacher improve during student teaching. Also used to screen for entry into the teaching profession.
2. Program improvement. Used to identify program weaknesses so that adjustments can be made.
3. Accreditation data. Used to provide data to state and/or national accreditation agencies to prove that the student teachers are meeting the

stated outcomes of the student teaching experience.

The assessment of student teachers is multidimensional, with the assessment being shared by the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher and involving both knowledge and skill. As many states adopt teacher competency standards, student teaching assessment has begun to include those competencies in the formal assessment-what the education professional should know and be able to do (Limback & Mansfield, 2002). The role of university supervisors and cooperating teachers is to guide the preservice teacher's formal entry into these real world classroom experiences, to provide scaffolding and developmentally appropriate support when necessary, to challenge each preservice teacher to grow as a professional, and then, to engage in assessment of these newly acquired skills (Nolan & Hoover, 2004).

Assessment Design in Student Teaching

Assessment tools are designed based on the criteria that have been determined by the institution, professional associations, accrediting bodies, and researchers to be important in evaluating the effectiveness of student teachers. Institutions that seek accreditation most likely utilize methods that will satisfy the criteria set forth by those agencies. Many states have adopted the INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) standards for preparing and licensing new teachers. The standards describe the knowledge and skills that every beginning education professional should possess. The standards include knowledge, disposition, and performance statements representing a deep level of understanding and performance. The INTASC standards become the guidelines by which formative and summative assessments are

written. Charlotte Danielson (1996) provides an assessment based on a framework for teaching. Each standard or principle is broken down into 3 to 5 specific teaching criteria. Each of the criteria are identified by a 4 level rubric system including unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, and distinguished. The supervisor will assess the student teacher from the identified criteria spread out during the student teachers experience. A grid format provides the supervisor with an area to indicate the achieved rubric level of the student teacher and space for comments. The following is an example of the formative evaluation of INTASC Principles based on rubric scales:

Principle #1 Element “Knowledge of Content”

Unsatisfactory:	Makes content errors, does not correct errors of students or self, or lacks initiative to research content.
Basic:	Displays basic content knowledge but cannot articulate connections with other parts of disciplines.
Proficient:	Displays solid content knowledge and makes connections between the content and other disciplines.
Distinguished:	Takes initiative to locate and teach information beyond traditional text. Seeks to keep abreast of new ideas and understanding in the field.

Rubrics have been used primarily for evaluating and improving the performance of students, while Rikard and Lancaster (1999) promote the use of rubrics in assessing the behaviors and development of preservice teachers. The design and use of rubrics that are appropriate to the developmental level of student teachers provide an excellent means of assessing the effectiveness of their teaching. The rubric system can be utilized in any assessment method that provides specific observable criteria. This strategy also serves as a model for student teachers learning to create and use rubrics for their own students.

Written assessments are offered as formative and summative. The written

assessment provides feedback to the student teacher relative to the criteria set forth by the university. The formal written assessment is typically offered in the middle of the experience and at the end. This type of assessment conveys to the students their strengths, as well as their weaknesses. A formative assessment should provide short-term and long-term goals that the student teacher should focus on. Student teachers should have a clear understanding of what is expected of their behaviors, where they currently rank in the grading system and what do they need to do to improve their grade. Cooperating teachers need to mentor and facilitate achievement of the identified goals (Weaver, 2000). A summative assessment is the compilation of formative assessments whereby arriving at a final method to evaluate the complete experience.

Assessment Methods as Defined by the Literature

Conferences may be classified as either formal or informal. During informal conversation, impromptu feedback is not threatening and offers rich mentoring opportunities (Weasmer & Woods, 1997). Ebbers and Brant-Kemezis (1992) noted that the cooperating teacher can avoid the stance of protecting a position of authority by being open to the student teacher's suggestions regarding change. Brief interactions that take place between classes can provide ongoing feedback that may have immediate classroom influences. This method of informal assessment provides an opportunity for student teachers to make immediate changes to any ensuing lessons for that day rather than waiting for a scheduled formal conference that may take place once a week. Formal formative conferences, which generally address prescribed discussion topics, are intended to encourage reflection and goal setting, provide guidance, and explore specific concerns.

Formal conferences are a valuable assessment because they provide a forum where the cooperating teacher and the student teacher have had time prior to the conference to reflect and organize their thoughts. Weasmer and Woods (1997) state that when informal formative assessment is coupled with formal formative assessment, mentors and teacher candidates maximize opportunities for process-directed feedback. Formal formative assessment provides a structured and concrete overview of the clinical experience and helps establish future goals. Formal assessment defines specific teaching performance parameters.

Wentz (2001) outlines one method of approaching the initial evaluation conference. The university supervisor, the cooperating teacher, or both identifies the evaluation materials to be handled during the term by all concerned, prior to the student teaching experience. Frequently, both the university and the school district require midterm and final evaluation forms completed by the cooperating teacher. Most universities expect the cooperating teacher to submit a midterm evaluation, which can serve as good discussion material.

In many programs, the university supervisor routinely completes an observation sheet each time visits are made to the student teacher. During the post observation conference the supervisor or cooperating teacher and the preservice teacher share and discuss interpretations of the data, compare lesson aims with actual results, assess the overall effectiveness of the lesson in terms of student learning, and come to consensus on future teaching goals (Nolan & Hoover, 2004). General topics such as professional manner, classroom management, lesson preparation, and presentation ability are cited on these observation report forms. In addition, space is usually provided for narrative

comments by the university supervisor. It is a great advantage to the student teacher to discuss this report with the supervisor following the observation.

Pellet, Strayve, and Pellet (1999) state, that constructive feedback is critical as it enables the student teacher to retain effective teaching behaviors and eliminate ineffective ones. Regular and specific feedback based on objective, systematic observation is recommended. This helps to eliminate some of the biases inherent in simply “eyeballing” what is happening while the student teacher instructs. The key is to set specific goals for any identified teaching areas needing improvement throughout the experience and then work to achieve them one by one. Liebhaber (2000) recommends that the cooperating teacher help the student teacher define what success means to him or her. At the beginning of the experience, sit down with the student teacher and map out a program for the semester that includes specific expectations and mutually defined goals. During the semester, meet again to evaluate how the student teacher is doing on a day-to-day basis, as well as overall effort. Review the initial expectations and goals regularly, make adjustments when necessary, and help the student teacher stay on track.

A final evaluation by the university supervisor includes a rating of the student teacher on specific teacher qualities and a comprehensive assessment of the probability of success of the student teacher as a teacher. The student teacher’s overall evaluation is probably analyzed most critically by the cooperating teacher. Daane (2000) found an overwhelming support by cooperating teachers and student teachers for the primary evaluation to be done by one person, the classroom teacher to which the intern is assigned. The cooperating teacher has the opportunity to observe the student teacher not only during instructional lessons but also during; self assessment conferences, outside

teaching responsibilities such as lunch duty, student to student teacher interactions, work initiatives, etc. The opportunities for observation from the university supervisors are limited compared to the cooperating teacher (Pellett, Strayve, & Pellett, 1999).

The final teaching evaluation and letter of recommendation from the cooperating teacher will, in most cases, have a direct impact on the hiring of the student teacher by future employers. Thus, it is important that the cooperating teacher take the time to complete the evaluation/letter of recommendation with great thought and effort (Pellett, Strayve, & Pellett, 1999). Possible areas to address for letters of recommendation/evaluation as identified by the authors include: planning/preparation/presentation, communication skills, class management and discipline, class climate, evaluation of students, professional attributes, and personal attributes. Wentz (2001) agrees that the most important reference for the student teacher is done by the cooperating teacher. This is the main reference that hiring officials want to see before offering employment to a beginning teacher.

The assessment of lesson and unit plans is crucial to evaluating a student teachers ability to plan for content, concepts, methods, objectives, materials/equipment, time, progressions, evaluating student learning, and fulfilling required state and national standards. School districts and state mandates are requiring standards to be implemented and assessed by teachers and achievement demonstrated by school children. The lesson plan provides an opportunity for the student teacher to analyze the lesson on paper. By careful scrutiny the student teacher may find areas of weakness, such as planning for diversity in the class or remedial work.

Currently, portfolios are being widely used across the country by teacher

preparation programs to promote student learning, professional development, and reflection and to provide evidence for evaluation. They are a valuable tool for teacher education because they are a more authentic method of evaluation (Stone, 1998).

Portfolios are a compilation of work produced by students that highlight and demonstrate their knowledge and skills in teaching (Wolfe, 1995). The portfolio serves to document teacher growth and achievement over a specific period of time. According to the National Education Association (1993), a portfolio is a record of learning that centers on a student's work and her/his reflection on that work. Material is collected both by the student and by faculty or staff and should be an indication of progress toward particular goals.

Stone (1998) describes the organization of a portfolio by dividing it into 5 sections including: planning and organizing, classroom teaching, classroom management, interpersonal relations, and professional development. Materials to be included in the portfolio are: pictures, audio/videotapes of classroom teaching, resume, transcript, letters of recommendation, goal statements and philosophies, lesson plans, writing samples, individual case studies, student evaluations, student papers with teacher comments, and classroom materials can showcase the talent and expertise of the student teacher. Morgan (1999) suggests also including; reflective commentary and certificates.

Benefits of developing a portfolio as perceived by student teachers in a study conducted by Dutt-Doner & Gilman (1998) included:

1. A more accurate reflection of student learning than tests.
2. Knowledge about teaching and the teaching profession.
3. Skills in organization and development.

4. Development of professional attitudes.
5. Enhancing personal skills and self confidence.
6. Improved relationships with the professor in charge and fellow classmates.
7. Practice in building portfolios.
8. The beginning of a professional portfolio that can be used in job searches and interviews.
9. A reference work for their beliefs and knowledge base for the teaching profession.

Although by definition each portfolio should be unique to its individual creator, there is a clear indication that standardized criteria must be used to assess quality. Doolittle (1994) states that making the evaluation of portfolios reliable and valid is problematic since there is a great deal of subjectivity. He and others suggest the use of rubrics in setting standards for assessment portfolios (Carr, 1998; Fischer & King, 1995). Carr (1998) suggests that as educators move from using a checklist of included materials to a rubric, they have better defined the portfolio process and the quality of work expected. A preservice teacher's portfolio is effective when it is evaluated with a scoring rubric and assessed not only by university personnel but also by mentor teachers in the public school setting (Mayo & Rakow, 1996; Rakow, 1999).

Performance assessments such as portfolios require teachers to demonstrate application of knowledge rather than just the knowledge itself (Long & Stansbury, 1994). Although portfolios usually require more time and work on the part of both assessors and teachers themselves, they have potential of providing much richer information than do traditional assessment methods (Long & Stansbury, 1994).

Barry and Shannon (1997) recommend six strategies to implement portfolios.

The six strategies are summarized as follows:

1. Early communication. It is essential to communicate clearly with all individuals involved in the process well in advance of the portfolio development the purpose of the portfolio, its intended audience(s), and specific evaluation criteria.
2. Limit the number of components. The number of portfolio components should be limited to a few items that can serve an appropriate and useful purpose for all individuals involved in the process.
3. Establish criteria for portfolio evaluation. Establish specific criteria to facilitate successful completion and evaluation of each of the portfolio components.
4. Teach and facilitate self-reflection and self-evaluation. We cannot assume that education students will suddenly learn to reflect when they begin their internships. Self-reflection and self-evaluation must be encouraged and actively developed throughout the professional education course sequence.
5. Provide adequate time to develop the portfolio. The portfolio process should begin much earlier in the student's academic career.
6. Provide training/preparation for portfolio development. Training and development should be integrated throughout the teacher education program, beginning with the orientation course.

In an age of technology, teachers will need to demonstrate personal skills relative to the use of computers and other technological pieces of equipment. One method of insuring that preservice teachers use the technology available to them is through the

development of professional multimedia portfolios (Smith, Harris & Sammons, 2001). Kilbane and McNergney (1999) suggest that digital dossiers provide “easily accessible, professionally appealing representations of a graduate’s work,” and that the process of developing them can reflect the maturity of academic decisions made by the preservice teacher. Although Smith et al. (2001) found that the process of developing a multimedia portfolio was much more time-consuming and cumbersome than they expected. It was noted that the process of thinking, organizing, and burning the compact disc was even more time intensive. In order for student teachers to be prepared to use this technology, earlier courses in the teacher education program need to be offered including the content knowledge and practical experience to independently compile a multimedia portfolio.

Videotaping is a very valuable tool for self-assessment and reflection. Having preservice teachers create and view teaching videotapes and then address open-ended questions about the lessons can be an effective means of encouraging reflection and refining practice (Hoover, 1994a). Nolan & Hoover (2004) explain that the videotape can be analyzed individually or in small groups, including other members of the triad. Videotaping, as described by the authors, offers student teachers an in-depth, uninterrupted, concentrated picture of their instruction, their interactions with students, and their students’ interactions with one another. Viewing unsatisfactory student teacher behaviors on tape validates the need for improvement. On the other hand, observing mastery teaching techniques on film provides positive reinforcement and a feeling of accomplishment. Other forms of assessment rely on someone else’s interpretation. The videotape can be viewed at a later time and allows the student teacher an opportunity for self-reflection through pre-determined criteria. Standard criteria includes; personal

appearance, language skills, instructional methods, classroom management, student interaction and feedback. Although Wentz (2001) warns to be careful when videotaping and not to include the students in the video, each school district has their own policy on this privacy issue.

Personal logs provide an opportunity for student teachers to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses throughout the course of their student teaching experience. The student teacher should include short-term goals that focus on the standards and assessment criteria. Holly (1989) advocates for writing in journals as a way for preservice teachers to examine particular teaching situations after the fact, record questions, confirm or disaffirm hypotheses, and eventually clarify ideas to help reach decisions about best practice. Maintaining a professional journal documents the events, thoughts, and feelings occurring during teaching experiences (Weasmer & Woods, 1997). Christenbury (1994) advised preservice teachers to make a habit of journal writing, suggesting that “a journal is a good place for student teachers to consider issues about themselves, their ideas, and why and how they are making the journey of becoming a teacher” (xi). Because interactive journaling focuses on reflection rather than correctness of expression, it provides a comfortable arena for communication and informal assessment (Weasmer & Woods, 1997).

Nolan & Hoover (2004) explain that while many preservice teachers use traditional paper and pencil journals, technology-based alternatives have become popular, especially because they facilitate teachers’ sharing their written reflections with others. The authors continue to describe electronic mail, a web-based course site, or some type of bulletin or discussion board option online as an opportunity for members of the

supervisory triad to participate actively and consistently as a cohesive team.

Exchanging journals with peers or sharing them with professional mentors gives the student teacher additional insights into his or her personal teaching efficacy and invites reflective formative feedback. Peer feedback during preservice teaching experiences offers reciprocal benefits as candidates engage in conversations about teaching practices (Weasmer & Woods, 1997). Responses from peer coaches are less threatening than evaluations of more experienced mentors.

Peer assessment may take place in group sessions. Students share experiences with their peers and engage in discussion. Peers provide their own opinions about issues or questions from their own placement. This is an environment that is not threatening and allows students to elicit responses from their peers instead of offering solutions. Students can question each other to promote brainstorming and arrive at acceptable solutions. This is a more informal assessment but certainly a valuable one. Veteran teachers network, go to conferences, research articles and brainstorm among their own peers in a quest to secure current information and effective teaching methods. Students have found it beneficial to work in peer groups while constructing their portfolios (Borko et al., 1997). Students can share their ideas with peers and critique other portfolios.

Written tests are not as valuable as authentic assessments and are usually not included during the student teaching experience. Darling-Hammond (1994) and others attest to the inadequacy of standardized test measurements to document teacher or student learning outcomes. "Performance assessment is a closer measure of our children's ability to achieve the aspirations we hold for them than are conventional forms of standardized testing" (Eisner, 1999).

Factors that affect the Student Teaching Experience

The discrepancy between university supervisors' and teachers' perspectives, between theory and practice, has led some critics to doubt that the current practice of student teaching is effective (Evertson, Howley, Zlotnik, 1984). They are concerned that student teachers simply model the behavior of their cooperating teachers and may not learn as much of the theoretical and general principles that would allow them to teach in a variety of classroom situations (Richardson-Koehler, 1988). Templin (1979) found that student teachers quickly become aware of teaching styles and philosophies of their cooperating teachers and feel at risk if they disagree with their cooperating teachers. Student teachers felt that disagreeing may affect their final evaluation. This often results in student teachers hiding their inabilities, weaknesses, and concerns. Student teachers may find themselves in an awkward position of choosing teaching methods or philosophies when cooperating teachers and university supervisors disagree.

As far back as 1973, Campbell and Williamson stated that the success in student teaching is not contingent upon the school to which the student teacher is assigned nor the subject that is assigned to teach, but the most important variable is the relationship between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. Although a student teacher may possess adequate skill in methodology and be sufficiently knowledgeable in subject content, it is most unusual for the student teacher to feel that the experience was a complete success or as profitable as it could have been if the relationship with the cooperating teacher was less than desirable. Traditionally the cooperating teacher and supervisor have taken the role of being the resource of experience and knowledge,

although student teachers must be encouraged to express their own perceptions of their experiences (Pellett, Strayve, & Pellett, 1999).

Establishing an open line of communication between the student teacher, cooperating teacher and the university supervisor is essential. The cooperating teacher and university supervisor must take the time to listen and respond genuinely to student teachers' comments and questions. Attempts to understand the logic behind a student teacher's instructional or management decisions will help to open the lines of communication between all three parties. While this may take a great deal of effort and time, it will help student teachers learn to critically evaluate their instructional methods and decision-making skills. Past practices included more feedback from the cooperating teacher and supervising teacher and less time devoted to reflective practices (Schilling, 1998). Cooperating teachers can increase self-esteem and confidence of student teachers by asking their opinions about some aspect of teaching (such as preferred type of equipment, grouping, etc.) (Darden et.al., 2001).

Koerner & Rust (2000) suggest that the supervisor can play a critical role in the success of the student teaching experience. It is ironic that the selection of student teaching supervisors is often done on the basis of availability rather than on the basis of experience and credentials (Snyder & D'Emidio-Gaston, 2001). Many are drawn from the ranks of retired teachers and principals, and in many university settings, graduate students with some teaching experience are also part of the pool of supervisors. Some supervisors may come from a job having learned to supervise as a craft from a skilled mentor; others may come with formal academic course work; still others may rely

completely on their experience as teachers and their memories of student teaching (Koerner, Rust, & Baumgartner, 2002).

Sudzina and Knowles (1993) examined 25 cases of failed student teachers over a 10-year period at two research sites. While most of the failures correlated with weak preservice classroom skills, contextual conditions of the placement were problematic in a number of the cases examined. In addition, for reasons such as personality conflicts, philosophical differences, and cultural misunderstandings, some student teacher-cooperating teacher pairs failed to develop into successful mentor-mentee relationships. Unfortunately the mentee group have few choices open to them: some remain in their placements and struggle through their practicums receiving weak letters of recommendation; others fail at the conclusion of their practicums; still others request to be withdrawn from their initial placements and to repeat their practicums at new sites.

Askins & Imwold (1994) identified five differing perceptions between a female, cooperating teacher and a male, student teacher. The following 2 are closely related to factors that affect assessment in this study.

1. The involvement of the student teacher during the experience. The question that was asked of both the cooperating teacher and the student teacher was, "How were the responsibilities shifted from the cooperating teacher to the student teacher?" The cooperating teacher's perception of the induction period was in direct contrast with the student teacher. The cooperating teacher stated that she would assign small responsibilities and then phase herself out and let the student teacher be in charge of everything without her present. The cooperating teacher maintained that

as long as the cooperating teacher was observing within the class the student teacher was not taking full responsibility. The cooperating teacher only perceived full responsibility when the student teacher was in the class teaching alone.

The student teacher was very convinced that he was given full class responsibility the second day after his arrival because he was given the full class period to teach. Only during times when the cooperating teacher wanted to step in to correct an aspect of his teaching did he have any break. When the student teacher is overwhelmed from the first day, it is difficult to plan ahead, to compare yourself with the cooperating teacher in a self-reflective log, or to observe teaching practices without an opportunity.

2. The cooperating teacher as a “model” during teaching. The only role-modeling that the student teacher observed from the cooperating teacher is when she stepped in to correct the student teacher and when she helped him to teach during a third period class. The student teacher did not perceive this as providing role-modeling. When the cooperating teacher was asked what role she played as the cooperating teacher, she explained, “I teach and the student teacher observes.” Even though it was clear that the cooperating teacher did not provide opportunities for the student teacher to observe. The cooperating teacher described her role as moving the student teacher as quickly as possible into the full workload of teaching.

A student teacher may be located in a school environment or with a cooperating teacher much different than another student teacher but regardless of where a student teacher is placed one factor that sets the stage for success is a supportive relationship between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher.

The Triad

The quality of the student teaching experience depends on the collective efforts of three people; the university supervisor, the cooperating teacher and the student teacher (Darden, et. al., 2001). Each of these individuals must be dedicated to working as a team in order to achieve a common goal. In triad theory, when a dyad is established between two people, the addition of a third person produces conflict and an interruption in the smooth functioning of the dyad; it may cause a relational disturbance (Caplow, 1968). Jealousy among members may result. Caplow indicates that a triad is by necessity hierarchal, creating a change in power distribution as members seek to form coalitions and alliances.

Mitchell & Schwager (1993) studied the misunderstanding or disagreement regarding the purposes of the student teaching experience that appear to be the norm rather than the exception. This discrepancy extends to perceptions of roles and responsibilities of the triad in the experience, often resulting in mixed messages altering the impact of the experience to yield, at best unpredictable and at worst undesirable, outcomes for student teachers. There is clearly a need to fully articulate the expectations of all parties in the student teaching experience. Such an articulation needs to involve a

dialogue in which all members can ensure a common understanding of goals and strategies for achieving these goals.

Power and Hierarchy

Griffin (1989) concluded that student teaching was business as usual and that the triad of university-based supervisor, school-based cooperating teacher, and student teacher has remained stable over many years. The student teacher possesses the least power for decision-making while the supervisor remains at the top. The cooperating teacher has power above the student teacher but is considered below the level of power of the supervisor. Hierarchical decision making in student teaching is a particularly constant characteristic. Cooperating teachers are excluded from many decisions; university personnel typically influence decisions about the choice of cooperating teacher, the duration of student teaching, the requirements of planning and written work, and the final grading (Glickman & Bey, 1990). Smyth (1986) viewed hierarchical relationships in many aspects of public education as problematic. Arguably the most serious issues confronting teachers are not matters of teaching technique, but impediments that exist because of power relationships.

The occasional visit by the university supervisor creates a shift in power. Often times cooperating teachers limit their interaction with either the student teacher or university supervisor during visits. This may be due to the subordinate image that the cooperating teacher feels in the triad (Caplow, 1968).

Some practitioners have sought ways to reduce the power differential in the triad. Silva and Dana (2001) discuss the changing roles of the cooperating teacher and the

university supervisor due to the collaborative nature of professional development schools. The authors state that because collaboration is relational; the terms used to refer to these roles have also changed in order to signify and celebrate this emphasis on relationship. The term used to refer to the cooperating teacher is mentor and the supervisor has taken on the identity of professional development associate. As stated by Nolan (1989, Fall) the nature of the new terms must imply a relationship of equality, of mutual vulnerability, and of mutual leadership. It must describe a relationship marked by unconditional professional regard, the professional competence of both partners accepted as a given; a relationship marked by skilled service, ethical conduct, curiosity, a willingness to suspend disbelief, and a genuine desire to achieve a greater understanding of the teaching-learning process on both parts. Sienty (1997) identifies subtle changes in the triad by identifying each from the role they play. Public school classroom teacher supervisors became mentors, university supervisors became liaisons, and student teachers became interns and residents.

Collaborative supervision grows out of the trust and care felt by the members of the triad. The collaboration thrives because it is relational and because the partners share responsibility for the development of the prospective teacher as well as the continual professional development of each veteran teacher (mentor and PDA). Collaborative supervision recognizes and honors the unique strengths and limitations that each individual brings to the supervision process and offers the opportunity for triad members to support each other's professional growth (Silva & Dana, 2001).

Perceptions of the Triad

Sudzina, Giebelhaus and Coolican (1997) studied student teachers feelings toward mentoring by the cooperating teachers and found that student teachers thought of mentoring as a supportive role model. Student teachers saw their own responsibilities as accepting constructive criticism, working hard, and being willing to change and to try new things. Student teachers attributed success in student teaching to a positive relationship with their cooperating teacher and a supportive work environment. In their study, student teachers greatest fear was that their cooperating teacher would not let them try new ideas or “let go” of the class.

In this same study by Sudzina, Giebelhaus and Coolican (1997), cooperating teachers identified their mentoring role either as a hierarchical enterprise in which students needed “to do more” and follow their lead in the classroom or as a shared enterprise between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. The hierarchical interpretation appeared to place the burden on the student teacher to meet the cooperating teacher’s personal expectations; expectations which may extend beyond the scope of university student teaching expectations and preparation. The shared enterprise interpretation describes the cooperating teacher as more sensitive and accommodating to student teacher’s developmental needs and perspectives.

Student teachers desire more specific feedback (Tannehill & Zakrajsek, 1988), and are dissatisfied with the student teaching experience when the cooperating teacher lacks appropriate supervisory skills (Burstein, 1989). Tsangaridou and O’Sullivan (1994) conclude that student teachers would prefer to be more involved in their own supervision. When student teachers feel ownership over what is discussed, they are more likely to

enter freely into the conversation. Student teachers should begin with goal setting and action plans to guide their professional development throughout student teaching. The other triad members should collaborate by providing feedback and support concerning the student teacher's plan. The student teacher's self-image seemed most influenced by the clinical teacher's willingness to relinquish classroom control to them, trust them to handle the class, provide back-up support in the face of problems, model effective teaching, and offer feedback (Rikard & Knight, 1997). The authors illustrated that student teaching effectiveness in the classroom was undermined by those cooperating teachers who were unable or unwilling to relinquish at least some classroom control. Implicit in the clinical teacher's hesitation to give up what some student teachers called the "teacher in charge" role was a distrust of the student teacher's capabilities and potential contributions. Student teachers also deferred their selection of teaching ideas and adopted clinical teacher behaviors in order to "get along".

Brunelle, Tousignant, and Pieron (1981) analyzed student teacher perceptions of cooperating teacher's effectiveness. The authors noted that some student teachers mentioned their dissatisfaction for not receiving enough feedback or for having feedback that was too general, too deferred, too negative or for receiving advice which resulted in being ineffective for them. Student teachers stated they appreciated receiving abundant, immediate and specific feedback as well as advice which may be classified as 'tricks of the trade'. Beck and Kosnik (2002) found that student teachers value the following elements in a practicum experience: emotional support from their cooperating teacher; a peer relationship with their cooperating teacher; a degree of collaboration with their cooperating teacher; a degree of flexibility in teaching content and method; feedback on

performance, provided it is given in an appropriate spirit and manner; a sound approach to teaching and learning in the placement classroom; and a heavy but not excessive workload.

To ease the anxiety that student teachers experience, cooperating teachers should take the time to inform beginning teachers of the culture of their school and the quirks of the job (Sherblom & McElone, 1996). As well, student teachers should request that cooperating teachers inform them about their rules and expectations and about the personnel and administration of the school. Student teachers can also benefit from early and regular demonstrations and discussions of discipline policies and classroom management procedures. These strategies can facilitate the student teacher's progress in more advanced aspects of instruction. Cooperating teachers should demonstrate mentoring through a variety of roles such as being a model and instructor of students' teaching, an information source for tips and advice, a co-enquirer who stimulates students' reflections on their own lessons (Maynard & Furlong, 1995), an evaluator and a challenger (Martin, 1996), a provider of an introduction to the teaching world (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1993), and a coach or supporter (Hawkey, 1995).

It has been suggested that the cooperating teacher plays a significant role during the internship and probably has more influence on the student teacher than the college supervisor (McIntyre, Byrd & Foxx, 1996). Yates (1982) stated that "the cooperating teacher is of greater help to the student teacher than the college supervisor" (p. 213). He added that student teachers believed the observations and evaluations done by the cooperating teachers were more valid than those done by the university supervisors, since the cooperating teachers were able to devote more time to the observations and follow-up

discussions. These evaluations by cooperating teachers have been important indicators as to the fitness of the student teacher who is about to enter the teaching profession (Bruchlacher, 1998). Blocker and Swetman (1995) affirmed that the cooperating teacher is the person who is more readily available for support, direction, and advice. Cooperating teachers are in a precarious position of having to establish a special relationship with preservice teachers that allows them to be peers while at the same time supervising, instructing and critiquing the preservice teacher (Koerner, 1992).

Copas (1984) found that student teachers wanted cooperating teachers who were models of good pedagogy and classroom management and that, “the value of the direct learning experience in schools seems to depend upon the quality of the teacher with whom the student teacher is placed” (p. 49). Gonzalez and Carter (1996) used the concept of well-remembered events to examine interpretations of classroom events by both cooperating teachers and student teachers. They conclude that “even though student teachers and cooperating teachers often share experiences, they do not necessarily have a shared understanding of what that experience means” (p. 39). Grimmett and Ratzlaff (1986) found that student teachers expect cooperating teachers to provide them with the basic information needed to adjust to the student teaching placement, help them acquire materials, involve them in planning and evaluation, hold conferences with them regularly, observe them teach, and provide feedback on their teaching.

Sienty (1997) describes the campus based teacher education program as: limited visits to the field by supervisors, limited communication between the supervisor and the cooperating teacher, and supervisors that do not teach the methods courses. University supervisors in a campus based teacher education program according to Sienty had

virtually no involvement with the placement of student teachers, training of public school supervisors or planning meetings or seminars for student teachers, as these activities were conducted by the Center for Educational Field Experiences Director. The university supervisor's role was to go to the school, observe the student, confer with the student teacher and the public school teacher, and at the end of the semester, assign a grade. In this arrangement, public school teachers and university supervisors operated somewhat independently. They spoke, but communicated at length only if there was a problem with a student's performance.

Tensions/Problems Inherent in the Relationships

Jones and Sparks (1996) identify the problem that cooperating teachers rarely receive training by universities to do their job, nor are they given any information on what to do in order to insure a positive and/or progressive experience for the student teacher. This is especially troubling because a negative experience or ineffective cooperating teacher can actually negate the effect of undergraduate training (Emans, 1983).

Rex (1989), in writing about the micropolitics of supervision, states clearly that the only protection the student teacher has is the university supervisor, who is the student's advocate in a system where student teachers do not have the perspective to know they are being treated unfairly; and where they also do not have the power to do much about it if they do recognize problems with their treatment. Rex's learning that his job was essentially political made him recognize that he had to know his cooperating teachers and had to negotiate placements wisely. What Rex notes is that he frequently

had to assign student teachers to mentors who are sometimes struggling themselves. He recognized that cooperating teachers frequently want only “the best” student teachers, ones that need less supervision.

Clark (2002, Spring) asks in his research of student teaching placement and purposes of student teaching, “How can we help each student teacher get the most value from their field experience, regardless of the excellence of the match?” Clark recommends; support for supervisors in the form of adequate compensation, time to connect, read, converse, and really learn the full implications of being a teacher educator in full; support for cooperating teachers, who for better or worse are functioning as teacher educators with little or no preparation for doing so; and support for student teachers, many of whom are experiencing the most stressful, responsible, challenging time of their lives during student teaching. For the student teacher disillusionment is a daily experience.

Coulon and Byra (1997) examined the educational focus, type of feedback, and amount of dialogue between cooperating teachers and their student teachers during post-lesson conferences. It was found that during post-lesson conferences, the cooperating teachers dominated discussions. It is suggested that student teachers need to have the chance to freely express their opinions and ideas during conferences to allow them to take control in the student teaching process. The ability to cooperatively identify pedagogical skills to improve, provide strategies for improvement, and reliably measure the improvement will dictate the success that a student teacher will have during the practicum (Ocansey, 1989).

Some cooperating teachers portray university supervisors as out of touch with what they call the real world of public schools and believe the university supervisors need to get back in touch. These criticisms reflect the tensions when the university supervisors are the primary evaluators of student teachers and when cooperating teachers are left out of the decision-making process. The discontent of cooperating teachers over who supervised and how that supervision is conducted by the university suggests the need for alternative supervisory models (Veal, M.L. & Rickard, L., 1998). Cooperating teachers stated in the Veal & Rickard (1998) study that they didn't see how the university supervisor can know that much about what is going on with the student teacher when they only come out once a week or once every other week. Cooperating teachers state that they know more about what the student teacher has done than the supervising teacher.

One of the strongest recommendations, made in a study by Veal & Rikard (1998), was that university supervisors must spend more time in the schools both as observers and teachers. University teacher educators must learn more about current conditions in schools, perhaps by gaining classroom experience after being away from K-12 teaching for a number of years (Richardson-Koehler, 1988).

Cooperating teachers often mediate between the university supervisor and the student teacher by attempting to be humanistic and kind in the face of what they perceive as an unjust amount of criticism from the university supervisor (Veal & Rickard, 1998). The cooperating teacher attempts to save the student teacher from the unfair actions of the university supervisor who operates from a position in the ivory tower. Working together on a daily basis solidifies cooperating teacher relationships with student

teachers. For some cooperating teachers, working together is viewed as teaching together and sharing ideas. For other cooperating teachers, working in the real world means re-teaching student teachers about how teaching is done in schools compared to what they are taught about teaching at the university. Veal & Rickard (1998) cite the statements made by cooperating teachers that the university teaches in perfect conditions and when student teachers get out in the real world they are taught again by the cooperating teachers. What makes the cooperating teacher position so strong is their understanding of pupils and ways of getting control, as they put it, so teaching can take place. Historically, studies show a lack of collaborative work between the university supervisor and cooperating teacher (Kauffman, 1992; Cope, 1973, Yee, 1968).

Because university supervisors teach at the university under what are perceived to be ideal conditions, without being forced to deal with discipline issues on a regular basis, some cooperating teachers do not consider what university supervisors do as real teaching. Cooperating teachers complained in the Veal & Rickard (1998) study that university supervisors either had never taught in the public schools or that they have been out of the classroom so long that they have no understanding of how things work. The authors infer that this fact invalidates many university supervisor observations and evaluations of student teachers. These criticisms reflect the tensions when university supervisors are the primary evaluators of student teachers and when cooperating teachers are left out of the decision-making process. Cooperating teachers imply that university supervisors would be more tolerant of student teacher actions if they understood the school environment. Some suggestions from cooperating teachers include having the university supervisor teach in the public school for an entire day and visit the student

teacher more often or at least once a week. The authors reasoned that the cooperating teachers wanted to be appreciated and were also making an attempt to shield student teachers from what they perceived as unfair evaluations by university supervisors. The discontent of cooperating teachers over who supervises (and evaluates) and how that supervision is conducted by the university suggests the need for alternative supervisory models.

A study by Daane (2000) supported the beliefs of some student teachers and cooperating teachers that it may be beneficial for cooperating teachers to take a semester off from student teaching. Cooperating teachers should be limited to one semester of interns per academic year in order to help teachers revitalize their own classroom effectiveness.

Dewey (1904 in Zahorik, 1988) already cautioned that student teachers' close contact with the cooperating teacher may prevent them from developing reflective inquiry skills. While student teachers need exemplary role-models, they must also learn to become reflective decision-makers, grasping principles and developing new techniques.

A cooperative teacher may be concerned that the supervisor is evaluating his or her program. For this reason, some educators may feel uncomfortable in a supervisor's presence. Liebhaber (2000) recommends that cooperating teachers should stay focused on the student teacher.

Fallin and Royse (2000) stated that the placement is the most critical step in ensuring a high-quality student teaching experience. Both the location of the placement and the choice of the cooperating teacher directly influence the student teacher's

performance. The authors emphasize that when selecting a student teaching placement, it is important to give careful thought to the college student's personality, readiness level, and teaching style. Student performance on experiences from the undergraduate curriculum, such as teaching activities in methods classes, written philosophies of teaching, journals from observations, and interaction with university professors, can all provide helpful insights into pairing a student teacher's needs with the strengths of the cooperating teacher and avoiding incompatible matches.

Lack of agreement about the roles triad members should play (Bain, 1991; Grimmit & Ratzlaff, 1986; Kauffman, 1992; Rothman, 1981) and lack of clarity about the goals of student teaching (Gallemore, 1981; Griffin, 1989; Marrou, 1989; McIntyre, 1984) may be reasons for the tensions researchers cite. Communication problems among all three members are also cited as a major source of tension (Bain, 1991; Kauffman, 1992; Koehler, 1988; Ryan, 1982). In one survey of cooperating teachers, the most common problems between cooperating teachers and student teachers were personal and related to communication (Sonthall & King, 1979). True collaboration between university-based and school-based supervisors requires a partnership marked by shared knowledge and goals, respect for one another's expertise, and equity in decision-making (Nolan & Hoover, 2004).

Summary

This study focused on the perceptions of the triad members and how they experience assessment during the student teaching practicum. Participants included triad

members that have been assigned to work together during the student teaching experience. Perceptions of the triad members are molded and influenced by a variety of factors. This study investigated the meaningful and valued practices of assessment, the assessment tool itself, as well as inconsistencies or limitations of the assessment tools and practices.

Some studies have provided data that expressed the views of, most often, student teachers toward specific assessment methods such as; portfolio development, written observations, peer evaluations, and final evaluations. There is a lack of empirical research investigating what the total assessment experience means to each of the triad members during the student teaching placement. This study will add to the literature and is viewed by the university being studied as an integral component of their teacher education program assessment.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

This is a case study of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors (triad members) perceptions of the assessment methods that are implemented during the student teaching practicum. Assessment is any method implemented for the purpose of evaluating and/or measuring a student teacher's performance. In this chapter, I describe the theoretical framework, my perspective on the study, how participants were selected, access gained, data collected, data analyzed, and how trustworthiness was established.

Theoretical Framework

Merriam (1998) defines a qualitative case study as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit” (p. 21). Becker (1968) defines the purposes of a case study as twofold, “to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the groups under study” and “to develop general theoretical statements about regularities in social structure and process (p. 233)”. Merriam (1988) advocates a general approach to qualitative case studies in the field of education. It is the intent of this study to arrive at an understanding of how the triad members perceived assessment during the student teaching practicum. Cresswell (1998) states that “qualitative research

is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting” (p. 15). He also adds that the researcher interprets phenomena through other people’s meanings of the phenomena. I determined that conducting a qualitative study would provide an opportunity for the participants to recall personal experiences and describe perceptions that were either unique or in congruence with others experiencing assessment. It was my intent to discover the perceptions of those experiencing assessment in order to determine methods or practices that could be considered beneficial or detrimental to the student teaching assessment process. Although the participants were questioned using an interview guide, all were encouraged to elaborate on issues, concerns, procedures and methods whenever possible.

This study is identified as a case study tradition. Yin (1994) describes the case study as reports of research on a specific organization, program, or process or some set of these. This study reports on Riverview University’s student teaching assessment process as described by the triad members. Merriam (1998) explains, the case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable. Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice, and future research. This study is based on the personal experiences expressed by the triad participants as they describe their perceptions of administering, receiving, interpreting or simply observing the assessment methods employed during the student teaching

practicum. Stake (1995) defines the case as a specific, complex, functioning thing. This is a case of assessment methods and how they are perceived by the triad members.

This case study offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the experiences of assessment during student teaching. In this study, the real-life situation is the student teaching practicum, the phenomenon is assessment during student teaching, and the complex social units are the perceptions of the various triad members. This study will serve to inform university administrators, university faculty, student teaching directors, accreditation coordinators and students. Data reviewed from the study by university personnel could serve to influence changes in the student teaching assessment practice and/or reinforce the positive impact of current practices.

As described by Bassey (1999), an educational case study is an empirical enquiry which:

- is conducted within a localized boundary of space and time (this study is conducted within the boundaries of Riverview University's assessment process during the student teaching practicum during Fall of 2003);
- explores aspects of an educational activity, program, institution, or system;
- is mainly in its natural context and within an ethic of respect for persons;
- seeks to inform the judgments and decisions of practitioners or policy-makers;
- is conducted in such a way that sufficient data are collected for the researcher to be able
 - (a) to explore significant features of the case,

- (b) to create plausible interpretations of what is found,
- (c) to test for trustworthiness of these interpretations,
- (d) to construct a worthwhile argument or story,
- (e) to relate the argument or story to any relevant research in the literature,
- (f) to convey convincingly to an audience this argument or story,
- (g) to provide an audit trail by which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings, or construct alternative arguments

Researcher's Perspective

My personal interest and motivation to immerse myself in this study originates from personal and professional goals. Professionally, I hope to contribute valuable information to the university where the study has taken place and to other universities seeking to understand and improve a teacher education program assessment. I intend to present my findings at workshops or conferences and incorporate the findings to improve the university courses that I teach. It is my assumption that student teachers perceive various factors as affecting the outcome of assessment methods. It is my contention that student teachers understand the need for assessment and may have valuable input pertaining to the process or implementation. Personally, my goal is to produce a quality study and complete my doctoral degree in a timely manner.

Since 1991, I have been a faculty member of the Health and Physical Education Department at Riverview University. My teaching responsibilities have included a teaching methods course for the last seven years and one semester of supervising student

teachers in 1994. Assessment is a critical component of the teacher education program not only to the institution but to the future teacher. How do those players that are directly involved perceive this one-semester experience? Merriam (1998) notes the importance of acknowledging one's "prejudices, viewpoints or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under study" (p. 158).

My interest in the topic of student teaching assessment originated from my own student teaching experience. I am an alumnus of the Riverview University teacher education program. My student teaching experience included 7.5 weeks at a large urban high school and 7.5 weeks at a small rural elementary school. In regard to my own student teaching and assessment experience, my recall is somewhat tainted by what I perceived as "difficult cooperating teachers". During my student teaching experience the only form of assessment included feedback from the cooperating teacher to the supervisor, but not to me, and 3 visits from the university supervisor. I observed behaviors from both of my cooperating teachers that were uncompassionate to students and reduced motivation. I was very unclear about what criteria were being used to assess my student teaching performance. Since my graduation in 1980, teacher education programs have implemented more authentic, fair, and consistent assessment methods, compliant with national and state standards. Programs are more conscientious toward matching compatible triad members and screening cooperating teachers. As well it was my contention to facilitate the accreditation process for Riverview University and it was supported by the university as I was granted an Alternate Workload Leave to complete the research.

In order to strengthen the truth value of this research and reveal any researcher biases, I solicited a colleague to review what I've concluded. Rossman and Rollis (1998) state, that "unlike the allegedly objective social scientist, the qualitative researcher values his unique perspective as a source of understanding rather than something to be cleansed from the study" (p. 9). The authors refer to this as *exquisite sensitivity to personal biography*. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) claim, "The researcher is making interpretations, and must have some conceptual scheme to do this." My interpretations will be developed from the discovery of common themes, my understanding of the student teaching assessment process from personal experiences, document analysis and peer examination.

Selection of Participants

This study included the following participants: student teachers and their assigned cooperating teachers, and the university supervisors assigned to the selected student teachers. Each student teacher was assigned to 2 different cooperating teachers during the semester; one cooperating teacher for the first 7 ½ weeks and another cooperating teacher the second 7 ½ weeks. The cooperating teacher that supervised during the second 7 ½ weeks participated in the study. All of the participating student teachers were students at Riverview University majoring in the teacher education program. The university supervisors were selected from the same university. Cooperating teachers were selected based on being assigned to the selected student teacher during their second half assignment of the fall 2003 semester placement.

The student teacher, cooperating teacher and university supervisor were selected based on a triad assignment. All three members of the triad needed to consent to participate in order to be a part of this study. If any one member of the triad was unable or unwilling to participate another triad would have been selected. Although each triad was directly related, both cooperating teachers and university supervisors responded with experiences from many different student teachers that they had worked with, not always the one that was a participant in the study.

Initially, all university supervisors were invited to participate by email. If any university supervisors declined the invitation to interview, they and all of their assigned student teachers were omitted from participating in the study.

A list of all student teachers and their assigned placements, cooperating teachers and university supervisors was solicited from the Director of Student Teaching. The four educational majors that were included in this study were; elementary, secondary, health and physical education and special education. A faculty member from each discipline that teaches a methods course prior to the student teaching experience was asked to identify all student teachers from their discipline that they believed would interview well. It was important to the study to select student teachers that would be articulate in order to gather enough data to generate categories, themes and patterns. From the selection of each list of the four majors, two student teachers from each major were selected while including the following criteria: 4 males, 4 females, urban and rural placements. A total of eight student teachers representing 4 different school districts were included. Almost all of the assessment methods implemented within the student teaching program at Riverview University were the same across majors. Some variations were present in the

interpretation of the assessment methods between different majors, and some supervisors chose not to implement a particular assessment method. It was important to the researcher to explore 8 student teachers' views of the assessment methods in order to discover recurring themes. By including 2 student teachers from each of the four teaching majors the researcher may find conformities and/or differences in opinions within the majors. Each of the eight student teachers was asked to bring personal assessment documents with them to the interview for duplication and later analysis.

Since student teachers usually leave the area as soon as school ends, it was important that the student teachers were scheduled to interview first. University supervisors and cooperating teacher interviews were scheduled in December and January. All interviews with cooperating teachers were held at their respective schools at the end of their school day. Each cooperating teacher was asked if there was a room available at the school for the interview that would provide privacy and a quiet environment. The interviews were held in each of the cooperating teacher's home classroom or as in the case of the physical education teachers, in the library and in a small conference room. All participants were given my work and home phone number in case there was a need to change the interview appointment.

Although it might have been desirable to select an equal number of males and females as well as urban and rural placements, it was the researcher's intent to collect data from the recommended participants in order to contribute to the development of insight and understanding of assessment. Based on the number of recommended student teachers, assigned placements, willingness of student teachers to participate, equal

representation of gender was not possible. A total of 8 student teachers, 8 cooperating teachers and 5 university supervisors participated in the study.

In a case study the crucial factor is not the number of respondents but the potential of each person to contribute to the development of insight and understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). It is the researcher's belief that due to the triad's very similar experiences of assessment methods, eight triads would maximize the information. It is the view of the researcher that a 2-hour interview from possibly up to 24 people is a substantial amount of data to transcribe and analyze. From the 8 triads, opportunity is there to discover a variety of experiences as well as note repetitive themes. Patton (1990) recommends specifying a minimum sample size "based on expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon given the purpose of the study" (p. 186).

This study satisfies the definition of criterion sampling, where all participants have met pre-determined criteria. Criterion-based sampling requires that one establish the criteria, bases, or standards necessary for units to be included in the investigation; one then finds a sample that matches these criteria (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). The criteria that needed to be satisfied by the participants were that they must have been student teachers, cooperating teachers or university supervisors that were actively participating in the student teaching practicum at Riverview University during the fall 2003 semester. According to Creswell (1998), in a phenomenological perspective it is essential that all participants experience the phenomenon being studied.

This is a purposeful sampling strategy. This study seeks triads of individuals that share a responsibility in receiving, evaluating or interpreting assessment for the student teaching experience. The study populations included; urban and rural settings, a variety

of education majors, male and female genders. This study may also fall under the category of “convenience” sampling only in the respect that the researcher had established a rapport with 5 of the 21 participants and a connection with the university directly involved in the study through employment. It is the researcher’s belief, that although convenient, the sampling did not compromise the credibility of the study.

Access

Before any contact was initiated with participants, permission was sought from a human subjects review board. This is a process in which a campus committee reviews research studies for their potential harmful impact on subjects. This study required the permission of two campus review boards. One review approval was required from the campus where the study is the final dissertation in the researcher’s doctoral program. The other review board approval came from the campus where the student teachers and university supervisors are associated. The Internal Review Boards from both Riverview University (where data collection took place) and the Penn State University (the university where the researcher is completing doctoral requirements) have approved the study. All study participants provided permission to be interviewed and needed to have a rapport with the researcher to disclose detailed perspectives about responding to an action or process (Creswell, 1998). Participants were informed of the following information; the researcher is a faculty member in the teacher education department from Riverview University; that the results of the study are valuable and necessary feedback to the university; assessing the student teaching program fulfills a requirement by NCATE

(National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) and the university sets a high priority of achieving and maintaining accreditation; and this study will complete the doctoral dissertation requirements of the researcher.

Student teacher participants were enrolled or recently graduated from Riverview University, where the researcher is employed. The researcher was familiar with two of the student teachers due to each of them being enrolled in at least three of the classes that the researcher teaches prior to student teaching. Once students entered the student teaching semester they would no longer be a student in any of the researcher's classes. This is important because of the honest responses that need to be collected from the participants. The researcher was acquainted with two of the university supervisors and one of the cooperating teachers. From previous interactions with cooperating teachers they were very anxious to contribute their perspectives. The Director of Student Teaching provided the researcher with the student teaching assignments and locations. Characteristics of the participants and their placements included urban and rural settings, four public school districts, male and female genders, and four teaching majors.

After identifying the student teacher participants, I was somewhat apprehensive about what type of reaction I would receive and whether the student teachers would agree to interview with as much enthusiasm as I had conducting the interview. The approach I wanted to have when contacting the student teachers included; a professional delivery, adequate explanation, an understanding of the importance it would bring to the university and assessment research, the ability to accommodate their schedule and an understanding of the confidentiality that would be adhered to. Each student teacher participating in this study agreed without hesitation to interview and seemed very eager to share their

thoughts. I interpreted the enthusiasm in the student teachers' voices and the "thank you" that I received after I asked each to participate, as an appreciation for valuing their input and a way to contribute back to the program. Although the interview appointment dates occurred during the wintry weather of December, seven of the eight student teachers initially selected attended the interview. One student teacher, a female Special Education major, was asked to participate and initially agreed. After missing the original interview date due to weather conditions, the student teacher did not return the calls to re-schedule that I attempted to make. As a result I was forced to select another student teacher from the Special Education major. While trying to maintain a selection of student teachers from diverse areas and from the list of student teachers that were identified as potentially good interviewees, it was necessary to choose a male from that category.

Data Collection

Merriam (1998) states, that it is common for qualitative studies in education to employ only one or two techniques for collecting data. This study included data collection from taped interviews and student teaching assessment documents. The interviews were taped in a private setting and the data was transcribed. All of the transcribed data was backed up onto compact discs and hard copies produced have been filed separately.

Interviews

All participants were asked to take part in the study by agreeing to being interviewed on tape. My role as the researcher was to ask semi-structured open-ended questions, request clarification and allow the participants views to unfold. The primary focus of the interview was the participants' perspective of assessment during the student teaching experience. Interviews were conducted at locations that were convenient and comfortable to the participants and offered privacy throughout the duration of the interview. The researcher's office at the university offered such an environment for the student teachers and university supervisors, while cooperating teachers were agreeable to interview at a location within their own school. Participants were informed that the interviews would last approximately 2 hours. The duration of the interviews lasted anywhere from 1 hour and 15 minutes to 2 hours and 30 minutes. This time frame provided a reasonable amount of time to complete the research questions. The student teacher interviews were held between December 8th and December 30th. This proved to be a convenient time to schedule interviews due to the end of the student teaching experience and the break before the public schools resumed in January.

Student teachers recalled experiences from 2 different placements. Student teachers did not appear to have any difficulty recalling their experiences from the entire semester and were able to describe both placements with distinct details. The researcher found that the cooperating teachers and university supervisors expounded on their experiences from their most recent student teacher and from many of their past student teachers. It was imperative for the researcher to encourage recollection of experiences and specifics in order to gain insight into the event.

An interview guide approach was implemented in this study (see Appendix A). As described by Rossman & Rallis (1998) the researcher develops categories or topics to explore but remains open to pursuing topics that the participants bring up. All initial questions asked of the participants within each study group would be identical, although the questions differed slightly between the study groups. Participants were asked at the beginning of the interview whether the researcher may contact them during the analysis process for clarification and/or additional information. All participants were receptive to any follow-up call. Follow-up calls were not necessary.

Document Analysis

Marshall and Rossman (1999) state the review of documents is an unobtrusive method, rich in portraying the values and beliefs of participants in the setting. Minutes of meetings, logs, announcements, formal policy statements, letters, journaling, videotapes and public documents are forms of data collection. Assessment forms, student teacher information and guidelines, requirements and accreditation documents were acquired and available for use in this study. Student teachers were asked to share personal assessment documents from their last student teaching placement to be included in the analysis. Observation forms, written evaluations, grading criteria sheets were solicited. Assessment documents that were available were analyzed to confirm data collected, clarify and to compare between participants. Assessment documents were analyzed to verify or refute data provided by the participants.

The NCATE and PDE (Pennsylvania Department of Education) standards are the blueprints for the student teaching experience. The university guidelines for student

teaching follow the criteria from NCATE and PDE, but are more defined in behavioral outcomes. The assessment forms, requirements and guidelines of the Riverview University teacher education program were compared with the interview data.

Data Analysis

“Data Analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others.” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, pp.157)

The first and one of the most important considerations in preparing to write your final report is deciding whom the report is for. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) call this process, audience conjuring. Once it is clear who will be reading the report, you can ask what that audience would want to know about the study. The answer to that question can help to structure the content of the report and determine the style of presentation. (Merriam, 1998). The data analysis will serve to inform the university where the research interviews took place, Directors of Student Teaching, Teacher Education Program Accreditation Agencies and other teacher education programs employing similar assessment methods.

Data analysis for this study incorporated phases or practices as described by Rossman & Rallis, 1998. First, I became familiar with the data. I listened to tapes more than once. Transcripts were reread which provided leads for possibly further data gathering, where participants could be contacted to clarify or discuss concepts important to the study. It was not necessary to make further contact with the participants.

Coding was followed by assigning a shorthand designation to various aspects of the data so that the researcher could easily retrieve specific pieces of the data. The designations used were letters, numbers and phrases. The coding scheme can be quite simple, as in identifying a theme that can be illustrated with numerous incidents and quotes or it can be quite complex, with a multilevel of coding for each incident. (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Most themes in this study were illustrated with numerous incidents or quotes.

As described by Creswell (1998), during *open coding* the researcher forms initial categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting the information. Within each category, the investigator finds several properties, or subcategories, and looks for data to dimensionalize, or show the extreme possibilities on a continuum of, the property.

Axial coding was employed when I assembled the data in new ways after open coding. I identified the central phenomenon, explored causal conditions and identified intervening conditions.

Using the constant comparative approach, the researcher attempted to “saturate” the categories. These categories were composed of subcategories, called properties, representing multiple perspectives about the categories (Creswell, 1998). At this stage

categories were displayed visually. Categories were then refined, looking at common characteristics and exclusions. It was important to test categories by challenging their meanings. Categories were developed from within each triad group first, in order to establish any patterns among a specific triad group experiencing assessment from a particular position or status. These categories or themes were described in chapters 4, 5 and 6. From there, I looked across the cases to find emergent themes. I investigated the similarities and differences between the participants. These emerging themes were the focus from across the triad members that are narrated in Chapter 7.

Finally, data analysis included searching for alternative understandings. Alternative understandings always exist. It was important to identify them and then demonstrate how the interpretation put forward was sound and grounded in the data. Recall building an argument or interpretation about what is learned in the field or develop an argument that is more compelling than the other alternatives. This argument builds logical relationships among the assertions, documents them with evidence, and presents a summation of the conclusions that relate to what is known in the literature. (Rossman & Rallis, 1998)

Standards of Quality Research

According to Merriam's (1998) research experience as well as the literature on qualitative research, an investigator can use six basic strategies to enhance internal validity: triangulation, member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative modes of research, and researchers' biases.

In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence (Patton, 1990). By employing in-depth interviews, document analysis, and peer debriefers, I incorporated triangulation into my study.

An in-depth description showing the complexities of processes and interactions will be so embedded with data derived from the setting that it cannot help but be valid. Within the parameters of that setting, population, and theoretical framework, the research will be valid (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Detailed descriptions of the assessment practices, methods and perceptions coupled with quotes that illustrate the themes will enhance internal reliability.

Researchers supplement participant interviewing with gathering and analyzing documents produced in the course of everyday events or constructed specifically for the research at hand (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). University supervisor's observation forms, the formative and summative assessment form, the PDE report, a video tape assessment form, grading sheets and the Riverview University Student Teaching Guideline booklet were all gathered in order to corroborate, negate or question the data.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) define the role of the peer debriefer as a "devil's advocate," an individual who keeps the researcher honest; asks hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations; and provides the researcher with the opportunity for catharsis by sympathy listening to the researcher's feelings. Peer debriefing was utilized through colleagues at Riverview University who are familiar with student teaching and research methods and through additional cooperating teachers in the districts studied. As well, the advisor for my dissertation committee asked questions that

made me think more deeply about the methods, meanings and interpretations of this study.

Clarifying researcher bias from the outset of the study is important so that the reader understands the researcher's position and any biases or assumptions that impact the inquiry (Merriam, 1998). This is important to the researcher because past experiences as a student teacher, university supervisor and faculty member might have slanted the researcher's interpretation. It was the researcher's intention to maintain objectivity throughout the study and be aware of and bracket possible biases. Peer examination was implemented during data analysis in order to maintain objectivity. A rich description of the study was provided in order to allow transferability. By describing in detail the participants' perceptions and phenomenon under study, the researcher enables readers to transfer information to other settings and to determine whether the findings can be transferred "because of shared characteristics" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 32). Because specific student teaching assessment methods are common among universities offering teacher education programs, findings from this study may be valuable to other teacher education programs.

Chapter 4

Perceptions from Student Teachers Regarding Assessment Practices

This chapter discusses the perceptions of the student teachers concerning the assessment process during student teaching. The narrative is organized into sections that correspond to each of the five secondary research questions that guided the study. The same section structure is also used in chapters five and six.

By the student teachers' quick and deliberate responses it was evident that they had already formed perceptions of the different assessment methods and the impact each had in facilitating their experience. Each of the student teachers could formulate their feelings into which methods and procedures had a positive impact, no impact or an adverse affect on their experience. Student teachers commented and agreed on most accounts of the role or roles that student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors play in assessment. Although the student teachers responded immediately to each of the triad's roles, during later interview questions other role/responsibilities would emerge from recalling what they had experienced. For example, one student teacher recalled writing a question in his journal and received the journal back from his supervisor with just a check mark. He immediately commented on the role of the supervisor as someone whose role should be to provide written feedback on all forms of assessment.

Responses from student teachers were similar when they discussed the purpose of assessment. All student teachers found value in assessment but didn't always agree with

how they were implemented or made suggestions for modifying some of the assessments.

Student teachers' thoughts were influenced by their personal experiences during student teaching, experiences from previous methods courses, and from other student teachers' stories that were shared. Each student teacher recalled instances that influenced how their view was constructed. Student teachers were very eager to describe the circumstances behind their views, as I reassured them that their identity would remain anonymous and any names provided during the interview would be changed. Due to the close relationship of assessment and grading, participants from each triad group addressed grading issues in some of their responses. This chapter reveals the views and perceptions of the student teachers; Ellen, Carla, Paul, Tim, Ian, Brett, Barry, and Linda.

How do Student Teachers Comprehend the Various Assessment Methods?

When asked, "What methods of assessment did you experience during student teaching?" the answers varied from 2 to 3 to a list of 5 or 6 methods. All student teachers responded that they had experienced supervisor observations (see Appendix B) and the formative and summative assessments (see Appendix C). It appeared that because these were the answers most often given and the first answers provided that these assessments were perceived to be the most important when calculating their final student teaching grade. Other forms of assessment that were identified included; portfolio, unit and lesson plans, journaling, videotaping, bulletin boards, and self-evaluation.

Observations

During the post observation conference the supervisor or cooperating teacher and the preservice teacher share and discuss interpretations of the data, compare lesson aims with actual results, assess the overall effectiveness of the lesson in terms of student learning, and come to consensus on future teaching goals (Nolan & Hoover, 2004). At Riverview University the university supervisors are required to conduct a minimum of 3 formal observations. Additional observations may be conducted if requested by the student teacher, cooperating teacher or administration. Student teachers stated that the required 3 supervisor observations were satisfactory, 2 would be too few and 4 might be a little better, if time permitted. It was noted that the more feedback that the student teachers could receive, the better. Some student teachers felt that they didn't see their advisor as often as they would have liked and post observation conferences were sometimes short. Pellet et. al. (1999) state that constructive feedback is critical as it enables the student teacher to retain effective teaching behaviors and eliminate ineffective ones. Regular and specific feedback based on objective, systematic observation is recommended.

As stated by Nolan and Hoover (2004) it is a great advantage to the student teacher to discuss the lesson with the supervisor following the observation. Student teachers preferred their supervisor to conference with them immediately after the observation. And although the opportunity is not always convenient to do so, planning as many as possible immediately afterward was preferred. When the conference was held immediately after the observation, the student teacher felt more prepared to recall events and to self evaluate more accurately. Barry was frustrated when his post-observation

conference was held days later and although he had reasons for implementing certain behaviors during a specific lesson he couldn't recall the reason at the time. It becomes frustrating for the student teacher because it appears that they are either lacking in teaching techniques or the ability to self-reflect. An immediate conference also gave the student teachers an opportunity to implement any suggestions or make changes in the lessons that would take place after the conference. As Ian describes, when observations are held within the first few weeks in the practicum the student teacher has an early understanding of what the supervisor is looking for. Early observations help to identify weaknesses early on so that changes can be made sooner.

Most of the time it actually worked out where I had some time like a prep period or lunch or something like that or it was the last period of the day and it was easy to just sit down and take our time and have our conference. Other times it was like we'll talk later because another class is coming in. The conference itself having it directly after your lesson, you get that immediate feedback. That is very important because you sit down, this went well, this didn't go well. I think the way it tended to go the student teacher was the first to make any reflection on it, nothing really prompted it just "How do you think it went?" And then you kind of start to get the ball rolling from there. Asked questions like "What could you have done in this situation to make it work better?" A suggestion here, a suggestion there and then this is what you are doing wrong this is what you need to work on. And you can always focus in on what to improve on. Having it directly after the lesson, that's the best thing about it because it's right there. I think one of the better benefits of it was I did mine early in my placement; it gave me an idea of what my supervisor was seeing. So for all of the other observations to come I had that image in my head what she is seeing. (student teacher, Ian)

I like to do it right after because everything is fresh in my mind. Especially if at the high school if you're teaching 3 sections of the same class and then you talk about it 2 days later you have to go back and think "which kids were in there? What happened?" I like to do it right away while you're still thinking "Oh yea that's why I did that, I knew there was a reason but if you waited awhile you maybe say "Oh ah I just..." (student teacher, Barry)

A few student teachers commented about the punctuality of the supervisor's visit.

Arriving prior to the start of the class was important to the student teacher because the

activities at the beginning of the lesson would be the most informative and active for the students. It was clearly important to the student teacher that the supervisor see the lesson in its entirety in order to fairly evaluate the student teacher, especially since the supervisor only sees the student teacher three times.

But it also can be a bad thing to know when they're (university supervisor) coming too, because you'll have supervisors that don't show up on time and then you have to wait for them. And then you're holding the kids up because you want the supervisor to see the best part of your lesson. Because one of these lessons the supervisor was late for and didn't see the motivator, which I thought was the best part of the lesson after that I thought it was pretty boring. I was all excited at the beginning and she came in for mostly paperwork. Then she didn't see me teaching that much which I thought affected my grade, you have to see the whole lesson or you can't give an effective observation by any means. (student teacher, Paul)

Most of the student teachers explained the format of the post-observation evaluation as beginning with the university supervisor asking "what do you think went well, what didn't go well and how would you have changed your lesson." Next the supervisor would share what student teacher perceptions they agreed with and then contribute any additional observations that were not discussed. The supervisor might then make suggestions for the student teacher. The suggestions that came from the supervisor were well received by the student teachers because the student teachers would then implement the suggestions into future lesson plans. Although student teachers did express their appreciation when the supervisor and cooperating teacher allowed the student teacher to experiment and try something new without the fear of a failure affecting their grade. Ellen describes her experience of being observed by the first university supervisor as positive but was not quite as satisfied with the second supervisor. Her first supervisor provided what she viewed as a more comprehensive, detailed account of her teaching including the student teacher's opinions and provided an on-the-spot

computer print-out of the report. As was noted by Ellen's post observation report her first supervisor narrated using the entire space while the second supervisor's narrative included approximately 5-9 lines.

There were 3 observations with each student teaching placement. My first placement my supervisor was absolutely wonderful, I had a great time she really showed that she cared. She did checklist observations and also the laptop computer added in, pretty much what good things I did in the lesson and also constructive criticisms, some things to work on she included those which helped me a lot, it gave me ideas of what I needed to work on. She would also add in my opinions about what I thought were the best parts of the lesson or the worse parts, what I could work on, different things like that. Then she would print it out and it would be on a scale from 0 to 4 under the different criteria. My second placement, the same type of form, not as detailed. I didn't get as much feedback from my supervisor as I had hoped. (student teacher, Ellen)

Student teachers placed a strong emphasis on improving any weaknesses from one observation to the next and implementing any suggestions that were made by the supervisor. They felt that in order to improve upon their performance as teachers they needed to hear from the supervisor constructive criticisms and suggestions that may facilitate their teaching. Making the changes and implementing the suggestions became the new focus for the student teacher in order to maintain a high grade or to improve their grade.

The observations from the supervisors I think were good because they knew exactly what they were looking for and the first observation wasn't graded so it gave us a chance to see where we needed to improve on and exactly what we are being graded on and fix up for the future. Sometimes it hurt though because I know at my second placement I only got observed in Health one time. So I didn't have a lot of room for improvement. (student teacher, Linda)

I was very happy that my supervisors took the time after each observation and sat down with at least myself and most of the time with my co-op as well. We have a 15-20 minute session where we would discuss what went well, what went wrong, how to fix this, what other instructional methods you could involve in the lessons. And that helped because I can just take that and if I'm observed third period by the end of the day I've already changed it to try something different. Student teaching is about experimenting. I've had so many failures

where I can turn them now later into successes which are what this is all about, so I'm very pleased with it. (student teacher, Brett)

While describing their experiences of being observed from the university supervisor, some of the student teachers revealed their perceptions of announced vs. unannounced visits. The tone most indicated by the student teachers was that they preferred to know when the university supervisor was coming to observe. This was especially the case among certain majors, e.g. Special Education. Tim praised his university supervisor for understanding how some days it would not matter who was teaching the emotional support students, their behavior was difficult to control. The university supervisor would ask if it was not a good day to visit, especially early in their experience in order for the student teacher to be more confident during his first observation. An interesting comment from Tim was that he appreciated the supervisors allowing him input on whether it would be a good time to observe. He believed their understanding was due to their own prior experience teaching that particular discipline.

My first supervisor let me know when she was coming in because of the disability I was working with. My second supervisor let me know the first time but then the next 2, the supervisor did not let me know about.

The last period of the day you know that something was going to happen and someone was going to flip out. They would even tell you "Mr. Jones I want you to know that I'm not going to make it." It was nice not to have the supervisor there the last period of the day. The supervisor said, "if I come and the kids are flipping out, maybe it was a full moon, things aren't going real good, just tell the co-op and he'll tell me that today is not a good day and I will come back." The supervisor said it has happened before. It made me feel good. I think it's especially important to do when working with the emotional support kids because some days everything goes fine and some days all of the kids are ready to... It was comforting to know that I didn't have to worry about it all day long, if I could postpone the observation. Both of my supervisors understood because they taught before. (student teacher, Tim)

My first supervisor, she told us she didn't want us to panic when she came in so she scheduled all of her observations with us so we knew what day she was coming, what time she was coming, which worked out well. My second co-op she

would just pop in. I didn't have a problem because I could just go get a student and have her observe but another student teacher in the building would have a lesson in the early morning and not again until the end of the day and the supervisor would come at 11:00am. (student teacher, Ellen)

The tone here again indicated a preference for a scheduled visit from the university supervisor in order to avoid a visit without the opportunity to observe a lesson. A little different perspective was provided by Ian. He really didn't have a preference as to whether he was informed when his supervisor would visit and his perspective of unannounced visits was shared by the cooperating teachers and university supervisors. If students know the supervisor is coming they may be more apt to enhance their teaching methods and aids, hence providing a perceived higher quality performance that is not indicative of every class that they teach. This is commonly called "the dog and pony show". Ian believes that when student teachers are observed unannounced, the supervisors will get a more credible or honest picture of the student teacher's everyday performance, as well as preventing the student teacher from deliberately increasing the quality of one class in order to impress the supervisor.

My first placement I may have only known (about the supervisor's visit) for the last one. But it was fair game. The supervisor could come whenever they wanted to. For my second placement because of their hectic schedule the supervisor had to schedule specific times to come, and needed for us to tell her when were the good times to come in and that was understandable with the supervisor's schedule. I think the element that you have to be ready all the time is a good thing. And that was there more so in the first placement than in the second placement. I think it is definitely good to have unannounced visits if for nothing else to keep you honest. (student teacher, Ian)

Some student teachers interviewed didn't feel as though they would do anything drastically different or better just because the university supervisor would be observing. A few did indicate that they would be more nervous if the university supervisor was observing.

A number of student teachers commented that they perceived their university supervisor to be extremely busy, rushed and lacking time for extended visits. They viewed their conferences sometimes as hurried, held later in the day or later in the week, short and sometimes involving non-specific feedback. It should be noted that many of the supervisors teach classes as well as cover a large geographical area for student teaching.

3-Way Conference

The 3-way conference is conducted in much the same format as the post observation conference between the student teacher and the university supervisor or cooperating teacher with the addition that all 3 of the triad members are present during the 3-way. Many student teachers did not experience a 3-way conference or they only experienced one at the end of the practicum. Student teachers favored being part of a 3-way conference if possible. Finding time immediately after a lesson observation for the student teacher, cooperating teacher and the university supervisor to converse was many times too difficult because of the back-to-back teaching schedule of the cooperating teacher. One student teacher described the 3-way conference as more of a conversation and a comfortable session for all to provide their own input.

I had my 3-way conference yesterday and that was a great learning experience. I respect my supervisor and he was giving me so many good pointers, both of them were. We were all talking and it was like half the time we weren't talking about... it was just teaching in general and just different ideas flowing through, we were working together on one of my lessons. It was just a neat thing and I feel just more of that would make it a lot better experience. (student teacher, Paul)

Linda did not experience the 3-way conference. She relayed feelings of strong interest to have this opportunity and why. She and other student teachers were in favor of all triad members meeting early on in the practicum to share input from an observation and expectations of the student teacher's performance so that everyone was "on the same page".

Maybe a meeting might be good with the supervisor and the co-op and you. Just so the 3 of you have a chance to sit down and make sure everyone is on the same page, make sure everyone is expecting the same things out of you. Because I think that could be frustrating if you're cooperating teacher is expecting one thing and your supervisor expects something else. And you're trying to please both of them. (student teacher, Linda)

Formative and Summative Competency Form

The INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) standards describe the knowledge and skills that every beginning education professional should possess. The standards include knowledge, disposition, and performance statements representing a deep level of understanding and performance. The INTASC standards become the guidelines by which formative and summative assessments are written. Charlotte Danielson (1996) developed an assessment tool based on the INTASC standards. Riverview University compiled a student teacher competency form based on the content and format of Danielson's model. (See Appendix C) This particular assessment is identified at Riverview University as the Formative and Summative Competency Form.

Cooperating teachers are asked to complete the formative assessment during the 4th week of the student teacher's placement and the summative assessment at the end of the student teacher's placement. Each criterion provides 4 rating levels where the

cooperating teacher will check the “F” box if the assessment is being completed in the 4th week of the practicum or the “S” box if the assessment is completed at the end. This provides an opportunity for the student teacher and university supervisor to determine strengths, weaknesses and growth. Student teachers did not harbor any discontentment with the form or its intent to evaluate student teacher performance but did have suggestions to modify and improve the validity of the form.

One student teacher, Brett, felt that since student teachers are usually not given a full load to teach until approximately the third week, that it may be better to eliminate some of the questions in the formative assessment. For example, one question states, “The student teacher displays thorough understanding of child development, different approaches to learning, student interests, and cultural heritage.” Brett believes that it is very difficult for a student teacher to have achieved proficiency (one level below the highest rating of distinguished) in this area when some of the classes were only recently assigned to him prior to the formative assessment. Brett admitted that he hadn’t really looked at the questions from the formative/summative assessment in-depth but he commented that there seemed to be questions that his cooperating teacher did not have answers for. He quoted his co-op as saying, “I’m grading you on this, but we never even discussed it or we haven’t had time to get used to that question.”

Carla was also frustrated with not having opportunities to succeed in some of the competency form criterion due to the circumstances of her teaching position or responsibilities. She felt fortunate that her cooperating teacher rated her high even though she did not have an opportunity to satisfy the criteria.

I’ll start with the competency form because I do have some problems with the one that our co-op fills out. Depending on . . . it doesn't matter if you're

teaching sixth grade math or if you're teaching kindergarten, they have the same criteria to assess you on. My first placement I had a lot of opportunities to use technology and to integrate it into the classroom. I was in fourth grade. We used technology a lot. My second placement it's the beginning of the year and I'm in first grade. There's no time. You're really restricted to what your co-op wants. I think one of the questions is how many times you use technology in the classroom and multiple technologies. Well, if you're not given the opportunity to use that they really can't rank you the highest. Even my co-op had some problems with that. She said, "I'm giving you a four because this is ridiculous." But I'm not sure if all co-ops would look and say, "Well, they weren't really given an opportunity to use technology." They may say, "you used the overhead one time, so I'll give you a two." Bottom line, 10-15% of our grade is assessment, so that one I think needs to be explained maybe a little more explicitly to the co-ops or maybe some of them need to be looked at a little bit more closely because they are very, very task specific a lot of them. And some of them it's not the student teacher's fault that they may not have had an opportunity to meet that standard in the way the classroom is setup. In my classroom they started a brand new math series. There was no time. There just wasn't time to take them to do an extra thing or an extra computer project. (student teacher, Carla)

A reoccurring theme articulated from a number of interviewed student teachers was the inability of the cooperating teacher to accurately grade some of the criteria from the formative/summative assessment. The student teachers stated more than once that there were some criteria that student teachers either did not have an opportunity to develop to a distinguished level or to demonstrate at all. Examples provided by the student teachers were different. Some examples were specific to their major. Paul stated that the form seemed very specific to special education and that the criteria were very valid for that field. Although he did remark that the grade he received for one of the criterion that evaluates your interactions with parents, as questionably low. He stated that he met with the parents two times, which was more than his last placement, and met with parents at a parent-teacher conference. This is how Paul interpreted the formative/summative assessment and this particular criterion:

Like the parents things, the parent things are a hard one because you're a guest. The university I feel wants you to make a little more of parent things than

some co-ops want. I think that's a misrepresentative tool because on this one they marked me low but I did everything I was suppose to and I met these parents more than I did my last placement but it was still only 2 times. But that's all I was suppose to do and could have done, I mean I sent my letter, met at my parent-teacher conferences and that was basically it. So I think they need to make that a little more individualized. Which I think a lot of things on the competency form need to be individualized.

But when you go down all those things (criteria) you're not going to have all 4's. Some of those are not applicable. That's another thing that varies about the co-op. Where my first co-op if it wasn't applicable he asked me to see if I knew about it then he give me the high one. The second one some of them just weren't applicable, the parent thing even, so I got a lower grade on that just because the opportunity didn't occur. (student teacher, Paul)

Paul's statement pertaining to his receiving a lower grade because the opportunity wasn't there concurs with Carla's point quoted earlier, that some teachers could grade you lower even if the opportunity was not present. Paul's opinion was that the formative/summative form was too long to complete at one time. And as Brett commented earlier, it is too comprehensive to be administered only 3 to 4 weeks into the practicum.

Many of the student teachers commented that the form was very generic and was not specific to their major. It was evident that student teachers could distinguish specific criteria as identifiable with one major more than another. The special education student teachers felt that the question that measures the student teachers ability to adapt to individual needs was too elementary and almost insulting from their major's perspective. The special education student teachers felt that they had no business getting into student teaching if they couldn't measure up to distinguished, although they felt that it would be more important to evaluate other majors on this particular criterion because it may not be something they must plan for all of the time. This particular criterion was not taken

seriously by the special education majors who adapt to individual needs as a basic part of every lesson, every day.

Other examples included asking student teachers to identify and use community resources to foster student learning. Tim expressed his feelings that there was no opportunity or desire on the part of the cooperating teacher to implement this criterion into the planning of the unit. Tim also used the criterion example of contributing to the school. He described satisfying this criterion as volunteering as a coach or participating in school events. Neither of these services were something that he was qualified to do or felt he had the opportunity to participate in.

Ellen recalled having an opportunity to work on a project for one of the professors that displayed the “reflective decision-maker model” for teacher education. Ellen explained that the formative/summative assessment form was based on the model. She felt the form was easy to comprehend, although it did not seem so easy for the cooperating teachers to interpret. The cooperating teachers stated that they would not place themselves in a distinguished category, how could they assign this elite category to a student teacher.

More than one student teacher referred to the criteria descriptions as too wordy and not specific enough. Ellen commented that there was an inconsistency when completing the form by the cooperating teacher. Some cooperating teachers did not make any comments under the rating that was assigned, for example basic, and the student teachers did not understand what specific behaviors led to a basic rating (one level above unsatisfactory). As well, Ellen noted that each criterion rating should include a comment statement that substantiates the subjective rating. Ian agreed that he experienced two

different types of feedback from the formative and summative assessments. His 2 cooperating teachers approached completing the forms with different philosophies. The first cooperating teacher assigned formative ratings below distinguished in order that the second or summative ratings would show improvement. The second cooperating teacher assigned most of the formative ratings as distinguished and then all distinguished ratings during the summative assessment. Ian had more feedback from the first coop and the formative and summative ratings reflected growth.

After seeing the 2 different placements that I had and how my co-op graded me it's relative to their own scale and how they grade. My first co-op didn't give me many of the distinguished grades and wrote a comment for almost every page, my second co-op gave me distinguished for almost all of them except a couple and wrote comments on just a couple that I didn't get distinguished on. That was for the formative and for the summative my first co-op set it up so I could see what I needed to improve and then I actually got the distinguished marks on the second one and the second one we really didn't have a conference on, she said I just gave you all distinguished for it if you have any questions you can ask me about it. (student teacher, Ian)

Tim described a few different examples where he believed a rating of "not applicable" would have applied. As discussed between him and his cooperating teacher, some of the criteria identified in the formative and summative assessments were not opportunities that the cooperating teachers had planned for or were willing to accommodate by changing their plans.

Some of the things that they looked at, I guess they were feasible, some of the things they looked for didn't really apply to some of the different classrooms and some of the placements. For other students they would have been fine but for other people they might not have worked like there's a couple on there, they need to have an NA on there for "not applicable". My second supervisor had us fill out one and our co-op fill out one and then we compared them. And if there was a huge discrepancy then he would talk to us about it and I think that was a good idea. Both of my co-ops said there needs to be a "not applicable" and complained about them a little bit and said some of the criteria have nothing to do with what we did in the class. Overall it was alright and just a few things could be changed. "The student teacher in conjunction with the cooperating teacher consistently

identifies and uses community resources to foster student learning.” Unless we were both doing a transition plan or took them on a field trip it really isn’t applicable and we didn’t have time to take them on a field trip. Both of my co-ops had a schedule they were trying to stick to and things they wanted to cover before the year was over and they didn’t have field trips planned in. (student teacher, Tim)

I don’t really care for the competency form because it seems like, there’s a lot of stuff that doesn’t apply to either student teachers, with the parent-teacher conferences, we have nothing to do with that, there’s a lot of things that really don’t apply to my major. (student teacher, Barry)

Linda, as well, remarks about the criteria that did not apply to her during her student teaching experiences.

The written formative and summative assessment, it’s kind of questionable, some of the categories were so detailed for the distinguished category that I don’t even know if one of the professors would be in that category, to be honest. Some of the categories didn’t apply to my specific major, so we tried to read into them to make them apply. Some just weren’t reasonable for the time period that I was there, like making contact with parents, using community resources. I think that had strong points and weak points. (student teacher, Linda)

Linda makes a good case for why it is difficult to determine a grade when there is more than one criterion within the same category in which to grade.

And other ones it was just so confusing you might meet 5 of the criteria listed and not the other ones so then do you give yourself that grade or do you drop to one below that’s where it’s not really you either your somewhere in the middle. So I don’t think that is as beneficial as the individual observations and assessments. (student teacher, Linda)

It has been noted by a number of the student teachers that the student teacher and cooperating teacher both complete the formative and summative assessment form. The majority described the procedure where the student teacher and the cooperating teacher would sit down and discuss the rating that each had determined and why, then some cooperating teachers took the opportunity to change their rating depending on the justification explained by the student teacher. A few student teachers encountered

different methods for this joint procedure and different methods of determining a final rating for each criterion. Yet the question remains, without an option to rate some criteria in a “no-opportunity, no-grade” category, how do student teachers and cooperating teachers rate these criteria?

As far as the written placement goes, my first placement I filled out my assessment at home, my cooperating teacher did the same and then we came in and compared. I liked that because it gave an honest opinion of where you thought the other person, like where I thought I was at and where she thought I was at. If there was a difference we got to explain why we thought there was a difference and support our position on that. With my second placement we filled it out together. I don't know why, that's just how we ended up doing it. And I didn't really like it, because where I felt I was weak in a certain area and she initially felt I was stronger it was kind of like my cooperating teacher would lower her grade because I felt I was lower and in some instances she felt I should be distinguished and I thought maybe not but if she's putting that then I'll put that then. So I don't think it was as realistic the second time. I think it should be done individually and then compared. (student teacher, Linda)

When student teachers were asked what changes they would make to the assessment methods that they experienced during student teaching, most replied with modifications to the formative and summative forms. Paul recommends implementing smaller assessments incrementally throughout the practicum. Linda makes a similar point that smaller assessments throughout the practicum would better inform the student teacher so that the student teacher is not surprised when they receive the formative assessment from the cooperating teacher.

Maybe a couple of more small assessments. Because I think that pamphlet is a little overwhelming I think. They want to put comments for each one, if you have a good coop they are going to want to give you as much information as possible and that's a lot for one time. Maybe get a little bit out bi-weekly, something maybe more at the beginning. (student teacher, Paul)

They need to have an NA on there for not applicable. My second supervisor had us fill out one and our coop fill out one and then we compared them. And if there was a huge discrepancy then he would talk to us about it and I think that was a good idea. (student teacher, Tim)

The only thing that I would change for the assessments would be instead of giving the exact same questions for both the formative and the summative assessments change it a little bit. If you've been there for three weeks and you're now just starting to take over three or four, maybe an entire workload, they haven't seen you enough to make good judgments. So some of the questions possibly remove and just make it a double packet instead of one big single packet where the co-op becomes confused at different areas and different questions. (student teacher, Brett)

I think the cooperating teachers should have a written observation of so many of your lessons. They don't have anything until that formative and summative assessment that you have to do. I think they should have to write a written observation every so often to show how you are doing in specific areas. Maybe a meeting might be good with the supervisor and the coop and you. Just so the 3 of you have a chance to sit down and make sure everyone is on the same page, make sure everyone is expecting the same things out of you. Because I think that could be frustrating if you're cooperating teacher is expecting one thing and your supervisor expects something else, and you're trying to please both of them. (student teacher, Linda)

Journal Assessment

Holly (1989) advocates writing in journals as a way for preservice teachers to examine particular teaching situations after the fact, record questions, confirm or disaffirm theories, and eventually clarify ideas to help reach decisions about best practice. Student teachers completed journals by sharing day by day personal school experiences and reflections of their teaching. Some university supervisors provided specific teaching behaviors for student teachers to choose from and then required specific examples that would demonstrate an understanding of those behaviors. While other supervisors were non-specific in their requirements and the criteria they held student teachers accountable for. Student teachers preferred to journal pertaining to a specific topic. Nolan and Hoover (2004) caution that unless supervisors structure the writing with some type of focus through a written prompt, preservice teachers, especially those in the survival stage,

may use them more as a diary or outlet for complaining and expressing frustration. Paul was quick to point out the differences in his cooperating teachers requirements for completing the journal. It appeared the value that he placed on the journal was diminished when he found that his supervisor was apparently not reading his journal or providing any feedback. Paul defines the journal as a communication tool, which most educators would probably agree with. Tim recommends asking student teachers to journal the first 4 to 5 weeks and then eliminating the requirement the last few weeks when student teachers have been assigned the full teaching workload.

I think they're good except at the university it's not standardized. For my first placement a paragraph was almost a lot. We wrote it by hand and she gave us a topic. I felt that was very ineffective. The one week it was talk about your apparel or your dress. I asked my co-op at the time, it was a guy, "you dress better than me what do you want me to say?" So to me that meant nothing to me. So I was curious, because I didn't think that mine was being read at the first placement. So I put a very specific question and put a question mark next to it and it was checked down as it was read and there was a check mark like it was read but no answer at all, no reply. So now what does my journal mean to me. I think it should be used more as a communication tool. If I'm going to put a question in there I feel it should be answered. (student teacher, Paul)

The journaling was helpful. The actual journal entries where we would pick a topic I found those helpful because it really made me think about different things like what types of classroom management do I apply. One was what are some of the management techniques that my cooperating teacher uses? So you really had to look at those a little bit further. (student teacher, Carla)

I think the journals were fine for maybe the first few weeks. I like how my second supervisor did it. I think the last 2 weeks of your placement you didn't have to do journals any more. If we didn't have to write journals, I don't think anyone would take the time to sit down and say "what could I have done better?" They're a good idea up until the last 2 weeks when everything is coming down to an end and everything is due. But they're fine for the first 4 weeks. (student teacher, Tim)

Student teachers responded positively to journaling provided that there was a purpose for the writing, that it was implemented as a tool for communication between the

student teacher and university supervisor, and that it might be omitted during the last 2 weeks when the workload was the greatest.

Video Taping

Video taping was not required by all majors, but it was the consensus of the student teachers that it was a valuable assessment tool. It was an opportunity to look at themselves step by step and observe their strengths and weaknesses without having to recall the events. Student teachers that were given an option to complete a video taping were less likely to follow through with completing the assessment.

I think one of the most helpful tools that you can have because you actually step back and sit and watch. It's amazing the things that you see that you don't see while you're teaching. We were given a list of specific aspects that we were to look at during our video. You know, one might be were all the students on task? And then we would have to critique each one and reflect on if we met each one of those standards. (student teacher, Carla)

I think it's a very good form of assessment, I can see if it was an entire class that I did I can pin point where I need to move a few students. If it was a whole classroom or if I needed to step back a little and look at the topic or aspect of what I was teaching and then also at myself am I putting my back towards the students more than I should, am I calling on one person all of the time, but as a one on one I was able to see making and breaking with words that I needed to work on with the students, some more emphasis on ending sounds and chunks that I needed to work on. So I picked up on those things that I did implement into my lessons in the following days that I was there. (student teacher, Ellen)

The video-taping I thought was a good idea because you didn't have the stress of the supervisor right in there watching you teach and watching your every move and I think it was important to go back and answer the questions. I think it made it easier for us, we knew what they were looking for. We knew exactly what he wanted and that way there wasn't any misunderstanding. (student teacher, Tim)

Students were very positive about the video taping method of assessment. Ellen did remark about an inconsistency with whether the university required a video taping or

not. It seems that this requirement is determined by individual departments and possibly by individual university supervisors. One obstacle is a few schools prohibit video taping in their classrooms, other schools require written parental permission and other schools require that the video only be focused on the student teacher and not the students. This poses a problem for student teachers to be able to self-evaluate from watching themselves teach in the school environment. One student teacher commented on an audio assessment:

We had to video-tape a lesson plan which is something really neat I really liked that. Originally they told us at the first placement that we could either audio listen to it or we could video tape it. I did the audio one and I liked that there were some things that I picked up like I say “you guys” way too much. But that was the only thing I really noticed about it. I taught the lesson, listened to it that night and I was still confused about what was going on through the audio tape because there were too many quiet times in mine. As you’re walking around the room especially with special ed you’re doing more individual walking around monitoring and proximity control and all that. Where in the audio tape you’re like it’s 5 minutes of quiet what’s going on? (student teacher, Paul)

Linda has completed her student teaching experience without video taping one of her lessons. She was required to complete a video tape of herself teaching during a professional semester methods class just prior to student teaching. It appeared from Linda’s tone that she was disappointed that video taping was not part of the assessment plan in her major during student teaching. When Linda and Tim were asked what they would change about the assessment process during student teaching they both requested multiple video taping episodes.

One thing would definitely be video-taping, when you’re sitting back and watching someone else teach you see it so differently than when you’re the teacher. Like when you’re teaching you’re doing as much as you can, but when you sit back you get to see all of the extra little things and say I would have done this differently and I definitely think that I would like to be video-taped once a week so that I have a chance to watch it and hopefully more. (student teacher, Linda)

Have a few more video tapings. That way you can go into the practicum and look at it and have the other teachers in the practicum tell you what they think was a good idea. Some things you could do better. Maybe instead of grading how well you did during the video taping, if you had more than one, how well you responded to it. (student teacher, Tim)

Having preservice teachers create and view teaching videotapes and then address open-ended questions about the lessons can be an effective means of encouraging reflection and refining practice (Hoover, 1994a). Nolan & Hoover (2004) explain that the videotape can be analyzed individually or in small groups, including other members of the triad. Videotaping, as described by the authors, offers student teachers an in-depth, uninterrupted, concentrated picture of their instruction, their interactions with students, and their students' interactions with one another. Viewing unsatisfactory student teacher behaviors on tape validates the need for improvement. On the other hand, observing mastery teaching techniques on film provides positive reinforcement and a feeling of accomplishment. Other forms of assessment rely on someone else's interpretation.

Student teachers commented that having a criteria sheet and following a rubric was an effective way for the student teachers to self-evaluate their videotaped performance. A criteria sheet would provide a guide of specific behaviors and methods in order for student teachers to evaluate themselves.

Another recommendation from a student teacher was that after completing the videotaping assessment form that the supervisors grade the evaluation form by the accuracy of their observations as opposed to the actual lesson delivery. This may encourage the student teacher to analyze their teacher behaviors more critically without the fear of influencing the supervisor to give a lower grade. You might call this a no-fault evaluation sheet, whereby student teachers would demonstrate competency by the

accuracy of disclosing specific needs for improvement, identifying effective teaching methods, professionalism, etc.

Portfolio

The portfolio was mentioned by only a few student teachers. This may be due to the fact that students begin working on their portfolio prior to the student teaching experience and continue to make improvements during student teaching. Only a few of the student teachers remarked that a small part of their grade for student teaching came from evaluating their portfolio. Some majors had students begin working on their portfolios in their freshmen year, while others began constructing their portfolio the semester prior to student teaching. Portfolios may be problematic as described by Stone (1998). For example when students are asked to develop an entire portfolio during their final student teaching semester, the stress of both teaching and the time consumed by the development of the portfolio can be overwhelming. Paul expressed positive comments about one supervisor's approach to how student teachers were expected to develop their portfolio.

Last semester I began to put my portfolio together. We had a project that was due for that. And also here is something with my supervisor that was very interesting, I wish if I had had him for both placements, my portfolio would have been very nice because he had us, the requirements for the supervisor was before the end of your first placement they had to see that 5 of your standards were done to show that you worked on it. Well for me I just took out of my last one and handed them in, I didn't even spend a minute on it. I just went to the assignment we already did last semester and popped out 5. But with my supervisor he had one due each week, I guess he started with 1,2,3,4,5 because when we started our second placement we had 6,7,8,9,10 due. I mean one week we had our tab dividers due. That was a little bogus and one week our table of contents, but since it was due like that you could make a really nice one. Because you're not putting it all on yourself at once.

This is something that caught me really off guard; there are different requirements by supervisors for your portfolio. Because for my second supervisor we had to have 2 artifacts for each standard for my other supervisor we only had to have one. At least at that time we did, I had to hand ½ of it in at the end of my first placement and that was the requirement. (student teacher, Paul)

Unit Plans, Lesson Plans and Bulletin Boards

Unit plans, lesson plans, and bulletin boards were also viewed by some of the student teachers as forms of assessment. Because these methods were discussed last, very briefly, and by only a few, it is the researchers perception that they were viewed with lower emphasis than the formative/summative assessments, observations, videotaping, and journaling. As one supervisor's grading scale indicates the unit plan and bulletin board are included within criteria that are weighted as 5% of the total grade. Other areas such as observations are weighted as 60% of the total grade. Some of the students stated that the observations, the formative assessment and the summative assessment were weighted the heaviest when calculating their grade. One of the few comments that was expressed by a student teacher pertaining to unit plans, lesson plans, and bulletin boards included:

We also had to write a unit of study and that was discussed ahead of time with our cooperating teacher. I know my first placement I chose the topic. My second placement that topic was chosen for me. Then we would write a unit of study which we were given a clear rubric ahead of time of what it needed to include. It was ten lessons and what we had to include in the lesson plans. We had to include what type of assessments we would use to show that the students actually learned and then also included an interactive bulletin board, which the bulletin board had to be interactive, and that was evaluated by our supervisor. He would come in. We gave a sketch ahead of time. He said yes or no, same as our cooperating teacher. He would come in and look at it and give you your grade on that. (student teacher, Carla)

Student teachers valued assessment methods that provided relevant, well defined criteria for their specific major, were implemented at appropriate times, provided

opportunities for equal input from all triad members, were consistent with the intended purpose, measured growth, and were perceived to be valued by the supervisor and cooperating teacher. Student teachers did not recommend eliminating any of the assessment methods. Although student teachers did provide recommendations for improved application for each of the assessment methods mentioned. Conditions that played a part in the student teachers views toward assessment methods included the school placement, major, the cooperating teacher, the supervisor, university requirements and prior experiences.

How is the Role of the Student Teacher in Assessment Perceived by Student Teachers?

There were 6 out of 8 student teachers that directly referenced self-evaluation as a critical role of the student teacher in assessment. These student teachers noted the importance of the ability for a student teacher to pinpoint accurately areas for improvement. As noted by the student teachers, it was not enough to just identify teacher improvements accurately but that the role of the student teacher was also to implement these changes by the supervisor's next visit. Methods for self-evaluation that were noted by the student teachers included; post-observation conferences, journaling, formative and summative assessment form, and written individual lesson critiques. Students identified their role as someone who can accurately critique their own teaching practice. As was indicated earlier, student teachers prefer to engage in self-reflection immediately after the observed lesson in order that they can more accurately reflect on their teaching.

It appears that student teachers feel comfortable identifying their own weaknesses without the fear that it will affect their grade; provided the areas that were identified significantly improved by the supervisor's next visit. I observed that when student teachers were asked to provide feedback pertaining to an instructional lesson they didn't feel threatened where it would affect their grade to divulge their inadequacies. Whereas some students noted that if they were asked what grade they should receive, they were a little hesitant to reply with a grade lower than an A-. They believed that the supervisor or cooperating teacher would then assign that grade even though the supervisor or cooperating teacher's initial thought for a grade was higher. It seems like a no-win situation, if the student teachers assign themselves a low grade, they take the chance that the supervisor/cooperating teacher will lower their grade to concur with the student teacher. If the student teachers assign themselves a high grade and the supervisor or cooperating teacher evaluated the grade to be lower, the student teacher may be recognized as having poor self-evaluation skills.

I play a major role in discussing how I evaluate myself. If I say a lesson went fine when it did not then that definitely looks bad on me and my co-op and my supervisor picks it up. So I have the ability . . . probably 1/4 of my grade is in self-evaluation. So if I'm not a good self-evaluator then that will affect me. So that's about the only way that I have any control over my own assessment besides working hard and getting everything in on time. (student teacher, Brett)

You really have to make an effort to self-evaluate. I guess the journal forces you into that train of thought. I think that's really the guts of the whole assessment, how are you going to go where you are today to a better teacher when you're done. The answer is you're going to self evaluate and make changes. The responsibility of the student teacher for assessment all comes back to self-evaluation. It seems to me it was based on improvement. One of the biggest reasons that I think I did really well is because I really paid attention to what my supervisor said. Next time she came in I made it a point to correct those things even if it wasn't natural for me. I had to make a conscious effort to change the things I had been doing and she made a point to say "way to go". That really impresses them to be successful that's what you need to do. (student teacher, Ian)

Our responsibility is to be good at self-reflection. Especially my second placement supervisor he asked us every time before he asked us our grade of the post observation what we thought our grade should be. And he said he would never give us a grade lower than what I thought I should have. Then he asked us why we should have the grade we thought and if he agreed well most of the time he gave a higher grade. For the summative and formative assessment we had to fill out one on ourselves and if we gave ourselves a lower grade than our co-op did then he would give us that grade so it's what we thought that we got for a grade. (student teacher, Tim)

How is the Role of the Cooperating Teacher in Assessment Perceived by Student Teachers?

Grimmett and Ratzlaff (1986) found that student teachers expect cooperating teachers to provide them with the basic information needed to adjust to the student teaching placement, help them acquire materials, involve them in planning and evaluation, hold conferences with them regularly, observe them teach, and provide feedback on their teaching. From analyzing the data, student teachers viewed the role of the cooperating teacher in assessment as the following; observing the student teachers' lessons, providing both positive and critical specific feedback throughout the experience, allowing the student teacher to reflect on their own instruction before hearing from the cooperating teacher, and providing input toward the student teacher's grade. Other roles stated by the student teachers that could have an affect on assessment outcomes included; familiarizing the student teacher with all aspects of the school environment, planning for the student teacher to take on the responsibilities of a full teaching load in progressive stages, and allowing opportunities for independence in the classroom. Sherblom and McElone (1996) suggest to ease the anxiety that student teachers experience, cooperating

teachers should take the time to inform beginning teachers of the culture of their school and the quirks of the job. Liebhaber (2000) recommends that the cooperating teacher should sit down with the student teacher at the beginning of the experience and map out specific expectations and mutually defined goals, then review the initial expectations and goals regularly, make adjustments when necessary, and help the student teacher stay on track.

Most of the student teachers' responses emphasized a need for more cooperating teacher input into the grade or the student teachers already understood the cooperating teachers to have the majority of the impact on the final grade and agreed with the practice. Student teachers noted many times that since the cooperating teacher spends significantly more time with the student teacher and the cooperating teacher has opportunities to observe the student teacher's organizational and management skills in and out of the classroom, that it seemed only logical that the cooperating teacher's final evaluation and grading recommendation should hold the most weight or at the very least share half of the weight with the supervisor. Considering the testimony from the student teachers and the views of the supervisors, in most cases the cooperating teachers input is taken into consideration but what weight it holds seems to be individually determined by the supervisors. Ultimately the supervisors will admit, they make the final grade determination. Daane (2000) found an overwhelming support by cooperating teachers and student teachers for the primary evaluation to be done by one person, the classroom teacher to which the intern is assigned. The cooperating teacher has the opportunity to observe the student teacher not only during instructional lessons but also during; self assessment conferences, outside teaching responsibilities such as lunch duty, student to

student teacher interactions, work initiatives, etc. The opportunities for observation from the university supervisors are limited compared to the cooperating teacher (Pellett, Strayve, & Pellett, 1999).

The only time he would change our grade from our co-op and what we gave ourselves is if there was a discrepancy. My first supervisor said she would not give us a lower grade than what our co-op gave us. I think that was important because the co-op is there every day. The supervisor is there 3 lessons and the co-op is watching you everyday every lesson. I think that is a good idea that the supervisor doesn't give you a lower grade than what your co-op did. (student teacher, Tim)

Brett describes the cooperating teacher's role in assessment as a gatekeeper overseeing and facilitating the development of the student teacher. It is the cooperating teachers' role to prepare the student teacher to a level that is satisfactory to the university's standards of quality. A few students commented on the freedom that was provided to them by the cooperating teacher as if the student teacher had succeeded in demonstrating a competency level that allowed them to teach without another teacher present. Giving the student teacher sole authority in the classroom was construed as reaching a level of readiness and when this took place in the practicum may influence how the student teacher is rated in the formative/summative competency form.

The completion of the competency form was noted as a role but as Barry observed the competency form was not taken seriously by the cooperating teacher. Providing feedback, positive and negative, was construed as essential by the student teachers. Student teachers needed to hear from cooperating teachers' positive reinforcement and not just criticism regarding appropriate content, techniques and management. Student teachers are very grade conscious. Paul makes an interesting point about the percentage of grade input that is calculated from the supervisors' visits. When the supervisor has 3

graded observations and the supervisors' observation percentage is 60% of the grade that amounts to 20% of each observation makes up the total grade. That represents a large percentage of the grade and a high stake chance for the student teacher to present 3 high quality teaching episodes.

Like I said earlier I think it should have a stronger impact and maybe not so much in the competency form, through more communication through the supervisor because they are with you so much and spend so much time with you. And for 60% of your grade to come from 3 times they come to see you that's 20% of your grade for a half hour. That's a lot of points for a little bit of time. (student teacher, Paul)

The cooperating teacher's role in assessment is to basically observe me and to determine how I have grown from the time that I started with him or her to where I finished and can I go out and run a classroom affectively. So there is (SIC) multiple things that go into that like how I teach, how I adapt for individual students, how I use multi-instructional activities, just different areas where I have to basically show that I'm a well-rounded teacher. I could step out tomorrow and take over a classroom and the students would be alright, and that's what the co-ops have to look for.

The observations they did for me and the fact that they let me just basically fly. After I took over the full load I didn't see them a whole lot which was good for me. We talked and they observe one or two classes a day and the rest they would be out working somewhere else. It's nice to have a little bit more freedom when the co-ops aren't in the classroom. (student teacher, Brett)

Askins and Imwold (1994) add that when the student teacher is overwhelmed from the first day, it is difficult to plan ahead, to compare yourself with the cooperating teacher in a self-reflective log, or to observe teaching practices. Ian explains that the practice of assigning the student teacher a full teaching load immediately is unfair. An induction period should include orienting the student teacher to the setting and school procedures.

If I were a co-op teacher, first as the student teacher comes in make sure they are comfortable with the environment show them around. I think that's a responsibility not just a suggestion, they should show them where everything is that they should need. That they're comfortable in their environment. I've heard of some student teachers that were just thrown into the full load of teaching

courses right away. I don't think I would do that it's a little unfair. I think student teachers need time to see how the students act get use to the culture of that particular region, even a week maybe 2 weeks and then gradually pick up a few courses teaching the co-op's lessons until you have a set date when your unit begins and at that point whether your ready or not you have to take the full load. (student teacher, Ian)

How is the Role of the University Supervisor in Assessment Perceived by Student Teachers?

When each student teacher was asked to reflect on what they believed to be the role of the university supervisor in the student teaching assessment process, almost all of the student teachers immediately referenced the role of observing the student teacher during an instructional lesson and engaging in reflection afterwards. The student teachers mentioned that they were observed formally at least 3 times by the university supervisor. Supervisors are required to make at least five visits to each classroom: introductory to meet the cooperating teacher, at least three formal observations with follow-up conferences with the student and teacher, and a final conference with the cooperating teacher for a closing evaluation. Additional observations could be scheduled at the request of the student teacher, cooperating teacher or administration.

Brett reflected on the role of the supervisor as assigning the appropriate tasks in a timely manner that would eventually be required to be included in the portfolio. Linda and other student teachers viewed the supervisors' role as providing feedback and issuing the final grade.

The supervisor played the role of basically coming in three times a placement and saying, "This is where you are, from what I see." She gave us different individual tasks that we needed to accomplish like a bulletin board,

portfolio, INTASC standards, so that when we put our portfolio together it wasn't all one last minute thing, thank God. It's not busy work; it's everything that is needed, creating a resume and doing your PA state application. Everything was needed and she would grade us on that, but how much that grading goes into our final grade I'm not sure. I really don't know. (student teacher, Brett)

Even towards the end I noticed she picked up on little things like how I moved around the room, who I called on, used different methods, rephrased questions if I didn't get a response soon enough. The supervisors gave a lot of input; they were probably more beneficial than my cooperating teacher in my second placement. (student teacher, Linda)

Communication was indicated as being an important role of the university supervisor. This included the supervisor initiating and maintaining communication with the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. Good communication is important before the actual student teaching experience begins and throughout the entire experience.

Ellen expressed a strong view about what the role is concerning supervisor visits and the first contact that is made between the supervisor and the student teacher and between the supervisor and the cooperating teacher. When Ellen described the lack of visibility from the supervisor, she appeared appalled that the cooperating teacher would not have had any immediate contact from the supervisor. The timing of the visits seemed odd to Ellen. Her tone led me to believe that instead of having back to back observations and none during the last week and a half, that one observation might have been more appropriate during the last week. Students need time to comprehend and put into practice the supervisor's recommendations prior to the next observation.

I think the supervisor has a good part in assessment, communicating with the co-op, making sure there are no problems with the student teacher and the co-op or the student teacher and the school district or the student teacher and the kids. If there is a problem the supervisor is there to address it. They also are responsible for evaluating the student teacher at least 3 times.

In 7 weeks, my first placement my supervisor came in the first week just to say hi and make sure everything was OK. The supervisor had never worked with the co-ops before, but you would never know that by the end of the 7 weeks that we were there everything went smooth and fine. And she was there 3 times for formal observations and she was there again for our final assessment. So she was there probably once a week, maybe 2 times a week. Whereas my second placement she was there, not the first week, and my co-op had no idea who my supervisor was. She wouldn't see her come in. And my co-op would say that she didn't see her observe me until the end, until my third observation. It happened to be that my co-op would always be one on one with another student but yet when I said my supervisor was here, my supervisor had left by the time my co-op could get back to talk with her. So my co-op didn't know my supervisor real well. The supervisor came the second week and my second and third observations were done before Thanksgiving. So I had the week after Thanksgiving and 3 days of the following week and the only time I saw my supervisor is when she came in to do my summative evaluation. So it was kind of different, she saw one at the beginning and 2 back to back and didn't see any at the end. I guess that was her choice. (student teacher, Ellen)

Ian immediately answered the question regarding the supervisor's role as being consistent when grading, which leads me to believe that this is not what he had experienced somewhere in the past. Having a more specific assessment tool may contribute to a more consistent grading practice.

Having a consistent way of grading. I think it's different from the co-op, well with the supervisor you have a blank copy of the grading sheet, you know exactly what you're going to see. So I think having that consistency and being true to it, the comments that say that you did well with classroom management, make sure you check the box that says you did well in classroom management and not that you did poorly there. Be consistent in that regard. I don't think that it's a responsibility for the supervisor to make it comfortable you may be in a job where your principal is a real hard ass and it's just the luck of the draw. (student teacher, Ian)

This is an interesting observation from the student teacher Ian. I examined a student teacher's (Ellen) first written observation from her supervisor. All comments were extremely positive and commendable. Only 2 short suggestions appeared at the bottom of her evaluation. The supervisor went as far as to describe her teaching technique as "outstanding", although all scores in the rubric were graded as #3 or good,

one rating below excellent. One rationale for the discrepancy between the verbal/written feedback and a grade below the highest possible grade is the thought that if student teachers are assigned the highest possible score for their first observation, they may not continue to strive to do better in the future and be content with having achieved the highest score. Although this may be confusing and frustrating to student teachers if both the student teacher and the supervisor believe the highest level of achievement has been satisfied at that time and it is not assigned as such on the written evaluation. Are we really promoting students' motivation to improve?

Other roles offered by the student teachers would be considered characteristics of the supervisors' roles that can affect assessment outcomes. One such role as shared by Ian is reliability of the supervisor. If the supervisor makes an appointment to see you at a specific class period then it is the responsibility of the supervisor to be at that class and on time. One student teacher noted that their supervisor arrived late and missed what he believed to be the best part of his lesson. An answer that might be echoed from the university supervisors is that the student teacher should be prepared for every class or that some unforeseen interruption prevented the supervisor from arriving at the designated time. From the responses of the student teachers, promptness and reliability are important for the student teachers' emotional preparedness. These behaviors are viewed as having a possible affect on the student teachers' assessment outcomes.

The supervisor should be where they said they would be when they said they would be there. I was amazed that my supervisor was always right on time when she had a schedule that had her going a distance of 60 miles in two different directions of the university. If you tell a student teacher that they are going to be graded at that time and they come the next period it psychologically hurts the student teacher. (student teacher, Ian)

I like knowing when a person is coming to see me. But I refuse to change anything if someone is coming. It also can be a bad thing to know when they're coming too, because you'll have supervisors that don't show up on time and then you have to wait for them. And then you're holding the kids up because you want the supervisor to see the best part of your lesson. Because one of these lessons the supervisor was late for and didn't see the motivator, which I thought was the best part of the lesson after that I thought it was pretty boring. I was all excited at the beginning and she came in for mostly paperwork. Then she didn't see me teaching that much which I thought affected my grade, you have to see the whole lesson or you can't give an effective observation by any means. (student teacher, Paul)

Another characteristic of the supervisors' role was being available for help as suggested by Barry, Paul and Tim. All saw the need for supervisors to be available when student teachers would have an opportunity to arrive back at the university and immediately after a lesson observation to conference. Some of the student teachers were provided a number of avenues to connect with their supervisors, while other supervisors were reached by a hit or miss approach.

A lot of times when I was at my first placement I didn't get back to the university until after 4:30 sometimes so it...I mean everybody's gone and you don't really have a chance to talk to them, you have to schedule a time and it's gonna be tough to fit something in...so it always seems like they're more out of there, out of the way a little bit.

I know that if I needed to a lot of times it would be tough to get a hold of him. Because you're in school the same time they are and the chances of them being here late are...some days they're gonna be and some days they're not, you never know I mean. That's not their fault I mean that's their schedule it's just... (student teacher, Barry)

Well they have their coming in and doing their observations coming in and making sure everything is ok, checking your logs, but I feel they should be given more time somehow to devote to that because I know that my first supervisor was doing probably around what they were suppose to but it's not as good as the experience as I have now. I know my last supervisor put a lot of time in, he let us come to his house, he let us drop off work at his house, when you need to have your unit plans checked over you have 2 days to do it, he would say just meet me Sunday night at my house and we'll go over it. How many profs do that? Now they probably need more time to be the real person you want them to be. (student teacher, Paul)

Tim expressed a need to hear comments from his supervisor commending his teaching and providing words of reassurance. I would surmise that it is something that all student teachers would like to hear. I did not get the feeling that Tim wanted to be spoon-fed, coddled, stroked or given special attention but that he was looking for support. By the enthusiasm that he expressed for his experience and the relationship he had with his supervisor, I understood his successes during his student teaching experience were generated by the reaffirmation and encouragement that came from his cooperating teacher and supervisor.

The supervisors kept telling us, we are here for you we are not here to try to fail you we're here to see you be successful. And I think that is really important for the supervisor to just keep telling them that. Their main responsibility or role is to make the student teacher become better themselves, become a good teacher and to tell them after they need to do something better and to make sure they are there to say, Look I'm here for you to be successful. (student teacher, Tim)

Student teachers seemed to analyze the triad members and the role each had in assessment during student teaching from how they experienced their weeks in student teaching as opposed to anything they might have read or heard. It appeared to me that for some student teachers it was difficult getting past some of their personal experiences. Their view of the supervisor's role was dominated often by a single experience, either positive or negative. Although they may not have focused on all true roles of assessment per se the stories that molded their perceptions are important to the research. Behaviors at the heart of their stories most often affect assessment outcomes.

Listed below are the roles of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors in regards to assessment as perceived by the student teachers.

Student Teachers

1. Self evaluation; during post observation conferences and the formative/summative competency form
2. Implement changes to future lessons as identified by previous observations

Cooperating Teacher

1. Observations
2. Completing the formative/summative competency form
3. Provide feedback
4. Listening to the student teacher's reflections
5. Orient the student teacher to the school setting
6. Provide a progressive plan to take on a full teaching workload
7. Allow opportunities for independence in the classroom

University Supervisor

1. Observations
2. Assigning requirements
3. Provide feedback
4. Communication
5. Issue final grade
6. Consistent grading practices
7. Prompt visits
8. Reliable
9. Available for conferencing
10. Verbally supportive

How is the Purpose of Assessment Viewed by Student Teachers?

Student teachers viewed the purpose of assessment in a few different ways, but most initially stated that the purpose was to determine strengths and weaknesses. Student teachers accepted the assessment forms as a means to identify weaknesses and provide direction for improvement. Assessing student teachers at different stages of their experience also provided an avenue for discovering growth. Student teachers saw the

assessment forms as informative documents of feedback where levels of competency would be indicated. They viewed the assessment forms as a structured tool for the purpose of grading by satisfying specific criteria. The assessment forms provide the criteria that would become the focus for teaching. A phrase that was repeated by a student teacher and supervisor avowed, "Assessment drives instruction". The assessment forms provided the standards for achievement and so student teachers would know ahead of time what behaviors they would need to satisfy.

Hopefully it's to make us become better teachers and help us find our strengths and weaknesses. Look at things we can improve upon but also look at areas that we have forgotten about. Like using the community resources and making the contact with parents because that is part of the real job. Again our time being there we're kind of limited with what we can do. I think it's to give us a grade and to hopefully improve our teaching methods and give us some feedback on how we are doing to become better teachers. (student teacher, Linda)

To plan your lessons and meet the objectives that you need to meet in the assessment. You know what you are going to be graded on so you want to plan your lessons to meet that. Your assessment drives your learning objectives for the students when you're teaching the students you want to make sure that you build them up to meet the different objectives they want to meet when they take the test. You want to build your lessons up and make sure you are meeting all of the objectives to meet the assessment that you are going to be graded on. What you're assessed on are the things that they want you to be or to do to be a good teacher. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure we know what to have in our lessons and the things we want to do so we can be a good teacher.

I think it's important for the student teacher to know exactly what they are going to be graded on. It just helps us to know exactly what we have to do. If we don't know what we are going to be graded on it just adds more stress because you have no idea what they are going to be looking for. (student teacher, Tim)

Student Teacher Perceptions of Factors that affect Assessment

When student teachers were asked how they were prepared for the assessments that occurred during their experience, most all student teachers described the similar experiences they had from their professional semester. The professional semester is a block of methods courses that the students take at the same time. The professional semester is taken just prior to the student teaching semester. Student teachers participate in a school setting for at least 2 full weeks and in most cases each Friday or another 10 days, over the duration of the professional semester. During their participation in the schools similar requirements as in student teaching are completed. Students noted many similarities that helped to prepare them for the ensuing semester of student teaching. Some requirements differ from major to major in professional semester. But almost all of the student teachers from the 4 education majors referenced their professional semester as being a positive experience for the preparation of assessment in student teaching.

After my block experience I felt I was very prepared. We had to do the 3 weeks in the 2 different settings for block and it was basically like student teaching we got observed twice each placement. We knew what we were going to be assessed on. So in student teaching it was just a continuation of the placements of block. And I think block really prepares you for student teaching. Actually student teaching was a little easier than block, because in block you had all of the projects to do. They put a lot of stress on you because besides teaching the lessons in your block placement you had all of the projects. And for block for the first placement we only had to teach one lesson a day, but the co-op I had had me teach everything but one class a day. On top of that I had the projects we had to do. So that was pretty stressful and prepared me for student teaching. And my second block participation she knew she was going to have me for student teaching too so she had me teaching everything. That way I would already know the system. I would know the procedures and strategies; she wanted me to use the same strategies. Really nothing was new when I got to student teaching because I had experienced everything in block. (student teacher, Tim)

Student teachers experienced videotaping as a method of assessment during their professional semester. This assignment included watching a videotape of themselves teaching and writing a critique of the instruction. Since this method of assessment was not new to the student teachers; this may be why they were more comfortable with this method of assessment during the student teaching experience. Student teachers that made any reference to including videotaping as a form of self assessment, felt it was an effective method and that its use should be continued or implemented if absent in student teaching.

We talked about some suggestions about making it more realistic teaching; I guess the most realistic aspect of it was the videotape in block. You really didn't feel a lot of pressure teaching in front of your peers, you know them you talk about things in class, it's really for once you get the stage and say whatever you want it's like a relief. But when you have the camera on it's yourself and for me I'm probably my biggest critic of myself. We had suggested setting up a plan within block of shuffling around and you teaching a history lesson to the math block students. First of all they don't know the content, you would ask a question to your own block students like "what is the agricultural revolution?" and everyone knows all of the answers and they can't wait to tell you everything they know and everything goes too easy but if you go in front of others that don't have a background or had the information since high school it makes it a little more realistic. (student teacher, Ian)

I think the types of assessment, like I said video tapes I think there should be video taping where you can actually sit back and observe your lesson from your perspective. Video tape a lesson, sit back and watch it and grade ourselves on how we think we did and then compare it with the supervisors evaluation of it. (student teacher, Linda)

Ian commented that his preparation for assessment in student teaching was enhanced because he was introduced to current requirements, such as identifying standards with each lesson, in his sophomore year. Ellen stressed the importance of consistency between the methods classes prior to student teaching and student teaching.

She observed the lack of knowledge from her peers regarding the university's educational goal statements that are the foundation for the assessment criteria.

I was very well prepared for lesson plan critiques, as long as everyone follows the same format. The format from the professional semester and what is in the student teaching handbook are 2 completely different things in some aspects and in some aspects they are the same. The one in professional semester they draw it out to make it 4 pages long and in the student teaching they just do a cut and dry template, which is fine. Sometimes you have to have the 4 pages to get in all of the aspects and make you think which is why we are there. As for knowing the university's educational goal statements, I know there are some people that don't know anything about what it's about until they got their competency form. I heard that from students. I was able to see this is what I am going to be graded on or assessed on from the university's goal statement. This is the core material of our university's education program. And some people had no idea. We also discussed some in practicum. The observation forms we had a copy we knew what we were going to fill out. They went over everything at the student teaching meeting as well. I was comfortable with all of the assessments. (student teacher, Ellen)

Another factor that student teachers identified as affecting assessment was the impact of different philosophies, between the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor, might have on a student teacher's grade. Student teachers seem to be aware of the criteria that make up the assessments and the grading rubric that is associated with each of the assessments. Although the student teachers point out that the possibility of differences among what the cooperating teacher feels are the most important criteria and what the supervisor believes are the most important could send mixed messages to the student teacher. Planning more of the 3-way conferences may help to keep the triad on the same page.

I was trying to plan my units for all of the teaching strategies that would satisfy the criteria of the assessments that my supervisor was going to look for but then my co-op said don't worry about that I'm going to be grading you on your behavior management. If you're not in control of the classroom then I can't give you a good grade. I made sure I planned my lessons around where it wasn't something that was going to flip the kids out. It would be something that would

make them have high success rates and I could make sure I could monitor the behavior well. (student teacher, Tim)

What happens if you have an unreliable co-op or something like that because they all grade different. Maybe there should be stricter guidelines about how to do it. My first placement I did less work, I did a lot less work and I don't feel I put as much into it and I got a higher grade on my competency form, just because the lower expectations. I mean everything went great there, they thought I was excellent but I know my grade was so much higher in the first one than my second one and both I feel are equally as good. It's just that people grade differently. So many different student teachers, it's not like they even have a class, one co-op has one student teacher, and there might be 120 different grading procedures or grading practices. (student teacher, Paul)

Student teachers were aware that no two lessons, classes, or teachers are alike and that it was important to have all of your fundamental preparations in place. Student teachers have an understanding that the preparation for teaching a class begins long before the teacher ever steps into the classroom and a lack of planning could become the catalyst that causes a poor evaluation of a class observation. In most cases a student teacher can easily self evaluate poor preparation because of the class disorganization or lack of continuity that is inevitable.

Our unit plans are all due the next day and you're up the night before and you don't get a lot of sleep to teach the next day, it definitely affects how well you teach for that day. Your energy level is not as high, you're tired and you don't adapt well to changes in the lesson easily. There are so many variables just through teaching that affect the outcome and I think a lot of times the lesson of the day that the teacher is observing or the supervisor is observing if it's the first period of the day they are really quiet because they are still sleeping but if it's the one right after lunch or 8th period when they are ready to go they're all wound up and so it's a completely different way I present the lesson to them. The students you have in the class, their personalities, the time of day, how well you were prepared I think there are a million variables that affect it. (student teacher, Linda)

Once again no classroom is the same anywhere I guess maybe we should give it a little bit more room for the individual because every placement is different, every classroom is different, even if you are in the same classroom from the first semester to the second, someone that has my exact 2 placements could

experience completely different stuff from one year to the next through different students or curriculum. (student teacher, Paul)

Preparation, preparation, preparation. If you're not prepared then you're going to do poorly. If you take the time every night to get your lesson plans in order, you do all your research and get everything ready so that as you should walk into that classroom knowing everything that you need to for that lesson, you'll be fine. If you are not prepared you will do poorly, so that's it. (student teacher, Brett)

Linda explains the more observations that are conducted followed by feedback, the more you will understand how to improve. Having many opportunities to receive feedback was definitely viewed by student teachers as critical.

I think the more the assessments that are done of you the better. Because each time you are observed you are learning more things about yourself and your teaching style that you can improve on in the future. So I think the number of assessments done has an influence on your grade. And even just in the conversations that you have I think that helps a lot because my supervisor might say "why did you do that" and at least I have a chance to explain why I did it and if there are certain circumstances that they might not be aware of just from sitting there through one class. So if there could be more assessments which I know is hard to ask and definitely the conferences after the observations helps out. Sometimes I think we should write a self-assessment of ourselves besides just that formative and summative assessment. (student teacher, Linda)

Attitude was the single word that immediately came to a few of the student teachers when asked what factors might affect assessment outcomes. Attitude seemed to be the key to a student teachers success or the barrier that affected all areas of student teaching. Having a positive attitude was something the student teachers felt you needed to come into student teaching with and show it all day, every day.

Maybe your attitude. If you don't have a good attitude in your classroom then that also shows through, but sometimes it can be overcome if you just know your material and you can . . . I don't want to say trudge through the lesson, but if you can get through it and it was effective then that's fine. Even if you do have a bad attitude that hopefully the students don't pick up on it. But besides that, you just need to walk in with a good attitude and be very upbeat even if your students are first period tomorrow and you still have to sleep, you need to be the one up on the desk doing a song and dance to get them excited, and just know your material

and be prepared are the factors that lead to successful assessments. Walking in disheveled, not being properly clothed is really a bad idea. (student teacher, Brett)

As far back as 1973, Campbell and Williamson stated that the success in student teaching is not contingent upon the school to which the student teacher is assigned nor the subject that is assigned to teach, but the most important variable is the relationship between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. The possibility of clashing personalities or differences in philosophies between the student teacher and cooperating teacher or supervisor was a reality that the student teachers hoped they didn't experience because of the affect it may have on subjective assessments and grading. Although the student teachers that were interviewed were viewed by their cooperating teacher as excellent in their experience, the student teachers were cognizant of the negative affect it might have if they were to display any antagonistic behaviors with either their co-op or supervisor. These student teachers knew that it was more important to listen and follow the advice of the co-op and supervisor than to speak their piece and chance igniting a dispute that may affect their grade.

I think if you have a co-op that you do not personality-wise get a long with that's going to affect everything that you do. And I also think in my own experience what I was allowed to do in the classroom. I mean, it's their classroom and you can go in there and you have tons of ideas and these really cool things you want to do and if they say no, it's no. "Okay, check that off, great idea, but not going to be doing it." I think they have because that's going to directly affect how your lessons go and how you're observed and just the mood. (student teacher, Carla)

Open lines of communication between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher as well as the student teacher and the university supervisor, were noted by many of the student teachers as important. This was explained as an important ingredient in facilitating the success of the student teacher. Beck and Kosnik (2000) suggest that

university supervisors should work closely with the cooperating teachers, support the student teachers, and visit the school sites often. Student teachers seemed to know immediately if the supervisor was making an effort to work with the student teacher or just going through the motions. Some student teachers noted that they were very comfortable asking questions, making changes and knowing that the supervisor would be supportive and “on their side”.

Just to make sure the co-op and supervisor have a lot of communication and that the co-op knows exactly what the student teacher has to do like the requirements and what they should be looking for in the student teacher. It's good to see the supervisor build up the work that the co-op is doing. My second supervisor did a great job of that. He's excellent at making people feel good about themselves. He'd say, “You're an excellent co-op, he's learning so much”. Make sure the supervisor tries to fit around the co-op's schedule because a lot of teachers don't want to be co-ops anymore.

The other factors would be doing everything the co-op asks of you. Making sure you communicate well with them. Making sure that you don't go into their classroom, you're a guest in their classroom, so make sure that you try to get along with your co-op. If they ask you to do something, you do everything that you can to make sure you do it. (student teacher, Tim)

Student teachers shared ways that they were made to feel more comfortable by their cooperating teacher and supervisor and how the cooperating teacher and supervisor made each other feel more comfortable. Student teachers even went as far as to take the initiative to solicit constructive criticism from cooperating teachers and supervisors, to make them feel more comfortable giving criticism.

Yes my co-op said, well you know they are going to be looking for this in your lesson so just to remind you make sure that you have it. And like for a closure or a hands-on activity my co-ops would give me ideas and would say try this the supervisor would probably love this. Because both of my co-ops they let me know that they were on my side. My co-ops gave me ideas and that helped me. Both of my supervisors said, we want you to be successful and this is what the university requires just make sure you have this.

I just made sure I asked him what I can do better. Am I doing alright? Every once and awhile, I would ask. Both of my co-ops would tell me if I could do something better but just to make them feel comfortable I made sure I asked is

there anything I could do better? It helps to have good communication. Our supervisors told us that it's important to have it. I think it's important for the supervisor to keep reminding you, make sure you ask them how are you doing is there anything you can do better to improve on because sometimes they might feel uncomfortable to come out and say "look you need to do this". But it made my experience comfortable. I think by asking the supervisors and co-ops made them realize that I want to improve and not someone that's going to get upset if they give me constructive criticism. (student teacher, Tim)

He just really put you at ease that this guy's in my corner. Plus we knew right from the beginning that he's really passionate about what he does and he was there for us. He was in our corner. He says, "I taught for so many years and really value my job and I knew it was important and that's what I want to instill in you, the sense that how important it is and to help you become better teachers." And when you would call I'm like, "Sorry to call." "Don't you apologize for calling me at home." So he just made you feel like you knew him forever. (student teacher, Carla)

Ian also shared the same feelings about his cooperating teacher stating that the co-op demonstrated a caring attitude by taking many opportunities to conference about the strengths and weaknesses of his teaching. The cooperating teacher communicated feelings to Ian that he sincerely cared and wanted to put the time in to help Ian reach his goal of being the best teacher he could be.

Interestingly, Ian discussed how he focused on 3 critiques from his supervisor to make improvements in his teaching because "the supervisor is the more important grader", as opposed to the cooperating teacher. He admitted that he made conscious attempts to improve those 3 areas and after the supervisor noted the improvements commented, "There's nothing you didn't do well". Most of the student teachers interviewed shared the same understanding about who holds the most weight when deciding a student teacher's final grade and that person is the supervisor. It was echoed among the student teachers, that it seems more accurate that the cooperating teacher

should hold more weight due to the greater amount of time that the co-op spends with the student teacher.

The experiences and expertise that the supervisor brings to their position was observed as a positive attribute. Student teachers wanted to know that their supervisor understood what it was like to teach students with behavior problems and have to work through several interventions.

The fact that he did this job for 35 years. I think it's so important that you have supervisors that have been teachers that have done it and they know exactly what's going on. When they come in and there's certain things going on it's like, "Oh yes, I've been there." He would explain all of that to us. (student teacher, Carla)

The one time we just got done learning about the APL strategies and I told her when she came in "I'm going to try this and I don't know how they are going to react to it" because I've never seen my co-op using cooperative learning or extended wait time, I'm just going to try it because we just learned it. I had them paired up in groups and it worked well for awhile but then I had to stop all of the time because they would start to argue with each other and fight. They learned from the lesson but I ran out of time I didn't get to finish the lesson because I had to keep stopping and redirecting. And I thought at the end I'm going to fail but she gave me a great grade because I tried something new and she knew the disability I was working with I wasn't working with enrichment students but kids with severe emotional behavior problems and she understood it. So I think that is important that the supervisor realize the disability that you're working with in special ed. (student teacher, Tim)

It was clear to some of the student teachers that their supervisor was assigned to student teachers outside of the supervisor's discipline. Paul found one supervisor with enough experience to provide a meaningful conference. His second supervisor who was supervising out of their major area was less convincing due to some of the critical feedback that didn't seem to concur with what the student teacher knew to be true.

When they pick your supervisor and Health and Physical Education have their own supervisors, they are HPE doing HPE student teachers; I think that's something that is important. My second supervisor, he is very well educated and he has never done special education and he likes it and he's great at it. He was

still an excellent supervisor through all of it and I think with him he could pull it off but there are a couple of little things that he has never done like that. In special ed you deal with a lot of things that are different, in my first one (placement) she (the supervisor) was asking me why I was doing things. One of things she wrote is I repeated myself too many times, you can't repeat yourself too many times of what I was teaching at the time. (student teacher, Paul)

Timing of the assessments was a factor that affected the outcome for the student teachers. It seemed that student teachers sometimes experienced the formative assessment too early, and there were no opportunities to fulfill the criteria on the formative assessment form. When student teachers were observed twice within a short period of time, this did not allow enough time for the student teacher to implement changes.

As well, student teachers prefer to hold the post-observation conference immediately after the observed lesson. As Barry stated earlier, holding a conference later in the day or days later gives the student teacher time to forget or confuse that particular lesson with another.

My first placement I know that the formative came too quick. I was only 2-1/2 weeks into it. I was 2-1/2 weeks into teaching. My first I went there during in-service days getting prepared. I didn't have any time with students, so it was very hard for my co-op then to assess me during the first formative. But when it comes to summative I feel all the questions are more than adequate for that because everything in there is needed by the time you reach your summative, but not everything is needed to be graded for your formative. It just makes it a little more difficult on the co-ops once in awhile. (student teacher, Brett)

The busy schedule of the supervisor was identified as a barrier for some student teachers. They wanted the opportunity to spend more time conferencing; more back to back opportunities to be observed; and engage in 3-way conferences after the observations. I found it interesting that the student teachers wanted to see more of the supervisor and at intervals that were evenly spread out over the semester. They didn't

view the supervisor as a threat but as their mentor and as someone they would benefit from by having longer contact with at each meeting.

So for the betterment of the student teacher the more the supervisors can get out the better. The more they can get out the better. I had one problem with at least the size of my student teaching practicum. There was I believe anywhere from 15-19 student teachers under one supervisor. We just ran her ragged. It was too many student teachers for one supervisor, so we didn't actually get the individual feedback. Which we are a small college and that's why I came here for the smaller classes. Although 19 is probably the smallest I've ever had. But still for student teaching, when you're constantly on the move and needing that feedback, it was a little too much. (student teacher, Brett)

Another that I would change is if there were some way that maybe the supervisor could spend a larger chunk of time in the day other than just one isolated lesson because there are so many more things that go on through the day. Just getting them to line up and getting to the restroom and back I didn't realize how challenging that was until I actually had to get 25 six-year-olds to the bathroom and back. You know, there is a lot of things you have to do to teach that you really don't think about. I don't know if that can be remedied or not because they are really busy, but they see us for such a small chunk of time in such an isolated . . . we're teaching this lesson and the rest of everything that goes on I think is really just as important as the actual teaching. It's kind of overlooked. (student teacher, Carla)

Student teachers expressed their feelings regarding a change in supervisor from one placement to another and when they were assigned the same supervisor for both placements. Those that experienced the same supervisor felt they had an opportunity to continue an important relationship and had the benefit of knowing all of the supervisor's expectations from the beginning. Those that changed supervisors felt some frustrations when the requirements and/or expectations were significantly different. The following student teachers experienced the same supervisor.

I think there are pros and cons. I think the big problem I knew going into my second placement exactly what was going to be required of me. I didn't have to go through that whole getting to know a new supervisor because you really do get really close to your supervisor. They are like your lifeline. The other side of it is, and I didn't think about it until actually a co-op at my first placement she was actually the phys. ed. teacher. I said, "Oh, I got the same supervisor. I'm so

excited." She goes, "That would be a good thing, but it might be helpful to get somebody else's point of view." And I didn't think about that until she said that. I thought, "It might be good to get somebody else's point of view and somebody else's feedback on your teaching." So I think there are pros and cons. (student teacher, Carla)

When Ellen was asked what she would change about the way student teachers are assessed she replied, being assigned the same supervisor for both placements instead of different supervisors. Although she states that it is not because one was better than another, I do believe she felt her experiences in practicum and post observation conferencing were not what she would have liked them to be with her second supervisor.

The only time we had a formal conference was during the final conference. My supervisor wouldn't ask me what went well in the lesson, we didn't do anything like that, it was just OK you did good and out the door my supervisor went. I would get the printout form of the post observation evaluation at the next practicum or whenever I saw my supervisor next and basically, very briefly, put together what I did in the lesson. Would give a couple of good comments as to how I was handling a situation, the instruction was developmentally appropriate, those types of things, nothing real detailed. I'm not sure with talking with other student teachers I went from structure to nothing there were several colleagues of mine that had structure and structure and got the same thing where there were commonalties between other supervisors and the supervisor that I had for my second placement that seemed to be not as detailed and wouldn't offer as much help or instruction as student teachers would have liked. I was in a building with another student teacher and he and I got to communicate back and forth as to what we thought. Pretty much we were each others left hand and it really worked out well. When the supervisor would just get up and leave and not talk to us or the cooperating teacher it was hard. (student teacher, Ellen)

Paul discussed the differences he experienced with 2 different supervisors. He was disappointed that the requirements for his portfolio were different from each supervisor. His second supervisor asked that the INTASC standards 1 through 5 be completed during the 7 ½ week placement and that one standard was completed each week with 2 artifacts. The first supervisor just asked for any 5 standards to be completed with one artifact. He believed that had he had the second supervisor for both placements

he would have had a nice portfolio completed by the end. As it turned out, much more work needed to be completed during his second placement in order to have a finished portfolio at the end of the semester.

One thing that came hard to me personally is even though there are so many districts and so many placements; I think having the same supervisor would be my ideal situation. Not because I had one good supervisor and one supervisor that was a good person but different. It would be good for my supervisor to see how I started and over 7 weeks got to see me 3 times and during the next 7 weeks the supervisor could see me 3 more times. And by the time the supervisor saw where I started to where I finished, I just think about the range of information that I would get and the feedback I would get. It is such a broad range. Outlying areas have the same supervisor. It was hard leaving. I had formed such a good relationship with my supervisor and the other student teachers in my practicum. We could get in a small group and talk. We would share experiences with other student teachers in a small group. I got so many ideas in the first 7 weeks from other student teachers sharing their experiences, songs, games and websites. My second placement the supervisor would give some information and practicum was suppose to last from 3:30 to 5:30 and sometimes it was 3:40 to 5:10 and all of the other student teachers are meeting about the topic that was suppose to be going on and staying until 5:30 and not that getting out early isn't nice but yet if it's about assessment or interviews I want to know about it. (student teacher, Ellen)

A more practical resolution to this perceived inconsistency might be to work together with all of the supervisors to communicate the expectations of their roles and responsibilities and to collaborate in their efforts to offer all students the best experiences possible.

Student teachers concluded that the assessment methods are an important part of the student teaching experience. Assessment was perceived to be a form of motivation and a way to keep student teachers on track. It provides documentation that employers would like to see. It is a means to provide feedback and keeps student teachers' focus on those areas that are in need of improvement.

I think it's a real important part. It's a big motivator. It's what keeps you going. It's not your room, it's the assessments that keep you on task and those types of things, it's very important. I think you need it. Yesterday we were

talking about it in practicum, we were talking about before we use to have pass/fail, and I would not like that. I think that would be ineffective because people were bringing up the fact that people could bust their tail and give 110% and then another person you can give them that 70% and pass and that's the same thing. If I plan on going into student teaching, I plan on passing and I plan on the "A" too but that gives you more to work for. Like passing is not an option. The "A" is more of a motivator. (student teacher, Paul)

It's just to hear another voice and another opinion on how things could be done. When they give you suggestions it's nice to have something else to go by and I think that's more important than whether you get a 92 or a 93 or whatever. I don't, I mean I don't want to get a 70 or something but I think the conversations and finding what they liked are and what you're doing good and what you need to improve on, I think that's more relevant usually than anything else. (student teacher, Barry)

Definitely improved it. Getting feedback from the cooperating teacher has definitely helped a lot because they see you everyday and every class hopefully. And from the supervisors, I know they are really busy and they do their best to come in when they can, and they really do give a lot of feedback because there are specific areas that they're looking for, so you know exactly where you've improved. I think the feedback helped a lot, without the feedback I would have never improved at all. (student teacher, Linda)

Some assessment methods are in the fore-front of the student teachers minds. The formative and summative assessments were spoken of more than any others. This may be because they are self-assessment forms that the student teacher must complete as well as the cooperating teacher and due to their perceived complexity. The supervisor then compares and analyzes scores from each criterion to determine a final grade. All three triad members are involved in the formative and summative assessment methods. Other methods that were discussed include observations, video-taping, journaling, portfolios, 3-way conferencing, and unit/lesson plans.

Chapter 5

Perceptions from Cooperating Teachers Regarding Assessment Practices

The following chapter will discuss the perceptions of cooperating teachers regarding assessment during the student teaching experience. Cooperating teachers like student teachers, voluntarily shared their experiences and feelings toward the various assessment methods. Reactions to various assessment methods, the purpose of assessment, the roles of each triad member, and factors that affect assessment were described by the eight cooperating teachers interviewed. Many common themes were found among the cooperating teachers experiences along with their feedback regarding assessment practices.

Cooperating teachers were eager to share their experiences during the interview. Some cooperating teachers when we began the interview seemed a little unsure of what I might be looking for when discussing assessment. And others began the interview by saying that they hoped they would have enough to say to benefit the study. Many of the cooperating teachers were surprised at the end of the interview that they had so many different stories and thoughts to share. The time seemed to fly by as we engaged in what I had hoped it would become; a conversation. Throughout all of the interviews, it was very gratifying to see that the cooperating teachers felt their input was appreciated and that their personal narrative may in some way have helped to reinforce effective practices and/or improve the current assessment process. I wanted the cooperating teachers to understand that I was the learner and they were the experts. It was a study focused on

each individual at the time and not about myself or the university. There are times when the cooperating teachers see university faculty as “living in the ivory tower” and they view university faculty as “out-of-touch” with the real world and “out-of-touch” with those teaching in the trenches. As stated by Veal and Rickard (1998) for some cooperating teachers, working in the real world means re-teaching student teachers about how teaching is done in schools compared to what they are taught about teaching at the university. I wanted the cooperating teachers to know that their input was extremely valuable and that contributing their thoughts would help to improve and validate the teacher education program they support.

All of the cooperating teacher interviews were conducted at the end of the school day in the cooperating teacher’s classroom. It was private, except for an occasional announcement on the loud-speaker. This venue made it convenient for the cooperating teacher and provided familiar surroundings that seemed to spur memories. Cooperating teachers were very forthcoming to describe the circumstances behind their views, as I reassured them that their identity would remain anonymous and any names provided during the interview would be changed.

At the end of each interview I felt a sense of accomplishment, that I had learned many new stories, philosophies and recommendations that I didn’t know before. Most importantly, I felt a real connection with each cooperating teacher during the interview.

Mitchell & Schwager (1993) studied the misunderstanding or disagreement regarding the purposes of the student teaching experience that appear to be the norm rather than the exception. This discrepancy extends to perceptions of roles and responsibilities of key participants in the experience, often resulting in mixed messages

altering the impact of the experience to yield, at best unpredictable and at worst undesirable, outcomes for student teachers. There is clearly a need to fully articulate the expectations of all parties in the student teaching experience. Such an articulation needs to involve a dialogue in which all members can ensure a common understanding of goals and strategies for achieving these goals. This chapter reveals the views and perceptions of the cooperating teachers; Sue, Judy, Lori, Christine, Donna, Bob, Tina and Jean.

How do Cooperating Teachers Comprehend the Various Assessment Methods?

Formative and Summative Competency Form

Similar to the student teachers responses, cooperating teachers commented most often regarding the formative and summative assessment (Appendix C). Although no cooperating teacher in this study suggested eliminating the form, almost all of them had suggestions for modifying/improving the forms. Cooperating teachers felt it was an important tool and that it did serve the purpose of documenting strengths, weaknesses, and growth. It was also identified as an informational tool that described the criteria student teachers needed to satisfy.

Most of the cooperating teachers agreed that the competency form needed to detail the criteria reflecting behaviors indicative to specific majors. Guyton and McIntyre (1990) found that when rating instruments have been compared, analytic methods using specific criteria seem to be more reliable than profile or global scales. Nolan and Hoover (2004) agree that specific indicators of performance are preferable to broad or global measures. Tina refers to an old competency form that was created by the educators of

that specific discipline. She and a university supervisor, Tom, both agreed that the old form was a better design and included specific criteria that they could identify with. Bob notes that there are not only differences in behaviors between majors but also differences between elementary and secondary teacher behaviors.

There were a lot of them in there I felt were not applicable to what was going on in the real classroom, and some of them may have fit an elementary classroom better than a high school classroom. It's like we don't see that sort of thing here. I don't know if they were split in between secondary. I suppose they were. You know, a secondary evaluation is different than an elementary evaluation for the student teachers. It's not the same. (cooperating teacher, Bob)

Many of the cooperating teachers deemed the terms used to describe the 4 ratings as problematic. The ratings of “distinguished” and “proficient” were difficult to assign by the standards of the cooperating teachers especially during the formative assessment. They viewed these as having reached the top and student teachers would not see a need to work harder to improve. Some of the cooperating teachers were somewhat appalled that they should identify a student teacher as “distinguished” when they saw this as a descriptor that should be assigned to only the very best veteran teacher. Other cooperating teachers maintained the perspective of “distinguished” in comparison of other student teachers. The point cooperating teachers were trying to convey was that student teachers would get the wrong message by achieving the status of “distinguished”. The message would state, “You have made it, no need to work harder or improve what you are doing”.

The one from the university has a lot of good ideas in there. Personally I don't think they are said in the right way for our major. They just don't match up to what we expect of our student teachers. The wording, the proficient, basic I think those words need to be changed again nobody is quote “proficient” because once you are you stop growing and you need to grow all of the time. Maybe those words need to be changed and student teachers feel that if their not on the top

their not going to get an A and that's really not true. It depends on them not their words that are being used. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

That's like saying with the assessment where it says distinguished. If they were all distinguished they wouldn't need to go to college. I've never given anybody all distinguished because I'm the only one that gets that. (cooperating teacher, Lori)

I look at "distinguished" as they've made it. They have no further to go. If you would give a student teacher a distinguished there's nothing to work for. I also feel if you give them proficient too early they feel like then I don't need any improvement. But yet, if you give them basic that's almost like giving them a C or a D in their feeling, and they don't want to see any basics there. Then for me to say this student teacher is distinguished after so many weeks and actually they only teach full-time for like two to three weeks, I don't feel anyone can be distinguished in two or three weeks. I just don't like that title. (cooperating teacher, Judy)

More than once the suggestion was made to include a rating of "Not Applicable".

This would give the person rating the form the option to determine that the student teacher did not have the opportunity to fulfill the criteria. As it was, cooperating teachers would either check "distinguished" so that it would not adversely affect the student teachers' grade, check "basic" or "unsatisfactory" which would adversely affect the student teachers' grade or handwrite on the checksheet "Not Applicable".

The big form that we do at the end of the student teaching is a little cumbersome. Most of those skills are important but some of them and again I'm not speaking as the classroom teacher. Some of them my student teachers do not get an opportunity to do. I've always had a supervisor that was very cooperative about that. The one's that deal with parents and home I'm not sure how apropos they are to student teaching because it is an important part of a teacher's performance but student teachers don't always get a lot of opportunity to do those things. I don't know that they should be added or eliminated; I don't have a real problem with them as long as the person that is supervising understands that there aren't opportunities for the kids to do those things. (cooperating teacher, Sue)

It appears that one cooperating teacher was working with an assessment sheet that was altered to provide an opportunity to check NA or Not Applicable on some criteria.

This is the only cooperating teacher I found to have had this option available. She did

suggest moving the NA to a position under the criteria where it would be readily seen as opposed to its current position at the left side crease.

Cooperating teachers are asked to sit down with their student teacher after the competency form is completed and compare the scores for each criterion. It is encouraged that they discuss how they scored each criterion, especially if they have scored differently. Sometimes after a discussion on a difference of a particular criterion, the cooperating teacher may change their original score based on evidence provided by the student teacher that possibly the cooperating teacher hadn't considered.

OK, we don't go through every single one. Its lots of time there are lots of pages, we'll go through it for the ones we don't agree on, and we talk about. Because if you agree on it, OK we're alright. But the ones we don't agree on we just give a quick explanation well why did you say that or why did I say that. And that helps in that way of why we didn't agree on what we said or what we wrote down. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

The only thing I didn't mention was, and it's a good thing, is all the space for the comments. When I first started years ago there was a little tiny space about three lines at the bottom of maybe the last page, "Do you have any comment," and that was it. I don't think people fully understand how important that is for us to explain why we gave them that grade. It's like people look at these assessments and they see, "Oh, I see they got mostly distinguished." Then I'll say, "Did you see why?" There might be something like this kid made homemade materials every single day, every single lesson. (cooperating teacher, Lori)

Cooperating teachers Jean and Tina understand the form as a method to evaluate the student teacher, to provide cooperating teacher feedback and for the student teacher to self evaluate. They shared very strong feelings and thoughts about the competency form not being utilized as a grading instrument. Although it should be part of the grade, they feel its purpose should reflect growth and provide feedback rather than to give justification for a grade. The university supervisors calculate a grade from the competency form while the cooperating teachers are only asked to fill in the level of

distinguished, proficient, basic or unsatisfactory for each criterion. My hunch is that if the cooperating teachers knew that the form was graded and how, as Jean explained, they would manipulate the ratings to achieve the desired grade outcome.

We fill it (competency form) out half way through, it goes to practicum, it comes back and at the end we fill it out again and it's gone. And that's fine to calculate a grade from the competency form, if the person is able to do the things that are put in the evaluation but when I have situations where I have student teachers that don't have the opportunity to achieve these things I don't think it's right to grade them on it. So I was assuming that this was averaged out but this was not a heavily weighted thing but something to justify where you're at.

But I do know that the one I last saw from the other university it actually has point values. Oh you can go down and there you are that's your grade. But I don't like that because what I think what you end up doing is well I don't feel that should be your grade. Now I have to figure out how to go back and change things around here so you get the grade you really deserve. And that's a stupid thing. It's a poor use of a form if you are going to do that. I like knowing that this maybe doesn't have all that point value to it; it's just to help you. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

A concern from Bob was that the university supervisors sat down and decided to implement this elaborate competency form, without cooperating teacher input. It was apparent that he would like to see it condensed and reflect the fundamental concepts of teaching. Most cooperating teachers were very confident that they could provide critical feedback to the student teachers without following a comprehensive competency form. As Pellet et. al. (1999) claim, by utilizing an objective, systematic observation form, this helps to eliminate some of the biases inherent in simply "eyeballing" what is happening when the student teacher instructs. Cooperating teachers did believe that the form was important in order that they could provide feedback in writing for the student teacher and had criteria guidelines to follow.

I think that the University system is too entailed, so I don't tend to be that way. I tend to look at what a student teacher needs to be able to do. I break it down to a much simpler format. They need to be able to plan. They need to be able to implement the plan, evaluate the plan, and control the classroom, and

that's what I'm looking for. And in the seven weeks that we have these young people with us to try to evaluate them on the scope that the University is asking, in my opinion, is just too much. If we had them for an entire semester that might be a different story, so I narrow the focus down. (cooperating teacher, Bob)

Oh my god those things are massive. Looking at the competency form these things are not in my head at all. Anymore it's a gut reaction (personal assessment) to how they are doing. I look at do they speak loud enough and directly to the kids. This is such a hard thing to measure but are they kind to the kids, is there a lot of positive reinforcement and not false positive reinforcement but are they really caring about the kids as individuals and not just this is my class and I'm going to be a good teacher. Do they really focus on one kid at a time when they have these special needs because we have such little ones still. And even though they may be huge in stature inside they're still a little person and need the nurturing that we can give them here. I don't think that that comes out in these forms really. This is the basics, the nuts and bolts in here, it's necessary (the competency form) but there's teaching is a science and an art combined. You can master the science and not be a good teacher if you don't have the art to go with it. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

Bob and others question the holistic approach to the competency form. When more than one behavior is included under one criterion it can be difficult assigning a rating when one behavior is high and another behavior is low. Unless specific written comments are spelled out, it would be a confusing interpretation for the student teacher as well.

Here cooperating teachers are with this huge packet and we're saying, "Okay, here's five different categories. Where are they on this rubric?" It's like, "Well, he did that real good, but he was better over there." "Is he here or is he there?" "Well, he's a little there and a little bit here." Then what we end up doing is for the first evaluation I'll say he's here and the next evaluation I'll move him up. I don't know if that's really doing the student teacher any favor. I don't know if we're pinpointing their strengths and weakness by doing that. (cooperating teacher, Bob)

Supervisors include the summative competency form as part of the grading criteria but it is each individual supervisor's discretion as to what weight the competency form will have in the calculation of the final grade. It is also within the discretion of the supervisor whether the student teacher's completed competency form will be factored

into the grade and/or only used as a method of comparison with the cooperating teacher's competency form. Although the competency assessment is in rubric form, it still remains the cooperating teacher's interpretation for evaluation and determining one of the 4 performance levels. Many of the cooperating teachers felt a resistance to check "distinguished" on the competency form. If cooperating teachers are avoiding assigning this performance level because of what the term implies, then a student teacher's grade will most certainly be affected in a negative way.

I guess another thing too that I remind myself when I'm filling out the form is OK I am filling this out based on a kid that's a student teacher not somebody that's been teaching for 5 years or 10 years. I feel there should be somewhere in between that distinguished and proficient and plus I was just saying to the student teacher you know I really feel like you're doing well at this time but we better save something for the end. If we say you're doing excellent in all of this now, what are we going to say at the end? And yet they were legitimate he was doing really well I thought for a student teacher at that point in their educational career. (cooperating teacher, Christine)

Jean describes her experience observing a student teacher from another university.

The student did not use the same type of comprehensive competency form and in her perception felt that because he did not get the feedback that he needed to in writing that the self evaluation that he perceived was inaccurate.

I know that one that we had he wasn't in our major but he was pretty unsatisfactory in a lot of ways, but because he wasn't from your university, he didn't have this experience. And I don't think he knew how unsatisfactory he was in fact he just finished up at the high school and he is going around telling people that when that high school teacher retires that that position will be his job. She and everyone in the building said "over their dead bodies". (cooperating teacher, Jean)

It is my interpretation that cooperating teachers viewed the competency form as a generic document lacking in identifying teacher behaviors that are specific to each major and possibly misleading student teachers with the rating terms. Cooperating teachers

commented that they would like to be part of the committee that develops or redesigns the competency form for their specific major.

Each cooperating teacher seems to have their own philosophy or strategy about how they should complete the competency form. Since every placement is different with a different cooperating teacher, it would be unrealistic to think that we could expect all cooperating teachers to approach the competency form in the same manner. Although it would seem helpful if the cooperating teachers could share their perceptions with supervisors and vice versa to gain an understanding of the purpose of the form and the part it plays in the student teacher's experience.

Observation and Conferencing

Yates (1982) stated that student teachers believed the observations and evaluations done by the cooperating teachers were more valid than those done by the university supervisors, since the cooperating teachers were able to devote more time to the observations and follow-up discussions. These evaluations by cooperating teachers have been important indicators as to the fitness of the student teacher who is about to enter the teaching profession (Bruchlacher, 1998).

A number of cooperating teachers commented with confidence that they could sense an effective student teacher and those that had a natural teaching ability. The cooperating teachers were much more at ease using their own personal assessment on a day to day basis than working off of the formative or summative form. Although cooperating teachers were not opposed to using the form during the middle and end of the placement.

I think I can come up with a fairly accurate assessment by observing the student teacher's daily activities in the classroom, how she interacts with parents, how she gets along with other teachers in the building, how actively involved she is in just the everyday routines in the classroom and her written lesson plan that tells me how well she is prepared ahead of time to know what she's teaching, so I feel that's pretty accurate. The assessment forms that the college uses I'm not totally happy with those. (cooperating teacher, Judy)

I always tell the kids the first day I can always tell when a student teacher is going to make it or if they are not the first day. The first day they walk in here it's all in how they relate to the kids, and if I notice that they back away from the lower functioning kids. When I find a student teacher that goes right to the lower functioning kids and sits and talks to them I know they're going to make it in this classroom. It works every time. (Cooperating teacher, Lori)

All cooperating teachers in the study described the post observation conference with their student teacher as beginning by asking the questions, "What do you feel went well?" and "What do you feel could have been better and how would you change it?" This technique allows the student teacher to engage in self-evaluation and critical thinking. The desired outcome is that the student teacher can identify personal strengths and weaknesses autonomously. If student teachers can answer these questions reflecting similar thoughts as their cooperating teacher has formulated, it is interpreted by the cooperating teacher as a quality self reflection. The same understanding holds true during a supervisor's conference. It is critical for the future growth and improvement of the novice teacher to have good self reflection skills. In the future each teacher will be responsible for identifying and implementing their own behavior changes.

It is important especially in the early part of the placement that the student teacher doesn't feel threatened to disclose weaknesses. Student teachers should feel comfortable to share their perceived teaching weaknesses in order to receive feedback from the mentor or cooperating teacher. If student teachers feel that cooperating teachers view their weaknesses as strikes against them instead of areas to improve upon, the student

teachers may try to ignore or defend weak teaching behaviors. Cooperating teachers mention numerous times how grade conscious the student teachers are.

But generally it would just be casual, "How do you think things went today? What do you think you could do to improve?" I try to get some self-evaluation out of them. I try my best not to give them the answers. But being a teacher it's hard not to give them the answers, so I try very hard to really make an effort to say, "How do you think things went and what do you think you could do to improve it" before I open my big mouth. And, of course, it depends on the student teacher as to whether it's easier to do that or not. I try to get a lot of their own self-evaluation. I try to get them to find the answer, the solution, before I offer it then I try to offer some sort of way to make it work. They may have an idea of how to fix it, but it may not be very practical, so let's try to work around it and see how we can actually make this work tomorrow and offer some sort of suggestion to that. So that's generally how my assessment works on a regular basis. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Cooperating teachers noticed that some student teachers can be too critical of themselves during the post observation conference. They found in most cases student teachers will rate themselves lower than what they, the cooperating teacher, will rate them.

I'm more comfortable with informal kinds of assessment. I like to really let the student teacher tell me how they think things went because they sometimes are really hard on themselves. I think sometimes they know almost better than I do when they are doing a good job and when they are not doing a good job. They are kind of critical of themselves. So I just let them go and if they get to the point where they are too critical of themselves where they might start to be detrimental to their own attitude then I'll stop them and make them re-evaluate. I would tell them that they wouldn't be that hard on their students so they have to lighten up a little bit. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

The practice of conferencing between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher was admitted to taking place most conveniently at the end of the day, due to the hectic schedule throughout the day. Although brief conferences were also noted immediately after the lesson if time permitted. As noted by the student teachers, they

preferred to hold conferences immediately after or within the course of the day, but not a day or two later.

Between 8:00 and 2:30 there is absolutely no time to sit down and talk problems, concerns, successes whatever. I have the kids here. Some may leave; the others stay, so the student teacher is pretty much with me working with the kids all day long. We may sit down at lunchtime. This is the time the student teacher can sit down with me and talk. "Did I do this wrong?" "What could I have done better", type of thing. "This might work for you a little better", over lunchtime. We eat while we're working. But at the end of the day after the kids leave is the time that the student teacher and I can sit down and discuss things. We can stay to 3:30 -3:45 or whatever. A lot of them do too. I'm very impressed with the university up here. The kids are so well prepared and want to ask questions. You can tell they've been primed to do so. It's a big help.
(cooperating teacher, Lori)

Basically I do a lot of observation. I try to do some note taking during the student teaching. I try to give them feedback at the end of the day as much as I possibly can. Sometimes I do it right after their lesson depending on if time permits or not. I have in the past made my own evaluation form, but I haven't really used it in awhile. I just find it so much easier to write down notes, so that's generally what I do on my own. Those are my personal ones. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Cooperating teachers were very positive about participating in a 3-way conference including the student teacher, cooperating teacher and university supervisor. They experienced more openness and better communication when all of the triad members were present. As one student teacher recalled, it was more like a nice conversation rather than a one-sided lecture on the positives and negatives of the student teacher's performance.

Now I've had two different ones, different supervisors, which I kind of prefer a certain way that we do sit down, the three of us, because it gives me a chance to go over the evaluation. There's two times that I evaluate them, written, grading-wise, and when the three of us are sitting there the student must grade themselves. I grade them, and then the supervisor will talk about what he feels needs to be done. We kind of compare our goals and see if we're on the same page type of thing which works very well, where at another time it was not done.
(cooperating teacher, Lori)

I know when I first started taking student teachers we didn't have the three-way conference. I would have a conference with the supervisor. The student teacher would be conferencing with the supervisor and sometimes then the student teacher would come back into the room and you would feel like, "Oh no, did that get said to her or him the way I meant it to be?" Or "How did that come across to the third person?" So I do like the idea of having a three-way conference. That way we're all out in the open. I'm not saying anything behind the student teacher's back. If it's something that I feel that needs to be said I can say it right to their face as well as just to the supervisor, and I think that's a good thing to have. (cooperating teacher, Judy)

Letter of Recommendation

Two cooperating teachers shared the same thoughts when asked how they would react if there was a case when the grade they wanted to assign the student teacher would be different from the university supervisor's grade. Both cooperating teachers noted that to date, this scenario had not happened but were realistic that it could happen. Both cooperating teachers affirmed the use of the letter of recommendation to reveal their personal evaluation of the student teacher. The cooperating teachers were aware of how important it is to receive a positive letter of recommendation when seeking employment. It is interesting that only 2 cooperating teachers recalled the letter of recommendation as a method of assessment, when it is the one vital means that cooperating teachers have to impact the probability for the student teacher's employment. Wentz (2001) agrees that the most important reference for the student teacher is done by the cooperating teacher. This is the main reference that hiring officials want to see before offering employment to a beginning teacher.

Now if they start saying Oh no I think they should get this then I may get a little cranky. And maybe try to get them to see my point of view. And if they don't want to see my point of view I always have a letter of recommendation that I can write. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

But even if that happened I really don't know what you would do to fix it. A separate grade I think is just too much. Like I said, I really think that's within the best interest of the student teacher and I think that's important. I mean, I can get over it. I guess I'm going to be asked for a reference, you know what I mean. So that's my other avenue right there if I really didn't agree. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Journaling

Journaling is an assessment method that includes the reflections of the student teacher. It is intended to provide the supervisor with critical observations that the student teacher details. It may also serve as a method for communication between the student teacher and the supervisor. Judy explains that if there is valuable feedback written by the student teacher that may allow her to understand their feelings that she would be interested in reading the journal. Christine will read through her student teacher's journal as a means to conference.

The one thing I would like to be able to do, I would like to be able to read or to get their feelings. I know they have a journal. Maybe it's like a diary. I've never been quite sure if that was something that was personal for them just to do or if this is something that if their professors are reading it or their supervisors. If they are sharing it with their practicum then I feel like sometimes I think I'd just kind of like to see because maybe they can put things on paper that they don't feel comfortable saying to me then that would help me too. Because I often think they may just be afraid to say to me, "I really didn't like doing that" or "I wish you would have told me this." (cooperating teacher, Judy)

Journaling was mentioned the least, along with lesson plans and cooperating teacher reference letter. The methods that were discussed in length were observations and conferencing, and the formative and summative assessment form.

How is the Role of the Student Teacher in Assessment Perceived by the Cooperating Teacher?

When asked of the cooperating teacher what the role of the student teacher was in assessment, the most immediate response was student teacher self evaluation. By cooperating teacher standards, student teachers should be able to recognize their own behaviors compared to the criteria that define effective teaching practices. Cooperating teachers prefer that student teachers not only identify their strengths and weaknesses but also analyze what they need to change in their behaviors to improve.

Jean contends that it is the responsibility of the student teacher to solicit feedback from the cooperating teacher. Jean's approach is somewhat different than Bob's. He feels it is important to formally communicate his observations to the student teacher and to elicit the student teacher's input.

I think it's really important because they have to see or recognize what they do. Whether it's something that needs improvement or something that is good because a lot of the time they see everything as "Wow it's great" and I'm thinking "Oh no, no let's work on this again". So I think it's very important that they can see different ways that they teach and different things that need to be done. I think they have an important role. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

They've got to continually evaluate their performance in the classroom. And ask for input. If they're not able to do that for themselves, some people are not really good self monitors and they need other people to say this is what you're doing. A lot of times if the student teacher doesn't ask, I don't offer. Or if they somehow don't initiate a dialogue that allows me to feel comfortable enough that they want my input I don't offer. I'm not going to push you into being me. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

Cooperating teachers recognized the role or responsibility of student teachers to complete the requirements that were issued by the university. These include; writing lesson and unit plans in a timely manner, completing journal entries, carrying out all

duties and responsibilities of the teacher. These assignments are all assessed and part of the final grading process.

Another role or responsibility recognized by the cooperating teachers of the student teachers was student teacher communication with the cooperating teacher and the supervisor. Communication is very important, as noted by the cooperating teachers, to avoid continuing ineffective teaching behaviors or omitting student teacher responsibilities. Student teachers that act on their own or choose not to act in some circumstances without explaining their actions stand the risk of sending a poor message to the cooperating teacher. It was interesting that Donna recognized the journal as a method of communication and that student teachers viewed it the same.

But they also have the responsibility to communicate with their supervisor and to communicate as much as they can with their co-op. And hopefully they feel comfortable doing that with both because otherwise they are kind of on their own. Hopefully the journals help with that, but definitely they are responsible for communicating as well as proving themselves during that time. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Christine affirms that student teachers have the role or responsibility to initiate dialogue with the cooperating teacher, as that demonstrates a desire to improve their teaching skills. She recalls her first student teacher and the frustrations she experienced by the student teacher making excuses for weaknesses, becoming defensive, and making other commitments a higher priority than student teaching. Honesty and a willingness to accept criticism were high on her list as a role of the student teacher.

Honesty, that's the key thing right there. My last student teacher was just starving for what can you tell me, what can I do, how can I improve, where he wanted to know how he could improve. He wanted you to tell him what he could do. Whereas my first student teacher you couldn't tell him he had an excuse for everything. I do believe you're only supposed to work a certain maximum amount of hours while you are student teaching. This kid was, "I have to go I have to be at

work”. And I thought, “Excuse me” and then we found out how late he was working and then I thought, “Hey, I thought you weren’t suppose to work”. He was just totally working the system and so it was very frustrating. So I think they need to be honest and be willing to accept criticism. (cooperating teacher, Christine)

How is the Role of the Cooperating Teacher in Assessment Perceived by the Cooperating Teacher?

The most immediate and prevalent response to this question was to provide the feedback necessary to recommend the grade to be earned by the student teacher. Cooperating teachers perceived their part to be critical in facilitating the grade assignment. Most cooperating teachers and student teachers shared feelings for weighting the cooperating teachers’ grade input more than the university supervisor’s due to the greater amount of time that the cooperating teacher spends with the student teacher. It was believed by both student teachers and cooperating teachers that the cooperating teachers had a much better perception of the student teachers holistic performance and not just a snap shot picture of the 3 or 4 times that the supervisor visited.

I think it’s a fair amount of input because we are with them all of the time. And they value our opinion. Which I think is good. We do talk about it so if we do have a difference of opinion, we know where both of us stand and then you come to a compromise. Because they see them only those certain amount of times but sometimes it’s a good show. It’s like “Oh it’s my supervisor I really have to do well”. And they do and then their gone and then they slack off again. And that’s not teaching, it’s either full or nothing. So I think it’s a 2-way street between the supervisor and the coop. I like having 2 people giving 2 opinions. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

Well, as I said before, I’d like to have a little more input into the specific areas, adding a few things. And I’ve talked with other teachers that have said the same thing. They don’t mention this, this, this and this, and it’s an important thing the supervisor might not see because he’s never here. But we’re here everyday

with these kids. So I guess you might just say I just feel we should be more a part of that process. (cooperating teacher, Lori)

You can't help but to feel that it's really out of my hands. I mean, as the cooperating teacher the final decision is the supervisor's. You can say as much as you want and you just kind of hope they see what you see, but you do as far as the final grade. You don't have as much to say as they do. You are doing a lot to prepare and you hope that what you're doing to help them prepare is going to get them the grade you want them to get. Even if I had a student teacher that was horrible for me on a regular basis, but if the supervisor thought they were God's gift then there's really not much I don't think I could do. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

When Donna was asked what input cooperating teachers should have into grading student teachers, she replied, "I think they should have quite a bit because they are with them on a regular basis". Although she did make a point to speak of a possible scenario where cooperating teachers may not be a credible evaluator, for example, if the cooperating teacher spends too much time out of the classroom when the student teacher is teaching.

Judy had mixed emotions about the evaluation and grading process, and the responsibility that comes with it. She gets mixed messages from the university where they want your input but they also want you to be aware that giving marks below distinguished could mean that the student teacher will not get a job. This is a lot of pressure to place on a cooperating teacher. Cooperating teachers would like to believe that they have at least 50% of the input into the student teacher's final grade. Some of the cooperating teachers spoke about their diminished influence on the student teacher's final grade when the supervisor and student teacher disagreed and rated the student teacher high.

The role, well, I definitely have to complete an assessment. I mean, that's part of my role, and I have to try to observe or somehow go over these criteria and feel that I have seen this happening or can make an intelligent judgment. But

overall I think at the end I feel my role is very small in the actual grading of the student teacher. (cooperating teacher, Judy)

All said and done I think the cooperating teacher should hold the same weight as the supervisor because I really think that the coop teacher sees the real thing. I'm not sure the supervisor always sees the real thing. Because they may be on their best behavior when the supervisor is here and they are use to the cooperating teacher being around in and out and just part of what is going on, I'm willing to concede that the supervisor knows a whole lot but the cooperating teacher sees a whole lot. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

You can't help but to feel that it's really out of my hands. I mean, as the cooperating teacher the final decision is the supervisor's. You can say as much as you want and you just kind of hope they see what you see, but you do as far as the final grade. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Donna perceived one of her roles as soliciting feedback from the student teacher or facilitating the conversation to allow the student teacher to disclose the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching.

I try to get a lot of their own self-evaluation. I try to get them to find the answer, the solution, before I offer it then I try to offer some sort of way to make it work. They may have an idea of how to fix it, but it may not be very practical, so let's try to work around it and see how we can actually make this work tomorrow and offer some sort of suggestion to that. So that's generally how my assessment works on a regular basis. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Interestingly Jean was very adamant that she would not initiate the conversation because she wanted to see the initiative come from the student teacher. Although later in the interview she did convey the need for a "connection" to be established between the cooperating teacher and student teacher in order to open the lines of communication.

Maybe just sometimes being able to create or develop a relationship with them can be a challenge. Each time a new one comes in I think OK where can we make a connection, how can I not appear threatening so I can work with them and help them and they can improve and that to me is probably the most challenging is trying to figure out how to make that connection. There are a lot of other little struggles along the way but I kind of feel as though I need a connection in order to be of any help to them as a cooperating teacher. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

The cooperating teacher as facilitator was defined by a few, and they saw their role as helping the student teacher, following the guidelines and supporting the university. Only one cooperating teacher said that she did not want the role of assigning a grade, and she admittedly explained that she does not issue grades in her own teaching role and would be uncomfortable if she were to be given that role to grade the student teacher.

First of all we're just here to help. Our role is to work with the college and we do whatever they want us to do. So I think if we can help the student teacher to be better at what they are doing, and I guess the only way we can do it is by filling out papers. So that, they say you have to document everything, and that's like documentation. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

It depends again on the student teacher if you have a student teacher that is very strong then the role is just to be supportive of their ideas and make suggestions when you feel like you need to. I think you have to be very objective and helpful. I don't think that my role is being negative and I don't like the idea of being part of the grade particularly. Because I don't like giving grades. I feel my role is more of a support person to introduce new ideas and give them direction, more than to provide a final assessment or grade. (cooperating teacher, Sue)

All cooperating teachers referenced conferencing with the student teacher and encouraging the student teacher to discover their own strengths and weaknesses, but in the case where the student teacher does not ascertain needed changes or notable teaching techniques then it is the role of the cooperating teacher to point these out. The desired outcome is one where the student teacher is able to analyze their own instruction and realize their own strengths and weaknesses. Although the cooperating teacher should provide the environment for self-reflection, they should also provide the valuable feedback and suggestions that will help the student teacher to grow. Student teachers also expressed a strong desire for feedback from cooperating teachers and supervisors.

As far as the role that we play in the assessment, we sit down with them explaining, "Look, these are your good points here" and letting them know what they can do to improve their weaknesses. (cooperating teacher, Lori)

Not only did cooperating teachers note providing honest feedback as a role of the student teacher, but also as a role of the cooperating teacher. In regards to conferencing between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher, cooperating teachers identified the importance to provide the student teacher with both positive and negative critiques and avoid "sugar-coating" or minimizing any faults when sharing feedback from the observations.

That's when I first started doing the cooperating teacher type of thing, and that was a real challenge for me to sit down and tell somebody, "you're not going to make it". I just have to be truthful with the kids. (cooperating teacher, Lori)

Being accountable was seen as an important role by Bob. The cooperating teacher should be found observing the student teacher at most times and choosing classes not to be present based on the needs of the student teacher. One cooperating teacher alluded to a practice where the cooperating teacher would leave the student teacher in the classroom alone before they were ready and not providing the supervision that was needed. This would affect the student teachers opportunity to improve and grow as well as affect their assessment outcomes.

Student teachers are up there by themselves, which may be a great experience for them. Talk about getting thrown to the wolves, but how is that cooperating teacher knowing if the student teacher is doing a good job if they are not there. Now, I will leave a room. I'll pick and chose which classes. This class won't kill them and I'll leave the room because a student teacher needs to feel that they are the teacher and they are in charge, and you need to do that. But the cooperating teacher also needs to be there to see what's going on. Because you never know when a certain problem is going to erupt and how that teacher is going to handle it. Anybody can teach an easy class. It's the one you have the difficulties. So if you're down in the lounge drinking coffee with the other cooperating teachers who aren't paying attention how do you know what the student teachers are doing? (cooperating teacher, Bob)

Jean described one of her roles from the perspective of keeping the student teacher on track with what the school district, building and classroom set as expectations. This perspective concurs with the student teachers as they too expressed the need for the cooperating teacher to orient them to the school system and procedures.

The responses given by the cooperating teachers pertaining to their role in the assessment of student teachers were surprisingly brief. It appeared that cooperating teachers see their list of roles in assessment as brief, not low in importance but focused on a few forms of assessment. They are responsible for conferencing, providing feedback to the student teacher and supervisor, completing the competency form and suggesting a grade, if asked. The cooperating teachers are to facilitate conversation that will allow student teachers to disclose strengths and weaknesses. They are a liaison between the supervisor and the student teacher. They provide the letter of reference that is critical in a student teacher's quest for teaching employment. Being honest was echoed by cooperating teachers. Although some struggled with that role because if they knew that scoring the student teacher below distinguished on some of the criteria on the competency form would lower the student teacher's grade, and they were in disagreement with that lower grade, they would be tempted to inflate the grade to get the desired outcome. And as was discussed earlier, statements by the supervisor such as, "a lower score may mean they will not be hired for a job", may also mean possible inflated scores.

How is the Role of the University Supervisor in Assessment Perceived by the Cooperating Teacher?

Here again, cooperating teachers noted the brief visits and possibly unrealistic perceptions from the supervisors when only observing student teachers a few times. The supervisors have an opportunity to observe, evaluate and grade a snap shot and not the entire picture of the student teacher's participation. This is viewed as a limitation by the cooperating teachers when considering the role of supervisors assigning grades to student teachers. Bob shares his view that the supervisor should have little input into the student teacher's final grade. He doesn't believe that 3 supervisor observations provide a realistic picture of the student teacher's overall performance. Cooperating teachers sometimes described the snap shot as the "dog and pony show". Because they experienced student teachers that put all their eggs in one basket for the best lesson they could teach while the supervisor was watching but when the supervisor was not there the cooperating teacher observed considerably less effort in the student teacher's participation.

In that three (university supervisor's 3 observations) I don't think supervisors should really have a whole lot to do with the student teacher's grade personally, other than what input they might have from their conferences that they have at the University and so forth. But as far as their three times of observation in the classroom, I don't think you base a grade on that very well. (cooperating teacher, Bob)

The supervisor comes in and he comes into a planned lesson. I have literally had student teachers that were not cutting it. They were not doing their best. They were not doing their work. Not making materials for their classes, and I lowered their grade because of it. But the day they get the planned class with the supervisor coming in I mean we have things on the wall. We have homemade puppets. We have outfits that we wear with our lesson. I mean, it was very, very

obvious that sometimes they will go to the extreme to impress the supervisor.
(cooperating teacher, Lori)

Spending more time and more visits at the student teacher's school placement by the supervisor was a recommendation stated by a number of the cooperating teachers. The cooperating teachers saw increased contacts with the student teacher and cooperating teacher as a plus and an opportunity for better communication. Planning plenty of time for conferencing was critical in the eyes of the cooperating teacher in order to provide consistent feedback and congruency between the cooperating teacher and the supervisor.

If they're (the supervisors) going to assess them then they need to be out more to see them teach. But that seems impossible because they have work at the college. And I know they will come out more to see students if they're having a problem with somebody, and we need to wham them to give them a jump start. I know they will come out that's not a problem but I think whether they are a good or mediocre teacher or someone that needs a push, they still need to be out. Otherwise they are relying on us and I don't mind that but I don't think it's fair to the student teacher. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

Then the supervisor needs to spend the time with the cooperating teacher and sit down with them and say, "What have you observed? What do you see? What's bad? What's good? How do we need to help or step back or whatever?" And that's not happening enough, and the reason it's not happening enough is not because the supervisors don't want to, they don't have the time. I mean, every year it's the same story. These supervisors come in and it's like, "Oh my God, I've got this amount of teachers and they're spread across all over the countryside. I can't be in this building and take my time and sit down and go from one to the other. I have to finish with you in 15 minutes because I have to be in Belleview, and when I get done there I got to be at Baldwin Area, and then I have to go to Winfield." (cooperating teacher, Bob)

Mary and Jean saw the supervisor's role more as a gatekeeper, keeping student teachers on track. Bob clarified the supervisor's role as one where they should check to confirm that student teachers are getting ample teaching opportunities and making evaluations based on the assessments. Bob also viewed the supervisor's role as an

observer, watching for any glaring problems and making sure the student teacher is being recognized. He provided the metaphor supervisors are like cheerleaders.

Another important role of the supervisor is that of liaison between the university and the cooperating teacher. Creating an environment that allows the student teacher to feel comfortable sharing their feelings and concerns was also viewed as an important role. Journaling was noted among the triad members as a method of communicating feelings and concerns with the supervisor.

They are sort of the liaison between the university and the cooperating teacher. So you're hoping that you have a supervisor that the student teacher can go to, that they can feel comfortable with, that they can give their problems that they are having in the classroom or with the cooperating teacher and get that support because that's the only support system. So you're hoping that supervisor will be there for his student teacher, definitely, and that will come through in the grade. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Although not all of the cooperating teachers' responses may be interpreted as a direct role in assessment, behaviors at the heart of their stories most often affect assessment outcomes. Listed below are the roles of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors in regards to assessment as perceived by the cooperating teachers.

Student Teachers

1. Self evaluation; during post observation conferences and the formative/summative competency form
2. Implement changes to future lessons as identified by previous observations
3. Honesty during self-evaluation
4. Solicit feedback/ Communication with cooperating teacher
5. Complete assignments

Cooperating Teacher

1. Provide feedback to student teacher/ Communication
2. Competing the formative/summative competency form
3. Provide grade input
4. Honest evaluations
5. Being accountable

University Supervisor

1. Observations
2. Assigning requirements
3. Provide feedback/ Conferencing
4. Liaison

How is the Purpose of Assessment Viewed by Cooperating Teachers?

Cooperating teachers declared the following when asked how they viewed the purpose of assessment; to improve student teacher performance, provide documentation to future employers, identify strengths and weaknesses, and calculate grades.

Assessment during the student teaching experience was viewed as a way to make self evaluation a habit for the rest of your career. Understanding the benefit of assessing your performance on a class by class, day by day basis was important for the cooperating teachers to instill in their student teachers. The message from the cooperating teachers was to continuously implement assessment methods to your daily regimen because we can always become more effective teachers. The assessment tools were noted as vital to the integrity and process of grading. Employers request forms of assessment to help compare applicants. Assessment was viewed as a way to inform student teachers what levels they are currently performing and what they need to do to improve.

Just to make people better. To help them, not to just find their faults but to find where you are strong and if you're strong in something then you know that's good so you have to work in your other parts that you're not strong in and that helps you to find parts to work on. (cooperating teacher, Lori)

Well it's obviously to make them better teachers. To get them to see what it takes to be in the teaching profession. Because we can not be the same kind of teacher your entire career. I think that you would be terribly bored, frustrated, maybe we get cenacle and angry about things. Teaching doesn't stay the same the

whole way through your career so you've always got to change, you've got look at your teaching, you've got to evaluate yourself all of the time and that's what it does for them. It says this is a process this is a continuing process. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

Well, there are several. Certainly they're a tool to help the student teacher grow and see what they are doing right, etc. But it's also in a more practical way a tool to help what grade does this teacher get and allow employers to see what they've accomplished. It's one of the easiest ways for employers to see what they've accomplished during their student teaching other than a course, the recommendation, and the portfolios. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Cooperating Teacher Perceptions of Factors that affect Assessment

The 3 most common responses from the cooperating teachers when asked what factors have an impact on the assessment of student teachers were; the student teacher's attitude, the need for communication and consistency between the university supervisor and cooperating teacher, and how well the university had prepared students prior to the student teaching experience. Cooperating teachers know all too well what the outcome is for a student teacher when they have a good attitude and when they have a poor attitude. Attitude affects everything about the student teacher's performance including; active participation throughout the school day, interaction with students and faculty, completion of responsibilities, etc. A poor attitude on the part of the student teacher was interpreted as a nightmare for the cooperating teacher. This is something that is difficult to change and would certainly affect the outcome of the various assessments.

Yes, some of them get a little bit upset because again they think they know it all and that they are perfect and can do it better than anyone else. They're the kind that really need to sit down and say, "Let's backtrack here because that's not the real world". We've had some that argue with you back and forth and say, "no, no this is right this is the way it has to be done". And we'll go out and try it and it doesn't work. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

I think the students are going through with "just get this over with." And a lot of times too I find with student teachers, and especially since I usually take them their second placement and they are ready to graduate, they are just like any other kid when it gets close to the end of the school year. They're pretty well shutting down and I don't think they are giving 100% of their energy. (cooperating teacher, Judy)

The last 2 kids I had from the university I don't necessarily know if they were directly involved with a sport they were just a student, and that was nice and they had this work ethic. And they wanted to be successful teachers. So yea just their personality or attitude coming into it, I often think you can do a personality assessment as soon as they come in and weed them out and say you aren't going to make a good teacher you need to go to engineering. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

Tina felt confused when she would encounter differences in expectations for student teacher responsibilities. Student teachers would indicate to the cooperating teacher that they were responsible for a specific amount of lessons which was confusing to the cooperating teachers that read guidelines stating differently. Although the student teaching handbook provides guidelines on progressively assigning student teachers classes from part of the day to full days everyday beginning after the 5th week, the university provides the flexibility to assign varying numbers of assigned classes depending on student teacher's readiness and preparation time.

Yes and sometimes how many classes they (student teachers) should have, how many they should be teaching even that should be said, OK this is the maximum they can have, this is the minimum they can have. Because some of us maybe don't give them enough, because we're afraid to pile up the work because they have so much other work. Some of them say here is your first day here's your classes and go and have coffee the rest of the time and they do just leave them. But that's not fair to the student teacher. So maybe we need to have the criteria set for us so that our criteria for them could be the same. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

Cooperating teachers did praise the university for preparing the student teachers well before beginning their placement. The sense that I got was that when the student

teachers are well prepared, the cooperating teachers feel good about sharing their classroom. The cooperating teachers are more apt to designate greater responsibilities to someone that demonstrates the maturity and skills to teach students effectively. I found an excellent question that was asked to a cooperating teacher by a university supervisor and that was, "If you (the cooperating teacher) left the student teacher in complete control of your class for 2 weeks do you think you would come back to the same managed class that you left and would the students have learned what was planned for?" This provides an excellent indicator as to what performance level the student teacher is working.

I think the college prepares these kids enough that they are ready for these assessments. I really do. I think somebody up there knows what they are really doing preparing these kids. It's amazing to me some of the ones that really come in here and the amount of work and determination. Their innate ability to relate to the kids and be creative, oh, it just boggles my mind. (cooperating teacher, Lori)

I would like to say that my student teachers come very well prepared to teach. They bring a lot of information, especially of reading, because they are Reading minors and that's really the only thing I see. They know a lot. (cooperating teacher, Sue)

Judy notes that it is important for student teachers to come each day prepared and not try to wing it or think they do not have to plan because they will be teaching first graders. Cooperating teachers pointed out that the more experiences that teacher education students can have with teaching younger students, prior to student teaching, the more comfortable and prepared the student teachers are when they get to the student teaching semester. Exhibiting preparation skills and the maturity that comes with a history of teaching experiences will have a positive affect on assessment outcomes.

And the university is better prepared, but they still need to get those students out in their sophomore and junior year into the classroom more than they do. Now I know there's tremendous time constraints with credits that they have to earn and where's this time coming from, but they need to do it. These kids come in for their student teaching having spent a few hours doing observation, and if

they were unlucky enough to let them get a teacher who didn't let them do anything they are sitting in the back of the classroom falling asleep basically. (cooperating teacher, Bob)

I think some people are natural teachers so this is not hard for them. They've had experiences all along. I think it's good that they get kids out more than they use to when I was in school. They need to have more and more of those so that when they are thrown in here for 6 weeks if they haven't had a lot of chances I think that 6 week participation thing they have or 3 weeks I think that is really good. They do that the year before they student teach. (cooperating teacher, Christine)

Jean points out an indicator of a good prospective teacher and that is to question the incoming freshmen coming into a teacher education program and ask them what youth programs they have ever volunteered with. It would be especially beneficial to ask students coming into an educational program that may be unsure of their chosen discipline. It may help them to decide early on whether teaching is a good choice for them. I heard this belief more than once from cooperating teachers and university supervisors.

I know I have said to colleagues if I had my way we wouldn't even consider someone to be a teacher unless before or while they were in college they demonstrated an interest in working with children by coaching little league, soccer, basketball and stuff like that, helping out with swim teams and have they been doing this since they were in junior high. In junior high were they helping out elementary and a high school kid were they helping junior high kids. If they haven't been doing that kind of stuff I am not sure if they're the right person to be a teacher. Because when there is that interest they're a natural. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

Obtaining help from the cooperating teacher and university supervisor is critical in the growth of a student teacher. If the cooperating teacher or supervisor does not spend enough time with the student teacher or does not give adequate feedback it would be difficult for the student teacher to gain an understanding of their strengths and

weaknesses. As well student teachers will not learn to change their teaching behaviors in order to become a more effective teacher.

There was one time the university supervisor, when one of our student teachers that didn't want to get real involved, I worried about that a little bit I didn't think that she was very helpful. But I think we covered the gap. I don't know how many student teachers this supervisor had to supervise, so maybe I'm not even being fair, but she didn't spend very much time with my student teacher and there was not a lot of information forthcoming about what needed to be done next or what kind of, I think if I had had a student teacher that was in real trouble it might have been a real problem but then maybe she would have been around more, maybe she just had other students that needed a lot more help. I don't know. Just more interest or more communication. It's only happened once in 10 or 12 student teachers. (cooperating teacher, Sue)

Perhaps how much the cooperating teacher is there to help assist them. Maybe the cooperating teacher is making some sort of evaluation of them and not yet giving them any tools to help them with that. Okay, "Your tools are really horrible." But not perhaps offering some sort of suggestion. Or even the supervisor, if they go to the supervisor and they say, "Look, this is what I need to do" and they are not getting any sort of help from that.

The only other difficulty would be if you had a bad rapport with the supervisor. I think that really has a lot to do with it as well. Let's say you're having a tough time assessing the student teacher and the student teacher is not getting or you're not able to communicate it to the student teacher and you're not getting any support from the supervisor. But other than that I think the way things work now I think it's pretty good unless you're having a bad connection with your student teacher. (cooperating teacher, Donna)

Establishing a rapport is important between the triad members, especially between the student teacher and cooperating teacher and between the student teacher and university supervisor. Not "getting along" as expressed by a few cooperating teachers can affect the assessment outcome as well as present a very uncomfortable situation. None of the cooperating teachers admitted to having a personality conflict with a student teacher but they did admit to the reality that it does happen. They also determined that in some ways the conflict would probably have an affect on the assessment outcomes.

Some people don't get along with their student teacher or don't get along with their coop and that can affect people's grades. And that's not quite fair

either. Another factor that affects the student teacher's grades is personalities. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

Christine was hopeful that if a clash was present between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher, that the supervisor would take that into account when determining the student teacher's grade.

Bob observed a few of his student teachers becoming stressed when the supervisor came to observe them. This added tension felt by the student teachers had an impact on the delivery of the lesson and Bob noticed that when student teachers felt nervous they chose to revert to a lecture style of teaching because it was within the student teacher's comfort level. This led to the assessment of a very average lesson taught by the student teacher.

Judy experienced differences in student teaching competency between males and females. She claimed that male student teachers were much more inhibited and uncomfortable coming into a forum with first graders. She also noted that the males had tendencies to discover that teaching elementary children is not what they really wanted to do. She explained that their comfort level or lack of it had an impact on the assessments that they were part of. She even got to the point where she requested that she not be given a male student teacher for a few semesters.

As stated earlier, many of the cooperating teachers were unclear when determining the differences between the rubric levels of distinguished, proficient, basic and unsatisfactory from the competency form. Some had difficulties just getting past the term "distinguished" to describe a student teacher. This descriptor should be intended for those teachers in an elite category with years of experiences, recognitions and notoriety. Judy felt she would not describe herself as distinguished and she could not see a student

teacher receiving the level of distinguished. Tina was concerned that if a student teacher scored a “distinguished” it would be interpreted that someone had reached the highest level and would not need to continue to grow or improve from that particular criterion. Tina suggested that the cooperating teachers meet and contribute examples of the behaviors that would define the 4 different levels of each competency criteria. She felt the rubric levels were vague, unclear and left up to subjective reasoning.

Another factor mentioned that affected assessment as stated by the cooperating teachers was the relatively short time period of 7 ½ weeks for each of the two back-to-back placements that student teachers experience. Bob, Judy, Tina and Donna all commented that student teaching at the same placement for the whole semester allowed the student teacher plenty of time to get acclimated, become comfortable, witness growth and improvement. In contrast, the 7 ½ week placement may not give some student teachers an opportunity to demonstrate growth and improvement because they are just getting to a point of feeling comfortable, learning names, building relationships, understanding their role as a teacher. Although the cooperating teachers noted that in their own student teaching experiences they were assigned a 15 week placement and preferred it, they also were not sure as a cooperating teacher whether they wanted to give up their classroom for 15 weeks or mentor a student teacher for that length of time either.

Cooperating teachers held a unique perspective due to their position as a mentor in the field, the close relationship they formed with the student teacher and in many cases a collegial relationship with the university supervisor. It is interesting to note that although the cooperating teacher is the most influential person to the student teacher and the cooperating teacher works with the student teacher many more hours than the

supervisor, the supervisor continues to possess the majority of control over the assessments and determination of the final grade. Cooperating teachers seemed accepting of their role in assessment but were eager to share their views for changes in the current assessment plan. Cooperating teachers stated that at one time in the past 5 years they had attended an informational meeting for cooperating teachers to share the student teaching assessments and expectations of the university. This meeting was intended to be informative and provide a forum to ask questions. This particular yearly meeting for new cooperating teachers would not be the appropriate forum to suggest changes to the current assessment plan. A meeting with cooperating teachers, supervisors and a representation of student teachers all from the same discipline would be more appropriate.

Chapter 6

Perceptions from University Supervisors Regarding Assessment Practices

The following chapter will discuss the perceptions of five university supervisors regarding assessment during the student teaching experience. University supervisors voluntarily shared their experiences and feelings toward the various assessment methods, the purpose of assessment, the roles of each triad member, and factors that affect assessment. Many common themes were found among the university supervisors experiences along with their feedback regarding assessment practices.

The university supervisors were interviewed in my office which was private and quiet. The university supervisors shared detailed experiences that they had with student teachers and cooperating teachers throughout their career as a supervisor. Every student teacher is an individual case working under a different cooperating teacher and teaching in a unique school setting. Because of the differences in student teachers and placements, the supervisors shared a number of interesting stories. All of the supervisors could clearly articulate what their role was as supervisor and what expectations the university required of them. The university's teacher education philosophy, policies and practices coupled with personal experiences had molded the supervisors' thoughts and views for effective assessment practices. The following chapter reveals the views and perceptions regarding assessment of the Riverview University supervisors; Tom, Denny, Terry, Sara and Kenda.

How do University Supervisors Comprehend the Various Assessment Methods?

The most immediate response from the university supervisors when asked what methods of assessment were used during the student teaching experience was observation and conferencing. University supervisors are required to complete 3 formal observations with a follow-up conference including a written analysis of the supervisor's observations (Appendix B). The written observation includes a short list of criteria with a rubric rating and a section for anecdotal comments. The student teacher is assigned a grade and all 3 of the triad members are required to sign the document. Copies are retained by the supervisor, the student teacher, the cooperating teacher and the university's Director of Student Teaching. Other forms of assessment discussed by the supervisors included the Formative/Summative Assessment Form (Appendix C), PDE 430 Form (Appendix D), video taping, journaling, and letter of recommendation.

Observation/Conferencing Techniques/Written Observation

Although the written observation form was structured, each supervisor approached completing the form with their own philosophy. Some of the supervisors felt it was important to narrate first on the observation form a list of comments that the student teacher needed to improve and others narrated first the positive aspects of the student teacher's lesson. Each had a personal rationale for their method but most importantly, all believe their method is helpful to the student. It was interesting to hear how Tom changed the typical terminology used to critique a lesson and chose what he perceived as less negative terms.

On the right side, I put my, I guess you could call them my pluses or minuses. I used to call them strengths or weaknesses. I found the student teachers did not like that. I went with pluses or minuses and they do not like that. I do commendations on the top and recommendations. Typically recommendations are just that. I would like you to think about this. I will give them something that I want them to think about as they are planning their lesson. It is not the same as a directive. I tell the student teachers that. Directives are, I don't want you to do this anymore or I want you to do this. This is way off, but if a student teacher actually was hitting a student or something, that would be a directive. I don't want you to hit a student anymore or embarrass a student in front of the rest of the group. That type of thing. My recommendations are the questions posed to them and have you thought of different ways of doing this? (university supervisor, Tom)

Of course I used the standard observation form. At the bottom the two most important things I put are first of all the words that I feel that they could actually improve upon or suggestions as what they can do and then the second thing is what are you doing that is commendable? I basically make my form in such a way that I deal with what they have to improve first. I always want to end with things that I have seen that they have done positively. I try to make sure that I get as many of those positives. (university supervisor, Denny)

At the top of the right-hand side I write positive recommendations. And usually I have more recommendations, accommodations, but the top are positives and at the bottom are recommendations of how to improve. Once the lesson is observed then we conference then I ask the students. (university supervisor, Terry)

Many student teachers will become anxious during a supervisor's observation.

Student teachers understand that the university supervisor assigns each observation a grade and that they have only a few observations to prove their capabilities. Student teaching is a high stakes experience where student teachers provide brief snap shots to demonstrate their skills to the university supervisors and a few short weeks to demonstrate to the cooperating teacher that they are an "A" student teacher. As recommended by one supervisor, announcing the first visit might provide an opportunity for the student teacher to emotionally prepare themselves for the observation. Once the student teacher has experienced their first supervisor's observation, ensuing observations

that are unannounced may not be as stressful. Unannounced visits help to decrease the opportunity for the “dog and pony” show or a lesson that the student teacher puts everything into but is a much higher quality than the lessons that the supervisor does not observe. As will be discussed later, due to the university supervisor having a schedule that is spread so thin, it is very difficult to commit to a specific time to observe a student teacher.

After we do our initial kind of hello checkup and make sure everything is okay, I like to tell them when I am coming the first time so that I know they will be a little more comfortable. (university supervisor, Tom)

I would say as far as the assessment, the observation is definitely the highest anxiety. The first one and that is definitely the reason why I announce it. So that they know that I am coming and that they can be prepared for it. In all reality I try to find something that I feel is not going to be overly technical or difficult for them to do. To be honest with you as a supervisor, the number one thing that I want to do, I want to set them up for success.

From here on out, then you will not know when I am coming. My rationale for that is two fold. First of all, I want you to teach your best at all times. Secondly, if I tell you I am coming and you prepare for me and I can't make it which has happened many times for me, then that breaks trust. In other words, is he going to come, is he not going to come. (university supervisor, Denny)

Terry approaches the visitations just slightly differently, she will inform the student teachers that they may invite her to one of the classes that they will be teaching and she will make every effort to come. Again, this allows each student that one class that they can plan for the university supervisor's observation.

Sara likes to observe a student teacher over a longer period of time. She will stay to observe an hour or longer. She likes to watch a student teacher so long that they may forget that she is there and then the observation becomes more realistic. Remaining in the educational setting for an extended period of time would provide more opportunities

to observe how the student teacher manages transitions, downtimes and just isolated incidences.

It is interesting to note that 4 out of the 5 university supervisors all referred to an intuitive sense that they possessed to be able to recognize “good teaching” techniques and methods just by observing. They claimed their observation evaluation would look the same with or without the use of any assessment tool with prescribed criteria. The years of teaching, attending scholarly programs and supervising had embedded in their minds the picture of “good teaching”. This view was shared by the cooperating teachers as well.

University supervisors noted that they look for classes to observe when the student teacher will not be teaching the next period so that time is available immediately after for conferencing. As stated by the student teachers, immediate conferencing is important. The lesson is fresh in their minds and less is forgotten if they have the conference immediately after the observation as opposed to another day or even at the end of the same day.

After I am done with the observation, I try as soon as possible.... this is something I do when I plan my visits, I try to go and see the student teacher and maybe he or she is teaching third period and then the co-op is doing fourth period. So then I can talk with the student teacher when they are not teaching. (university supervisor, Tom)

Time limitations. Another one I can think of, especially in our field, students are teaching and we go to observe a class and sometimes we're not able to conference immediately, and that bothers me because I think immediate feedback is so important. We schedule a time either after school, and sometimes it can't be that day, for whatever reason, and the longer it seems we go I look at my form and when we do finally conference it's like you're going to have to help me remember this because I've already had two or three observations in the meantime. So that's one problem I would like to see handled differently, but I don't know how we can do it. (university supervisor, Terry)

Supervisors have personal routines and philosophies that they like to follow during the post-observation conference. They begin with inquiry that solicits self reflection from the student teacher pertaining to the delivery of the lesson, student behaviors, student understanding of concepts, lesson content, etc. They believe that student teachers need to be able to self reflect by analyzing their lesson and offering appropriate suggestions for improvement. The supervisors would like to hear specific pieces of analysis before they need to interject with their own suggestions.

Along with self reflection, supervisors will ask student teachers to assign a grade to their observed lesson that would reflect their level of performance. Most supervisors found that the student teachers' ratings of themselves were lower than what the supervisor had assigned to them.

I worked a lot with the cooperating teachers, so we have a feel for one another, but we try to have the student teacher do most of the talking. We ask pointed questions where they have to reflect, but we want them to actually recognize their strengths or weaknesses, and we just give input. (university supervisor, Terry)

First of all, I try to go some place where we have privacy. I take my computer and I put it on the screen and the first thing that I normally ask the student teacher is, "Give me an idea of what you thought. What did you think?" I have said to them if you were going to grade yourself from a 3.0 to a 4.0, using my grade scale and by the way my grading scale is more distinctive than the universities and it is right on the bottom of their individual grade sheet because they know exactly what I am asking. I said based on a 3.0 to 4.0, what would you give yourself? Now if I felt that it ranged into the C level, I may say from a 2.0 but I am not going to play mind games with them. (university supervisor, Denny)

Going back to the processes where I conduct the conference, right after the conference we discuss what the student thought they did well and what they would do differently then I do share with them some of my ideas and some ways that it could be done a little bit better or more effectively. I always ask the student teachers after we're done discussing this where they see themselves, and sometimes they say what do you mean? I say, "Well, if you had to grade yourself would you give yourself an A, B, or C, above average, average, below average?" And it's interesting to hear their reactions...More often than not, we're on the

same page. But sometimes students, if anything, students grade themselves harder. (university supervisor, Terry)

The 3-way conference is held with all of the triad members where reflections are shared, feedback is provided and any questions pertaining to expectations can be addressed. Before conducting the final 3-way conference, Tom recommends conferencing alone with the cooperating teacher first. This way the supervisor and the cooperating teacher can share their observations and work towards an agreement on the student teachers' performance and grade in order to avoid any conflicting feedback during the 3-way conference. If the cooperating teacher and supervisor were to disagree in the 3-way conference, it would send a very poor message to the student teacher and could cause possible hard feelings. Rothman (1981) investigated behaviors cooperating teachers believed most and least effective by university supervisors and found that cooperating teachers most value having conferences with the university supervisor. She concluded that conflicts between the two often resulted in competition for control between the cooperating teacher and university supervisor.

At the end of the observations the co-op and I kind of look at where we see the student teacher, I like us to be on the same page before we bring the student teacher in. Then we bring the student teacher in for a three way conference. Then we talk. I don't want myself and the co-op to be battling while the student teacher is there and then the student teacher says, "I saw my co-op has me at this and why are you giving me this grade or you had me at this, but my co-op is doing this? Why are you doing that?" I just think sometimes the co-op is more open and willing to discuss things when it is just the two of us. Then we bring the student teacher in for the final conference. (university supervisor , Tom)

Tom remarks that the supervisor's observation form may be a more reliable assessment tool if it was structured more objectively. He believes that isolating certain

aspects of teaching each observation would help to focus the student teacher and communicate more concrete information to the cooperating teacher.

I would like to see the observation form, the one that we fill out, I would like that to be a little bit more objective. I don't think it is ever going to be totally objective, but maybe these are things that we look at the first time that we come out and concentrate on those. Then our second visit, these are things that work. So that we make sure that all of the areas that we are looking at are addressed at some time during the three times that we go out to see them. Sometimes we end up looking at the same things all the way. I know sometimes the co-ops or student teachers will say well I have myself at this grade, but they are not really sure why. I think we need to all be on the same page with that. If we can make the observation that we do more objective, I think that would increase its reliability in terms of making it more valid for everybody. (university supervisor, Tom)

The Formative and Summative Competency Form

The competency assessment form (Appendix C) is completed separately by the cooperating teacher and the student teacher, but not by the university supervisor. Student teachers are assigned to 2 different placements for 7 ½ weeks each over the course of one semester. The competency form is completed 4 times, the formative assessment is completed halfway through the first and second placement and the summative assessment is completed at the end of both placements. However, it is the same form just completed at different times during the placement. The university supervisor collects the forms at each interval. At the midpoint university supervisors are looking for large differences in each criterion between the cooperating teachers' rating and the student teachers' rating. When a large discrepancy is noticed or if the student teacher is consistently rating themselves higher than the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor will call a conference with both to share views and attempt to come to an understanding. After the summative assessment is completed the university supervisor will calculate a grade based

on an average of the cooperating teacher's scores for each criterion. Tom clarifies that the competency form is a graded assessment form that is intended to be used for written verification of the student teacher's final grade. However supervisors are not required to base the final student teachers' grade only on that particular grade. Tom views it as a base or starting point for the student teacher's final grade and that the supervisor has the discretion of agreeing with the competency form grade or raising the student teacher's final grade based on other assessments.

Tom was on the committee to develop the formative/summative competency form and although he is in favor of its purpose he believes it still needs revisions. Tom states, "I don't think it addresses all of the areas. I think that by making it specific to the particular discipline, it would improve its value."

Well, for me personally, I think the form that we have, that was specific to our discipline. I think it was a much more accurate depiction of what student teachers were being asked to do and being expected to do. The form kind of became generic because they use it for every domain, every discipline. I think if I could change it to something to where I would think it was better; I think it should be more specific to the particular discipline. (university supervisor, Tom)

Supervisors see the form as difficult to interpret and that not all cooperating teachers rate the criteria accurately but instead rate lower due to personal philosophies. Hartsough, Perez & Swain (1998) Likert-type ratings rarely provide the rater of teacher performance with standards for the 4- or 5- point scales used. Raters must decide for themselves the meaning of such terms as often and regularly. Ratings of the same performance will differ because some raters are hard and others easy. Tom declares the following about the competency form, "I would be surprised if any two co-ops or student teachers or university supervisors view it the same way."

I think it is hard too when the co-ops look at it or the student teacher. Sometimes they are just overwhelmed by it. They are not really sure what makes someone proficient from basic and the verbs and the adjectives used to distinguish no pun intended, between the two of them. It makes them hard to decide where they are at. I have had co-op teachers tell me when they fill out the form, that very often they fill out the form knowing that they want the student teacher to make improvements the second time. So a lot of times, they do not always put the student teacher where they see them, because they want to make sure that the student teacher improves or because they look at that and say if I put them at distinguished right now, he is not going to get any better. This is something I think was a good point. I don't know who came up with this. If you see a student as unsatisfactory or distinguished, as a cooperating teacher you need to document why that is. (university supervisor, Tom)

That is interesting that you would bring that up because I had an example with the phone call from the young lady. Everything that I got and every observation that I had, the young lady was doing A work. My comments from the co-op was A work. Yet when I did the evaluation and did the competency form a B. I talked to the student teacher and I said I am a little bit surprised about this. She said he has a problem with distinguished. He said he does not feel that anybody is distinguished. Consequently, she suffered as a result of that. Had I based her grade basically on that, the young lady would have gotten a B and she did not deserve a B. (university supervisor, Denny)

One change that Denny expressed very emphatically was the option of checking “Not Applicable” on any criteria listed on the competency form. He has experienced cooperating teachers that will assign student teachers the score of basic only because the student teacher did not have any opportunity to demonstrate this competency and there was no other option for the cooperating teacher. It becomes quite disappointing to a student teacher after only 4 weeks in the placement and they are assigned a basic score to a competency they are not in a position to fulfill.

One suggestion that Tom made is to introduce students to the competency form prior to the student teaching experience so that they have a better understanding of what is expected of them. Sara's concerned that student teachers are so worried about understanding the competency form and completing the criteria by a due date that she

sees student teachers being motivated with an externally (extrinsically) driven model and decreasing their internal (intrinsic) motivation.

It is my contention that cooperating teachers would benefit by meeting with university supervisors from their specific major to clarify the form and answer questions concerning the intent and outcome of the competency form. I found that many cooperating teachers did not know that the form was graded. One cooperating teacher said that if they did know how the competency form was graded then they may be inclined to assign the scores that when averaged would come out to the grade that they wanted the student teacher to receive. I would suggest meeting in small groups that represent the major, because I think people would be more inclined to contribute in smaller groups, as they did in this study one-on-one.

PDE 430 Form

The PDE 430 Form (Appendix D) is to serve as a permanent record of a student teacher's professional performance evaluation during the student teaching practicum, based on specific criteria. The form is a state requirement of all student teacher candidates. The form must be completed for each student teacher twice during a minimum 12 week experience. Student teachers in this study were evaluated at the end of each 7 ½ week placement. An overall rating and justification must also be included in each category. The four categories to be rated include: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instructional delivery, and professionalism. Only supervisors mentioned the PDE 430 form most likely due to the fact that they are the only ones to complete the form. Student teachers receive a copy of the form at the end of their

placement but it would seem unlikely that they would view this as any type of meaningful assessment because the supervisors react to the form as unnecessary paperwork.

From the reactions of the supervisors, the PDE 430 form was a formality and a method to indicate on record whether the student teacher achieved what the state required as a minimal level. Students had to achieve a score of four out of twelve in order to be accepted. My hunch is if student teachers did not achieve a minimum of four they would not receive certification and most likely be required to repeat the student teaching semester. Tom expresses his frustration at the lack of initiative on the part of the state to train and inform those using the form. His recollection of how different forms had been sent to the state included everything from checkmarks and very little narrative to 16 pages of narrative.

One of the problems with the PDE 430 forms is we have been asked to administer the PDE form without any type of training and without any type of information other than here is the form and what you need to do is do it. What I am saying is we don't even know what the form is supposed to do other than we are supposed to fill out the form. The form is broken down into four areas. The student teacher needs to make a four out of twelve. What we are saying is that a student teacher in order to pass the PDE has to have a 25% (SIC) on this form. You have the possibility of earning up to twelve points. You have to earn four in order for you to be passing and competent. With no disrespect to the PDE, how do they know that I know how to do this? How do they know that I am doing it the same as the person from other teacher education colleges or whoever else is doing these? What they are doing is, they are saying I understand that the practice exam was not doing it. I agree with that. Whoever is doing this form, I think for it to be truly valid, the same person from PDE has to come and evaluate every person and use the form the same. I have seen where we had an example; I don't know what university it was. It may have been Greenview, where the form was like sixteen pages by the time the person was done with it. We have had other people where all you have to do is check it off and say you got it and off you go. (university supervisor, Tom)

It's another form of assessment that the state is requiring, but it parallels what we're already doing, and it's just an additional piece of paperwork that we

need to do. Honestly, I think if the state would look at our competency form I don't think we would need to do it, but it is very, very time consuming.
(university supervisor, Terry)

Video-taping

Video-taping was viewed as a valuable assessment tool for student teachers to self-evaluate themselves. Some disciplines require the student teachers to video-tape a lesson and then complete a self-evaluation. Others give their student teachers an option. And yet others do not require the completion of a video-tape evaluation due to some of the districts policy of absolutely no pictures or video-taping. Some schools require that the students from the class to be video-taped must take home a permission slip to be signed by a parent and returned to the school. It becomes problematic when there are children in the class whose parents did not give permission to be video taped.

I think that a videotaping is an extremely valuable tool in assessment. A video says this is it honey. I have a very specific rubric for my videotape. I want them to analyze voice dynamics. I want them to analyze their management. I want them to take their goals, objectives and standards and understand not only the strategies and the methodologies of how they accomplish that, but I want them to analyze sudden response. It is a big thing. They will write in their reflections, "I did not realize that I only spoke to the left half of the classroom. I did not realize that I only call on students with their hand raised. I did not realize that I spoke too quiet." They don't see it and I have been telling them all semester long and they see it and it is like, "I get it." It is a real self analyzing tool. (university supervisor, Kenda)

Denny's approach to assessing the video tape reflections from the student teacher coincides with the recommendation of a student teacher. Earlier a student teacher recommended that the self reflection of the video tape should be evaluated on the basis of accurately analyzing specific teacher behaviors as opposed to critiquing the actual lesson delivery. Denny implements this practice. It would appear from the student teacher

interviews that not all of the supervisors that require video taping critique the student teachers' accuracy in self reflection.

Yes and that is one thing that I really try to take the pressure off of them by saying to them, "I am not going to evaluate your lesson. I am going to evaluate how you evaluate your lesson." In fact, I had a girl call me last placement and she said, "I did a terrible job teaching when I video myself. Should I do it again?" I said, "No." I want to see what your reaction is to how you taught. I said if you feel that you did a terrible job, tell me that you did that and tell me what you would do to improve. Boy she did. Quite frankly she got a 4.0 on her reflection on a terrible lesson. Because she saw what she was doing. That basically is my objective. (university supervisor, Denny)

Journaling

Journaling is a commonly used assessment tool completed by the student teachers. University supervisors view the journals as a self-reflective assessment tool. Each university supervisor approaches the journal with their own personal philosophy in regards to grading and content. Some of the supervisors choose specific aspects of teaching and the school culture to require student teachers to reflect on, other supervisors seek an inquiry style of self-reflection including a personal analysis, while others are non-specific and have no specific criteria.

We have talked about how that (the journal) can be used and how it should be used. We ask students to reflect on what is happening during the week. What are the types of things that you are doing or the types of things or interactions that you are seeing? Maybe they are having interactions with a student and it is a time for questioning. A lot of times I will have students ask me questions during their log that I will write answers to. (university supervisor, Denny)

Tom provides a suggestion to help students maintain accuracy in their reflections and a method to help students remember incidences that are noteworthy.

Keep an index card and a pen or something with you. When something happens, it could happen during the lesson, it could be a food fight in the cafeteria, you take out your card and you just write down fight in between sixth and seventh periods. Then at night you can then do the reflection part. I think it

really needs to be done on a daily basis; you need to do your reflection as soon as possible. (university supervisor, Tom)

Letter of Recommendation

The letter of recommendation was only mentioned by two university supervisors. Supervisors may not recall the letter of recommendation because it is typically completed by request and does not require a grade. The supervisor's analysis of the student teacher's performance during the experience is critical none the less to a prospective employer. As Denny explains he will inform student teachers if he will write a reference for them and he is not shy when it comes to rejecting a request to write a letter of reference if he does not feel he can provide a positive recommendation. He believes this is in the best interest of the student teacher that will need positive letters of recommendation. Kenda warns that it is important to be honest when writing recommendations in order to build a trust with district administrators that are searching for the best candidates.

I tell student teachers don't ask me for a letter of recommendation. I will tell you if I will give you one or not. Because I can write a letter of recommendation that will destroy you. I will not play mind games with you. If I don't feel that you are doing the job, I will not write you a letter of recommendation. I have held to that. Likewise, if I feel that you are doing an excellent job, I will do everything that I can in that letter of recommendation to see that you get the job. In fact I just had a phone call right before I came over where a student teacher gave my name and the person called me and just asked me a few questions and you can tell and I have had them say to me, based on what you said Denny we are gong to hire this person. Boy what a satisfying thing. You talk about goose bumps. I really get goose bumps. (university supervisor, Denny)

How is the Role of the Student Teacher in Assessment Perceived by the University Supervisor?

The role of the student teacher in assessment echoed by all of the university supervisors was self assessment and other roles that were described included identifying their strengths and weaknesses, as well as areas for growth. Tom adds that it is not only the student teacher's role to identify strengths and weaknesses in their teaching skills but to also offer behavior changes and then implement them. Tom prefers to have the student teacher assess their behaviors and continuously seek improvement as opposed to the student teacher perceiving they have achieved a pinnacle in teaching and contend there is no need for improvement. Some supervisors shared not only what they believed to be the student teachers active role but also what their role was not to include, such as offering a personal evaluation of their placement or justifying their own ineffective teaching with the excuse of external factors.

Well their assessment is internal. They are never to judge the cooperating teacher or the school district or the administrator or me. We have nightmare stories. Two kids in a Dunkin Donut talking about their co-ops and the principal in the next booth. For five years we did not have a student teacher in that building. I mean you just don't do that kind of thing. You keep your opinions to yourself. The assessment is internal. The assessment is, "do I really know enough to teach this?" The assessment is, "Do I know these kids well enough to know how to reach them?" The assessment is, "Did I have enough strategies in my backpack"? The assessment is always, always what do I need to do? If I feel ill prepared, then I had better spend more time planning and thinking through.

You have got to be able to get along with the teacher that you work with in the building and the administrators. That kind of stuff can't be measured on black and white paper, but it can definitely be seen and it can be heard about in conferences. (university supervisor, Kenda)

Well I think the student teacher's role in assessment has to be related to the self-reflection part, where they see themselves. I think their only role in the true assessment in terms of a grade and achievement is knowing what is expected and knowing where they need to be. I really don't think it is a student teacher's

role to assess themselves in terms of achievement as much as it is to assess themselves in terms of progress. Do I think I am getting better? Do I think I see myself moving towards an upper level? I think when you look at assessment, not achievement, but assessment is recognizing the need for change and then coming up with a program that is going to help to develop those changes. (university supervisor, Tom)

Tom shared later in the interview his concern for honesty from the student teachers. Do students really analyze their lesson as good, when it had weaknesses or are student teachers cautious to express their faults for fear of lowering their grade?

Give honest answers with true modifications on how we can do a better lesson. Even the best of lessons, we can tweak them a little bit and maybe find out that we can do a better job. It is interesting because I will have some student teachers who are very difficult or hard on themselves and they don't need to be. I will have some other student teachers who need to be harder on themselves and they are just like, "Oh, I thought everything went well." They did not really learn anything in that. I look at that as not really being self reflective. (university supervisor, Tom)

During the student teacher's self-assessment and being honest in identifying areas for growth it is important that they pull from their internal locus of control. As Tom describes below he would like to hear the student teacher look honestly at what behaviors they can change in order to change the conditions or behaviors of others. Since you only have control over your own behavior then look at what you can do better to improve the learning environment.

I find it difficult sometimes when I think student teachers take their own reactions to assessment and sometimes they will take it personally. The reason I am not doing well is because my co-op does not do this and the kids are this and it is snowing outside and it is Monday and I get nervous when you come to see me. There are some student teachers and I am going to say not everybody, but there are some that don't really internalize what they need to do a better job. That is one of the reaction parts that I like to talk to them about. What are the things that you are going to do, not me, not the co-op, not the kids, but what can you do to make this a better experience and make you a better teacher? (university supervisor, Tom)

Sara really looks at assessment from the student teachers point of view. We ask students to be reflective, critical, honest, yet by doing so we may be giving students the rope to hang themselves with. As with the second quote from Denny, his student teacher didn't want to look bad or show poor self-reflection so she agreed with the cooperating teacher that she performed at a C- level only to find out that the supervisor had her at a B+/A- and then she was not permitted to change her grade. Student teachers mentioned this same scenario a few times. Karen, a student teacher, assigned herself a B and others in the class that didn't do half of what she did gave themselves an A and she received the B and they received an A. And her teacher said to her, "you have just learned one of life's lessons". I could tell by Karen's tone that she was very angry and that she would never rate herself lower than an A again.

I really feel their role should be to take on more of the self-assessment, that self-reflective decision-making type of model that we have in place, and by in large we do a good job with that. Unfortunately, I don't know that that happens as much as it could or should. And certainly they need to learn at a minimum to accomplish the projects and turn them in on time, show up for work, do all of those types of benchmark types of external behaviors, and I think it's really hard for them. And maybe this is me, maybe this is my thing, that if you say to someone you have a grade resting on this how honest are they really going to be? How deeply self-reflective are they going to be about how that lesson went or how their unit looks or anything else if being honest might cost them points? So I really struggle with that. Again, this is my struggle, but I would like to think that part of the role of the student is to have them learn to become self-motivated and self-guided and learn to critique ones own self and be open to the thoughts of others. That would be nice, but I don't know how realistic it is. (university supervisor, Sara)

There again, sometimes the co-ops will give them more than they give themselves. The young lady whose co-op gave her a C-, do you know what she gave herself? A C-. I literally called her into my office and said to her, "Why did you do that?" She said well I did not want to overrate myself. I looked at her and I said, "Young lady do you honestly feel that you are a C- teacher?" She said, "I did not want to go against my co-op". I told her you are a B+ to an A- student teacher. She said, could I change it? I said, no I am sorry. (university supervisor, Denny)

How is the Role of the Cooperating Teacher in Assessment Perceived by the University Supervisor?

The one role in assessment that is required of the cooperating teachers by the university is the completion of the competency form. Other roles that are expected or understood to be implemented from previous standard practices include conferencing with the student teacher, providing feedback to the supervisor and providing input into the final grade. The competency form is an important document that falls on the responsibility of the cooperating teacher to complete. Tom would like cooperating teachers to include a narrative with specific events or cases that would help him to see why the student teacher has received specific ratings. He has received some forms that just have all distinguished checked and nothing else. He does mention that it was suggested to ask all cooperating teachers to include a narrative any time student teachers are rated as distinguished or basic.

Denny views the cooperating teachers' role as having input into the student teachers grade and being the expert in the class to give the student teacher feedback and suggestions. Terry and Tom agree that it is important that the cooperating teacher establishes a rapport with the student teacher as a colleague. Sometimes the student teacher does not feel as though they are on the same playing field as the cooperating teacher. She notes the cooperating teacher should be a mentor and should eventually by the end of the placement be a colleague to that student teacher and a resource person. This role doesn't speak directly to assessment but would have implications of affecting assessment outcomes if there was a lack of mentoring.

Sara remarks that the cooperating teacher has a responsibility to the children in the classroom. The cooperating teacher has the gatekeeper role to wean the student teacher into taking on more class load, as well as telling the student teacher when to step back because it's not working.

They are mentors. They make or break a student teacher. Their job in assessment is mentoring to guide, to direct, to encourage, to model so that the student teacher gains confidence. They gain knowledge. They get an understanding of students at that particular level. The knowledge is not only content, but all of those state standards and those kinds of things. They need to mentor them in strategies and diversities because there is just..... In assessment, it is giving them enough positive feedback so that they have confidence and they build that confidence. Enough reflection so that where they need to improve, they have the ability and the equipment to do that. (university supervisor, Kenda)

I think their role differs from cooperating teacher to cooperating teacher. I think they share the same role as the student teacher in terms of the assessing and finding out difficulties and ways to improve. I think that since the cooperating teacher sees the student teacher every day that they are at work, I think that they actually have a big role in trying to help that person get better and also in terms of the overall development achievement part. In terms of what their grade is, they have to have a lot of input. (university supervisor, Tom)

Beck and Kosnik (2002) found that student teachers value the following elements in a practicum experience: emotional support from their cooperating teacher; a peer relationship with their cooperating teacher; a degree of collaboration with their cooperating teacher; a degree of flexibility in teaching content and method; feedback on performance, provided it is given in an appropriate spirit and manner; a sound approach to teaching and learning in the placement classroom; and a heavy but not excessive workload.

Tom discusses the roles or responsibilities that cooperating teachers are asked to do that could affect assessment outcomes positively. By taking the perspective of a student teacher, Tom was able to describe the cooperating teacher behaviors that would

set the student teacher up for success. Suggestions made by Tom for the cooperating teacher included; exposing the student teacher early to responsibilities outside of teaching in the classroom, introduce the student teacher as an equal, avoid giving student teachers the worse classes early on, and do not assign the student teacher the same class after the co-op teaches. The tendency there is for the student teacher to copy the co-op.

Richardson and Koehler (1988) agree that student teachers simply model the behavior of their cooperating teachers and may not learn as much of the theoretical and general principles that would allow them to teach in a variety of classroom situations. These would not be considered assessments but certainly factors that could affect assessment outcomes.

How is the Role of the University Supervisor in Assessment Perceived by the University Supervisor?

Nolan and Hoover (2004) contend that the role of university supervisors and cooperating teachers is to guide the preservice teacher's formal entry into these real world classroom experiences, to provide scaffolding or developmentally appropriate support when necessary, to challenge each preservice teacher to grow as a professional, and then, to engage in assessment of these newly acquired skills. Kenda comments, in concurrence with Nolan and Hoover (2004), that her role is multi-dimensional. Each of her student teachers is different and each requires different attention. When she discovers a weakness in a student teacher, she implements a specific plan of action for that student teacher that will facilitate the improvement of their teaching skills or knowledge base or

understanding of the school system or student behaviors, etc. She admits that she has removed about a dozen student teachers from their placement that make a choice not to follow through with the action plan or just refuse to put in the effort.

Providing plenty of time to conference after the observation is planned by Kenda and most all of the supervisors interviewed. Most of the supervisors remarked that their responsibility is to provide the maximum quality feedback that is possible and to commit to however much time it takes to discuss those issues in a conference. As will be discussed later in factors that affect assessment, time is very limited among the supervisors that have great distances to travel to supervise.

Tom doesn't want student teachers to be overwhelmed with constructive criticism during the post observation conference. His role is to isolate some of the major points that need to be addressed and look to see improvement in those areas. Then shift to other areas for improvement during subsequent conferences. He admitted, as did the other supervisors, it is important to note especially in the beginning many positives during the feedback in order to raise their self-confidence. Denny observes the emotional nervousness too at the beginning of the placement and views his role as supervisor to put the student teacher at ease at the beginning.

The first observation there is a lot of anxiety. I don't know if they really know what to expect. That is the reason I really open up with what did you think and try to bring out some things that I felt they did pretty well because I actually get into the meat of what I saw during the observation. I really do see my role as a supervisor is to help them to be able to get beyond the point of that anxiety level. The second visit is much easier and much different because now they have a pretty good idea what I am looking for and they know that they are doing those things. They are less critical of themselves. (university supervisor, Denny)

Tom comments that the role of the supervisor ultimately is to decide the final grade. Tom states that it is the supervisor's role to gain input from the cooperating

teacher into the final grade, but as I have found from the data, the weight of the cooperating teacher's input varies from supervisor to supervisor. Tom sees his role as a stabilizer or bringing the grade into check if he believes the cooperating teacher's grade might be higher or lower than it should be based on the student teacher's performance. Denny would also concur, from a number of experiences, that the supervisor has the role and responsibility to pull all of the assessments together and assign the grade that was earned and not allow it to be tainted by a cooperating teacher that is difficult and non-supportive toward the student teacher. From the assertiveness that I heard in the university supervisors voices, there was no doubt they exercise the power to issue the final grade. They will all admit to acquiring cooperating teacher input but none of the supervisors made any indication that they would ever relinquish more input from the cooperating teacher. Glickman and Bey (1990) found that cooperating teachers are excluded from many decisions including final grading.

They have input, but they don't have the final say. The university supervisor does, and we do that for a variety of reasons. Probably foremost, some cooperating teachers are grateful just to have a student teacher. And if the student teacher shows up and takes the classes that they are responsible for that's an "A" in that co-op's eyes, and that does not mean that teacher is really effective. So it comes back on the supervisor because we know, and hopefully the cooperating teacher we work with also knows the criteria, but sometimes they are more lax. (university supervisor, Terry)

When asked, "If there's a discrepancy do you have a philosophy of how to proceed from that point?" Terry replied with communication.

Just communication. Even though I say the University Supervisor has the final say I'm willing to listen. Without a doubt that cooperating teacher has worked with that student teacher day in and day out and they have seen things that I didn't see and if they can give me evidence of it that's fine. I can certainly be persuaded another way. But if they can't, I just have to go basically on what I see and how I feel, and that's just based on experience. (university supervisor, Terry)

I technically have the responsibility for final grades. Now being who I am, I figure the co-op is with the student teachers six and a half or seven hours a day, five days a week. I see them on Tuesdays and when I come to see them, I rely very heavily on them. I will never, ever undermine a co-op. If it is a C, it is a C. (university supervisor, Kenda)

A response that was heard in each supervisor's interview was the role of supporter and mentor. The responsibility of the supervisor for conferencing is stated in the university's student teacher handbook. Although the approach that each supervisor implements is specific to the supervisor's philosophy. Some of the supervisors have said that they will take whatever time is necessary to observe and conference. Although considering time constraints, other student teacher observations, distances to travel, meetings on campus and the response from cooperating teachers and student teachers, there may be good intentions but it appears supervisors are limited on time.

I will literally spend forty minutes. I will spend whatever time it takes to make sure that the student knows. Somebody said to me, "How do you do your job?" Well you go at a rapid pace and criticize people. I said you don't understand the perspective that I have. I am a coach. I go around every day and I go up and I say, "How are you doing, let's do this together." We both want to win. It is not I am going to defeat you. It is we are both going to win and they know I will do whatever it takes to get them where they need to go. Driving, screaming, kicking you know. It is that kind of thing. Every one of them is different. (Kenda)

I have seen many of my observations in their portfolios because and I tell them I am going to do as a professional job as I can to give you a tool that will help you to get a job. That is my job. That is my job. My job is to help them to get a job. I need to do everything that I can to make sure that that happens. (university supervisor, Denny)

Sara established her role as supervisor into three categories; the gatekeeper, the supporter and the diplomat. The gatekeeper oversees the student teacher fulfilling university requirements. The example Sara gave, as did other supervisors, if the student teacher missed a day or two due to illness many times the cooperating teacher will tell the

student teacher that they do not have to make them up. But the supervisor will then intercede and inform the student teacher that they do need to be made up because it is university policy. The supporter is the coach or the person giving positive feedback and encouragement as well as critical feedback. This role, as Sara described, requires a lot of positive feedback and focusing on some of the critical weak areas in order to be effective. The diplomat was described as having the ability to work effectively and cooperatively with both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. You might think of it as having two lenses. These might not be what we think of as roles directly associated with assessment but again they could and most likely would affect assessment outcomes.

Sara pointed out the important role of communication with the cooperating teacher throughout the experience. She found through experience that she was able to solicit more critical feedback from the cooperating teacher if her inquiry about the student teacher's performance was stated as an invitation as opposed to assuming there are problems.

Everyone has their own technique. "Is there anything that you would like me to communicate to the student teacher that I haven't seen during this observation? Are there any things that I shouldn't add into my evaluation form" or "when I talk with this student during practicum is there anything that I could help with?" And by that it allows that door to open to hear what might be the butting problems that otherwise may not be heard. If you're just going to say, "Is everything okay? Is it going well?" And that's the biggest. And yet if you go in, "Is there any problems?" You cannot go in that way like you're looking for problems. So that I think was the biggest learning event for me as a professional that has changed in me over time, is finding that mechanism to allow that door to open for a cooperating teaching to share concerns without it being, "Do you have any concerns?" (university supervisor, Sara)

Denny also shares Sara's thoughts. His approach is very similar to Sara's. He wants to open the door and invite a response from the cooperating teacher. It's important that the cooperating teacher feels comfortable sharing the student teacher's weaknesses

so they can be addressed as soon as possible. Sara has determined that cooperating teachers sometimes feel responsible for the student teacher and will conceal the student teacher's shortcomings, intending they will improve before the next visit.

One of the things that is very important to me is the feedback from the co-op. When I walk in I work very hard on my relationship with the cooperating teachers. Of course, I feel that the fact that I have taught for thirty five years and I know many of these teachers, that helps a great deal because they know that I have been there. It is not like I am some pie in the sky and has not experienced what they are going through. I usually find out from them how things are going. A statement such as, "how are things going, any problems that you know of?" and then, "do you feel that you would be willing to share with me at this point?" To me that is also very important. If there are some things that come out during that, then I relate those things to the student teacher. If I feel it is serious enough, I will call a three-way conference in order to be able to solve their problems.
(university supervisor, Denny)

Earlier Tom noted how important it is that the cooperating teacher brings the student teacher into the classroom as a professional and a colleague. Denny echoes the same concept from the perspective that the supervisor has a role to treat the student teacher as a professional and encourage professional behaviors. He wants student teachers to make decisions and know they are valued. But he also believes that it is his responsibility to also provide feedback and always make it very clear to the student teacher, at any given time in the placement, what their current grade is.

A characteristic that was repeated many times by cooperating teachers and university supervisors is the importance of honesty. All members of the triad have a responsibility to be honest whether it is during reflection, evaluations or grading. Honesty must be foremost in everyone's mind. Terry's experience has allowed her to determine when a student teacher is trying to persuade her into thinking that she just observed an "A" lesson. While by most standards the lesson would be rated a "B-" at best.

I'll be honest with you, sometimes I've had some students that they know the game. So you say that and you ask them, "Oh, I think I got an A. I think I deserve an A." Then you ask them why. If I had them at a B- or a B they need to explain why, and sometimes they have a very difficult time doing that. But they just think if they say it then I'm going to think it was better than it really was. That's where you have to be honest with them and say, "Well, that's not where I saw it. This is what you need to do to improve." (university supervisor, Terry)

Kenda knows the harm that can be done if student teachers that are not cut out to be teachers get into the classroom. She feels a real sense of responsibility that supervisors must monitor who makes it and who doesn't. Educational programs are taking greater steps to screen students before they get too far into a teacher education program. Some will slip through the cracks and it will be up to the cooperating teachers and supervisors to identify them through assessment documentation. As Nolan and Hoover (2004) charge that evaluation of preservice teachers is an extremely important function because the summative evaluation decisions that are made by the supervisor and cooperating teacher determine who gains entry into the teaching profession. The authors also describe the university supervisor as the gatekeeper, protecting the interests of the countless number of children the teacher candidate could impact.

If I put you in a classroom with three different teachers, you could grade them without any problems. You instinctively know what their teaching is. You instinctively know when someone is trying, but is not there yet. It is not that you want to hold them from getting a job, you just don't want to let them loose on the kids by themselves yet. You know you would be dooming them to failure. You just do not want to do that. The C's will never get a job. One of them is an insurance salesman, one of them is selling cars and is actually making mega bucks, \$58,000 a year selling cars. I know that because they come back and tell me. Because they know I did them a favor by removing them. One of them went home and buried her father, got married and came back and took two classes and got an A and did a phenomenal job. You have a responsibility to the future. You can't let loose people who will damage them or harm them in any way. (university supervisor, Kenda)

Denny is committed to ensuring that his student teachers know exactly where their grade stands at every point during their student teaching experience. He does not want the student teacher to be surprised at the end and looking at a possible confrontation. There is a need for continuous assessment in order to provide justification of the student teacher's grade during any given point in the practicum.

That is probably one of the greatest challenges I see is that you need to be able to have an ongoing assessment of that individual so that you can give them the feedback and help to correct and resolve whatever needs to be resolved. Can you image if I would just give checks or pluses on some of those journal articles and those people would not have gotten a grade and they felt well that is not going to affect my grade down the road. In reality, here I was giving them a grade behind the scenes. They would not have responded to that. I would say that it is always hard. If anybody tells you that assessing is objective, they are crazy. First of all it is subjective because every tool that you make is subjective. None of it is ever objective. I try to make it at least communicate what I am doing. I just walked out of a supervisors meeting the other day and was discussing this individual with one of the other supervisors who is new and they said how do you feel about letting them know all of this. What is going on? That really bothers me. It bothered me at another university that there was a situation going on where they said don't let the students know this. I said wait a minute, I am sorry ethically I cannot do that. These young people are professionals. I am going to treat them as professional. They are going to know exactly where they stand. If we are going to have a battle, it is going to be in January it is not going to be in May. It is going to be right where it needs to be done. I am not going to pull punches on them later on. They are going to know exactly where they stand with me. That helps me deal with my anxiety of having to assess them and in having to come up with some grades. I have done everything as concrete as I possibly can, probably more for myself than for them. (university supervisor, Denny)

Some of the supervisors' responses may not be interpreted as a direct role in assessment; however behaviors at the heart of their stories most often affect assessment outcomes.

Listed below are the roles of student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors in regards to assessment as perceived by the university supervisors.

Student Teachers

1. Self evaluation; during post observation conferences
2. Implement changes to future lessons as identified by previous observations
3. Honesty during self-evaluation
4. Maintaining a professional attitude

Cooperating Teacher

1. Provide feedback to student teacher/ Communication
2. Provide grade input
3. Gatekeeper Role
4. Complete the formative/summative competency form
5. Honest evaluations
6. Determine an appropriate workload
7. Establish a rapport with the student teacher

University Supervisor

1. Assign the final grade
2. Act as mentor and Supporter
3. Provide honest feedback/ Conferencing/ Communication
4. Mentor as one professional to another
5. Supporter
6. Gatekeeper
7. Diplomat

How is the Purpose of Assessment Viewed by University Supervisors?

Most of the university supervisors focused on one or two major purposes of assessment during the interview. Some comprehended the purpose of assessment as a tool or method to “drive instruction” or a vehicle to provide feedback and determine changes in order to improve instruction. Other views included: assessment as a method to measure achievement, a way for student teachers to recognize where they are and as a motivational tool. I was curious why the supervisors didn’t mention satisfying

accreditation or certification requirements. As one supervisor mentioned, the PDE 430 form is repetitious of the competency form and the PDE 430 form seems to only serve the purpose of a State Department of Education requirement.

It drives instruction. What else can I say? Your assessment drives your instruction. You find out where they are weakest and then you devise a plan to help them improve that. It drives what you do. It is as simple as that. If I am assessing and you are looking at me like, "I don't have a clue what you are talking about," then I am going to redirect my thinking, my instruction, the method, the strategy, the way that I present the material to you until I find a way that you are going to be able to process it. (university supervisor, Kenda)

I think that assessment works as motivation and helps students recognize the need to do well. I think it works to measure achievement. I think it helps to measure their progress. (university supervisor, Tom)

As an institution I think the purpose is to make sure that there is a form of quality control going forward and that's why there is no one model that necessarily is the best model as long as you have some sort of a quality control mechanism to make sure that people are really able to do what they are supposed to do when they complete and go forward. That's one component, so like the gatekeeper. But there's also the component of being the supporter-facilitator to help people get to that level. The students that are still struggling with whatever their weak areas are coming in that they need that time to develop that skill or whatever it is that part of what a supervisor should be doing is also helping students help themselves and facilitating their own professional development. (university supervisor, Sara)

University Supervisors' Perceptions of Factors that affect Assessment

All of the supervisors elaborated on their views and perspectives from their experiences supervising student teachers. Although some of their experiences may not have fallen under the definition of contextual factors, they were factors that would affect assessment either directly or indirectly. The perceptions and views that were expressed during our conversation of assessment were important for the supervisors to share because they perceived them to impact assessment.

Supervisors place a high value on attitude when asked about the factors that affect assessment outcomes. Their comments relay the mind-set that there is no place in student teaching or in the field of teaching for a poor attitude. A poor attitude might be defined as; defensive, unwilling to listen to feedback, unwilling to change, unwilling to admit to weaknesses, a know-it-all type of behavior and unwilling to work to their full potential.

I don't like dealing with a student teacher who is very defensive. I will make a suggestion and as soon as I make a suggestion, it is like the reason he did that was because of.... That is all well and good. I understand there are reasons backing it up. At a certain point, I don't really need the defense for why you did it. I want you to do it a different way or whatever...The apathetic student, I don't really want the input, I just want the grade part. Just tell me where I am at and let me be on my way kind of thing. I really think I spend a lot of time on the post observation conference because I look at that as a stepping stone as to where do you go from there? What is your action plan for getting better? What can I expect to see the next time I come and that type of thing? (university supervisor, Tom)

When I say to somebody, "Did you consider doing this?" and they start to defend themselves. That is the wrong attitude with me. You don't want to go there. If I say something and they start to cry and they fall apart. I said to many student teachers, "Tears don't work, performance does." Get it together. (university supervisor, Kenda)

Another factor is a willingness whenever they are told that an area needs improvement that they are willing to work on that. That they are not just complacent to, "Well, this is the way it is." They are willing to try to change it. (university supervisor, Terry)

Tom makes an interesting observation about the possible attitude of some student teachers. He contends that as educators and achievers we believe that all students have a desire and goal to achieve an "A" in their student teaching placement. We also know how important it is to have the best you can offer when a prospective employer is comparing you to the next applicant. But for some student teachers achieving the "A" grade is not as important as other priorities in their life. And if the student teacher doesn't have that value system, you can't force it on them.

One of the things is the students being able to accurately assess their own teaching. What do I see as going well? What do I see as not going well? What do I need to change? Then it becomes a matter of are you willing to make the changes? Are you willing to put the time in to make the changes? That is something that I talk to co-ops about and sometimes we butt heads on this but I think it is a point that is pretty interesting. I would like to see student teachers do their best and earn an “A”, but that does not mean the student teacher wants to do their best and earn an “A”. (university supervisor, Tom)

Personal Factors

Personal factors play a part in how assessment outcomes could be affected. These could be small cases to extreme life-altering occurrences. Kenda talks about the many different cases that she has encountered and her struggle to look at each case objectively and compassionately while maintaining the integrity of the teacher education program. In most cases these personal events usually occur without warning or while hiding the disturbance it diminishes the student teachers performance over time. A case that was very disturbing to her was after observing a student teacher displaying very abrasive instruction and disrespectful mannerisms to the students, the cooperating teacher and supervisor had a 3-way conference with her to discuss their observations. The student teacher broke down and told them she had been abused by her brother and after they put two and two together, all 3 of them realized she was emulating the behaviors she received from her brother. Once this was recognized the student teachers performance changed dramatically and to Kenda’s delight, the student teacher is currently teaching and doing an excellent job. Kenda shares other personal factors that may affect assessment outcomes.

We have a student teacher whose fiancée was killed in a car accident. Now do you make her make up that whole week that she missed? She did God bless her soul. She did. The challenge comes in balancing. Her fiancée gets killed in the middle of a semester. A tree dropped on him and killed him

instantly. They had been engaged and going out since ninth grade. It did not happen when I was supervising, but I did happen to do the final assessment with her. She stayed in the school until December 23 and making up that time. With their personal situations that they have like the girl that asked me if she could go to have an abortion and come back. Of course now I am God. She ended up leaving student teaching anyway. You have somebody with a sick kid or who has had emergency surgery. Well that balance comes in how much leeway do I give them? What do they absolutely have to do and if they do it, will it make them a better teacher? You have a lot of really Like a girl that was communicating back and forth and traveling from Wilkes-Barre to here because she had a terminally ill father. Yes, you can cut some slack, but the standards are not going to change because you are dealing with a terminally ill father. So you have to be compassionate and understanding. Yes, I know life is hard, but you have to be a standard of excellence because this is our university and I will not let you sacrifice the integrity of the program. That challenge is always there. (university supervisor, Kenda)

Denny recalls ten years ago as a cooperating teacher for the same university being asked if he would take a student teacher that was being reassigned. He said he would. The student had very basic typing skills and was not able to keep up with typing 20 or more lesson plans that the previous cooperating teacher required. Denny went to the supervisor at that time and said do you want to know how good his typing skills are or how good his teaching skills are. The supervisor agreed to allow the student teacher to handwrite the lesson plans. Denny remarked that he did a fantastic job in his placement.

Kenda came across a cooperating teacher that kept all of her materials locked up in a cabinet and would not share anything with the student teacher. Kenda helped her secure materials from elsewhere, but she did ask the cooperating teacher, "If the student teacher shares with you her projects and materials, will you share some of yours?" And the cooperating teacher replied, "yes, but she can't use everything." And Kenda said, "I wasn't asking for that." Supervisors found some cooperating teachers to be a little possessive of their materials, maybe because they want the student teacher to be self-

sufficient or maybe to encourage them to bring in their own ideas. Kenda's mediation helped to alleviate a struggle for the student teacher and the cooperating teacher.

Tom agrees that you do see personality conflicts, but that sometimes student teachers use that as an excuse for a lower grade. Since Tom has had all of the student teachers in his methods class prior to student teaching he has had an opportunity to assess students that have a higher potential for problems during student teaching. Tom sees a real benefit in student teachers being placed during the semester with 2 different cooperating teachers as well as different supervisors. If a comfortable relationship is not present, the term of each placement would be rather short and the second placement may be better suited. As was noted earlier by student teachers, having different cooperating teachers and supervisors would offer a different perspective.

Not all co-ops are the same and that is another factor that affects the student's assessment in terms of grading. I have had some co-ops that are really good and I have some co-ops that are not really good. I think it is a problem in terms of where student teachers are placed. You can be placed with a bad co-op who struggles himself or herself as a teacher. I found out that students that do not respect their teacher, that carries over sometimes to the student teacher.

I think if the truth be known, the best of both worlds, I think you should have the other supervisor for one placement and you should have me for one placement. Only in the sense that now after I have seen a student teacher for fourteen or fifteen weeks, there is not a whole lot more that I can say or do or help. When I have them for seven weeks and then I look for things that maybe the other supervisor does not see or that person sees things that I am not looking for. I think the more people that you can get that are interacting, the better you can help that person. I really don't think one of us is easier than the other one, I don't think that is the case. (university supervisor, Tom)

The university supervisors place a high value on a student teacher's ability to self-reflect. They see self-reflection as the most important vehicle in any teacher's ability to improve and grow. When student teachers are not competent at identifying their own strengths and weaknesses; this shortcoming will affect the assessment outcome.

Supervisors agree that this criterion is extremely important and is outlined as one of the four major components of their teacher education conceptual framework.

If you are reflecting, nothing is more frustrating than saying to your student teacher, “How do you think the lesson went?” Those really high expectations and high commitments to excellence and high commitment to improvement, is just continual. Some student teachers will look at me and go, “Great.” I will think oh God, you don't get it do you? You just don't get it. So if they are not reflecting, then I have to sit back and say, “Well what did you think about when this happened?” They will go, “Oh”. What do you think about when this happened? “Oh.” Well what about Then they will say, “Well I guess it was not so great, was it?” So I have to do the thinking for them. Then train them. Before they will say great, they learn once is enough before they say great the next time. That is the wrong answer. I have not yet gone into a classroom and said everything is perfect. You cannot come into my classroom and say everything is perfect. I am always going to need improvement. The journal reflections are pretty important and I don't want a diary of what you did. I want a diary of what are you going to change to make it a better experience. (university supervisor, Kenda)

Then I go back and I will ask them how did their lesson relate to what the students were to learn? What particular learning activities do you think were effective or ineffective in achieving these goals? What were the students to learn today? That is when I would rather see a student teacher come to me and say to me that I thought this one was effective because of this or I thought this learning activity was ineffective because of this, rather than say, “I think everything went well”. (university supervisor, Tom)

I thought it was interesting how many times I heard both cooperating teachers and supervisors say that a very good indicator of predicting which students will do well in student teaching or the teaching profession are those students that have been involved voluntarily in helping youth programs earlier in their life. Those students that have worked with children, especially voluntarily, have a sincere interest in working with children. They may also have an understanding of developmental behaviors and skills and be able to develop a good rapport with children. Some student teachers that have had only minimal contact with children prior to student teaching find it is not the right profession for them.

One of the factors that affects their outcome is how much time they have had in the classroom. That is really clearly evident. Somebody that has had 400 hours just is so at home and so comfortable. They are more like a first year teacher. So I think another one of those things that clearly affects and for this particular population, if you have a parent or an aunt or an uncle in teaching and you have grow up around it and you have seen them haul home homework and you have seen the amount of time and commitment. If you have someone in your immediate circle of reference who is a teacher, they get it. (university supervisor, Kenda)

Well, obviously if they've had experience working with children in whatever setting, summer camps, YMCA work, coaching, whatever, if they've had experience with children they know what's appropriate for that grade level. So when they come in if we're looking at what to teach they just have that background coming in. Hopefully those who have gone through our program will know that as well, but obviously if you have more experience you're going to be better at it. (university supervisor, Terry)

Somewhere, somehow there needs to be that mechanism for them to do some sort of deep internal reflection about themselves. "Is this the career I want, not just the career that mom and dad said I should do? Not just a career that's convenient because it's good for women." And I get it a lot particularly in education, where many people, particularly young women say, "Well, I love children. Of course, I should do this." "Well, you can love children and you'll be married and have a family, but to be in a classroom for thirty years is just not the right match for you." And that's where I think the profession at large, not just our university. (university supervisor, Sara)

The topic of different supervisors affecting the student teachers continuity and possibility of confusion due to changing expectations was conveyed by student teachers and university supervisors. Although student teachers thought it was a negative experience to have 2 different supervisors, university supervisor Tom stressed that it would be a good situation because the student teacher would be getting feedback from 2 different perspectives.

When the supervisors were questioned about how they were prepared to assess student teachers and where do they go for information, all supervisors praised the efforts of their colleagues that currently supervised and the Director of Student Teaching. They

commented that the support from these people included sharing professional materials, listening to individual cases and offering suggestions, inviting the supervisor and their student teachers into a practicum session, offering the new supervisor an opportunity to shadow them and just mentoring throughout the semester. One supervisor noted that the Director of Student Teaching offered to sit in on a 3-way conference with a student teacher that was experiencing difficulties. Supervisors are invited to attend a new cooperating teacher's workshop that is held regularly that provides very valuable information about student teaching expectations, assessment, possible situations that could arise and how to handle it, conferences, etc. One of the supervisors that was assigned to a variety of different majors to supervise expressed a concern about the ability to really critique content in an unfamiliar discipline. Interestingly a student teacher picked up on this as well. The student teacher revealed that although some supervisors might be able to "pull it off"; it was quite evident to one student teacher that the comments provided by the supervisor were vague and didn't address some of the content knowledge. On the other hand another supervisor that was assigned student teachers of various teaching majors was very confident in her skills and felt it was an injustice to assign her to only one discipline. She noted that she is now required to travel a much greater distance to visit student teachers and she experiences limited time with student teachers and cooperating teachers due to the travel.

Chapter 7

Key Assessment Issues as Perceived by the Triad Members

The following chapter examines the similarities, differences and implications of the responses from the three groups of the triad. The framework of this chapter will focus on the following secondary research questions of the study: How do the triad members comprehend the various assessment methods that are utilized during student teaching? How do triad members view the advantages and disadvantages of various assessment methods? How are the roles that each triad member plays in assessment perceived? How is the purpose of assessment viewed by all triad members? How do triad members view factors that are perceived to impact assessment or assessment outcomes? Key topics were identified from each triad group's responses and compared. The topics discussed in this chapter highlight the perceptions and practices for consideration to improve the teacher education program.

Assessment Methods

All three groups of the triad were in agreement recommending changes to the formative/summative assessment form, conferencing immediately after an observation, providing specific directions or criteria to the journal assessment and offering more 3-way conferences during the practicum. The letter of recommendation was noted by both cooperating teachers and university supervisors as a form of assessment that had very powerful implications for future employment. Pellett, Strayve, & Pellett (1999) claim

that the final teaching evaluation and letter of recommendation from the cooperating teacher will, in most cases, have a direct impact on the hiring of the student teacher by future employers. Thus, it is important that the cooperating teacher take the time to complete the evaluation/letter of recommendation with great thought and effort. The cooperating teachers mentioned that if they had experienced a difference in opinion from the university supervisor regarding the evaluation of any student teacher, they were at ease knowing they had the avenue of writing a letter of recommendation if asked by the student teacher. Wentz (2001) agrees that the most important reference for the student teacher is done by the cooperating teacher. This is the main reference that hiring officials want to see before offering employment to a beginning teacher.

The video taping assessment was recalled as a valuable tool by the student teachers and university supervisors. It was even recalled as a valuable tool by a student teacher that was in a major that did not require video taping. Having preservice teachers create and view teaching videotapes and then address open-ended questions about the lessons can be an effective means of encouraging reflection and refining practice (Hoover, 1994a). Cooperating teachers are not directly involved with this particular assessment so it was not mentioned by anyone in that triad group. The PDE 430 form was only mentioned by the university supervisors which is not surprising since they are the only ones to complete the form. The PDE 430 form is required to be completed by the university supervisor and submitted to the state department of education.

The Formative and Summative Competency Form

The INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) standards describe the knowledge and skills that every beginning education professional should possess. The standards include knowledge, disposition, and performance statements representing a deep level of understanding and performance. The INTASC standards become the guidelines by which formative and summative assessments are written. Charlotte Danielson (1996) developed an assessment tool based on the INTASC standards. Riverview University compiled a student teacher competency form based on the content and format of Danielson's model. (See Appendix C) This particular assessment is identified at Riverview University as the Formative and Summative Competency Form. The formative/summative competency form is a comprehensive assessment that is completed by the cooperating teacher and student teacher midway through and at the end of the student teaching experience. The competency form was mentioned most often for needing changes or modifications. Student teachers, cooperating teachers and university supervisors all offered suggestions for the competency form. Although it was clear the form warranted changes, no one recommended that it be eliminated. Brett, a student teacher, believed that it was too comprehensive and in-depth to administer after only 3-4 weeks into the semester. Cooperating teachers mentoring novice teachers are asked to assign minimal classes to the student teacher at the beginning of the practicum in order that the student teacher can observe the cooperating teacher and familiarize themselves with the school environment and procedures. The intent to progressively require increased responsibilities from the student teacher is a practical suggestion, however if the student teacher is assessed after a

few short weeks and during a period of acclimation, we would expect some of the ratings to be low. This would most likely be due to a lack of opportunity to exhibit or become consistent in applying the behaviors. The results are low formative scores that become confusing for the student teacher who is looking for positive reinforcement. Rikard and Lancaster (1999) state that when the design and use of rubrics are appropriate to the developmental level of student teachers they provide an excellent means of assessing the effectiveness of student teachers.

Three weeks into it if I'm just now starting to take over a class how do I have any knowledge of the students, their background, how they live. My first placement I know that the formative came too quick. My first placement I went there during in-service days getting prepared. I didn't have any time with students, so it was very hard for my co-op then to assess me during the first formative. But when it comes to summative I feel all the questions are more than adequate for that because everything in there is needed by the time you reach your summative, but not everything is needed to be graded for your formative. (student teacher, Brett)

Participants in each group of the triad remarked on the need to revise the criteria stated in the competency form. It seemed that those completing the form (the student teacher and the cooperating teacher) were unclear as to how the student teacher might satisfy the criteria and to what level (distinguished, proficient, basic, unsatisfactory). Many stated that the criteria were difficult to interpret when looking through the lens of their specific discipline. In terms of assigning a rating, it was very difficult to distinguish between the criteria levels when each criterion, as defined by Charlotte Danielson (1996), includes more than one behavior or descriptor. Cooperating teachers were noted as assigning both 4's and 1's when the criteria were not met. From the cooperating teachers' responses the form lacked identifying behaviors that were critical to an effective, responsible teacher and the specific teaching pedagogies pertinent to the

individual disciplines. Bob was very clear when he noted that elementary and secondary teaching is very different in terms of the teacher expectations. So utilizing the same form for every discipline would have to generalize teacher behaviors or omit some that are discipline specific. Interestingly both a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor from the same major made the comment that they preferred the previous assessment form that was designed by the professionals in that major because the criteria were more focused and specific to their major.

It doesn't matter if you're teaching sixth grade math or if you're teaching kindergarten, they have the same criteria to assess you on. (student teacher, Carla)

The one from the university has a lot of good ideas in there. Personally I don't think they are said in the right way for our major. They just don't match up to what we expect of our student teachers.

The categories are good but what they have in them, myself personally I don't quite understand what they always want. They're specific but not specific enough. I just think if you're going to assess someone everybody needs to be on the same page because we're all different. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

I think it is hard too when the co-ops look at it or the student teacher. Sometimes they are just overwhelmed by it. They are not really sure what makes someone proficient from basic and the verbs and the adjectives used to distinguish no pun intended, between the two of them. It makes them hard to decide where they are at. (university supervisor, Tom)

Most of the triad members were convinced that there was a definite need to include a space to check "not applicable" on any given criteria of the competency form. Each student teacher placement offers a different experience that may or may not provide the opportunity to satisfy the criteria, and the opportunity may not be there to satisfy the criteria to a distinguished level. This modification gives those completing the competency form an option of not rating a specific criterion. Offering a rating of "not applicable" would facilitate a more valid average score, since some cooperating teachers

assign a “4” or “1” when there was no opportunity to satisfy the criteria. These concerns were echoed from student teachers and cooperating teachers but only one university supervisor discussed these concerns. The supervisors seemed to have bought-in to the administration of the competency form as is, although they are the only group from the triad that does not complete the form.

Some of the things that they looked at, I guess they were feasible; some of the things they looked for didn’t really apply to some of the different classrooms and some of the placements. They need to have an NA on there for “not applicable”. Both of my co-ops said there needs to be a “not applicable” and complained about them a little bit and said some of the criteria have nothing to do with what we did in the class. Overall it was alright and just a few things could be changed. (student teacher, Tim)

Some of them (competency criteria) are not relevant. There are some things about the community but they might be relevant if you’re working in a high school setting or something like that. I think where would a kid have time in this short space of time to be doing some of those things? But I just write not applicable. (cooperating teacher, Christine)

Many of the cooperating teachers found the terms that describe the levels to be problematic. They viewed the terms as descriptors of teacher performance and the confusion or resistance emerged when they were asked to identify a novice teacher as “distinguished”. Cooperating teachers noted that they would not classify themselves as “distinguished” so they were not about to place a student teacher in that category. Jean describes the rating of “distinguished” as a level to strive for but not a level that a novice teacher would be capable of achieving.

I’m not sure that as a student teacher you have an opportunity to distinguish yourself in some of these areas (criteria from the competency form). I looked at it recently with my last student teacher and said, “I’m not even distinguished”. It’s OK if we don’t get up there because that’s what we strive for but so many personal things get in the way. Just your style of communication can get in the way of this. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

I guess another thing too that I remind myself when I'm filling out the form is OK I am filling this out based on a kid that's a student teacher not somebody that's been teaching for 5 years or 10 years. I feel there should be somewhere in-between that distinguished and proficient and plus I was just saying to the student teacher you know I really feel like you're doing well at this time but we better save something for the end. If we say you're doing excellent in all of this now, what are we going to say at the end? And yet they were legitimate he was doing really well I thought for a student teacher at that point in their educational career. Some of them (criteria), I think distinguished is really an unrealistic expectation for a student teacher. But when I put down distinguished it's distinguished relative to...what I mean is...not like you don't have to do anything else the rest of your life. No need to go to any conferences. (cooperating teacher, Christine)

From the interviews, it was apparent that at least some of the cooperating teachers were unaware that the summative competency form was graded and was intended to show justification for the final grade. It is my observation from the data that the competency form has a purpose to demonstrate growth by analyzing the improvement in ratings between the cooperating teacher's formative and summative competency form. Another purpose is to demonstrate self-reflection skills by comparing the student teacher's completed competency form with the cooperating teacher's competency form. It may serve some purpose to the university supervisor when considering the student teacher's final grade, but since the cooperating teachers are not completing the form with the same perception as the university supervisor, the practice elicits questions of reliability.

That is interesting that you would bring that up because I had an example with the phone call from the young lady. Everything that I got and every observation that I had, the young lady was doing A work. My comments to the co-op was "A" work. Yet when I did the evaluation and did the competency form a "B". I talked to the student teacher and I said I am a little bit surprised about this. She said he has a problem with distinguished. He said he does not feel that anybody is distinguished. Consequently, she suffered as a result of that. Had I based her grade basically on that, the young lady would have gotten a "B" and she did not deserve a "B". (university supervisor, Denny)

Sara explains that unless all of the cooperating teachers are informed about how to interpret the competency form and its purpose that every cooperating teacher will implement the assessment based on their own philosophy. Consequently, if we have 10 cooperating teachers we may very likely discover 10 variations of this assessment's implementation. Borman (1977) states that one of the major problems, which makes it difficult to secure sound assessment with rating scales, is in the raters rather than in the rating scales.

When you hand it to all those different people and my first time out in five years with using this evaluation form I took it back from all these different very good cooperating teachers. Ten good cooperating teachers. People like Mr. Smith and how they utilize that tool with the particular student teacher they had, and I knew probably half of these student teachers from past experiences on some form or another and had a clue who they were, the reliability was just not there. And I'm not saying that the form is wrong or that the cooperating teacher filled it out wrong or any of that sort of stuff, but just because you've got a number to affix to a box does not mean that all the people using it are trained or prepared in the same way to use it. (university supervisor, Sara)

The formative/summative competency form is graded by assigning each criterion a score corresponding to the rating levels of distinguished (4.0), proficient (3.0), basic (2.0) and unsatisfactory (1.0). Tom brings up an interesting point pertaining to grading the formative/summative competency assessment form. If we average all of the criteria scores together, we are saying that each criterion is equally as important as every other criterion. And as Tom states some criteria are more important than others at this stage of a student teachers developmental level. Couple this with the indecisiveness of the cooperating teachers wavering about how to rate student teachers when the opportunity to satisfy criteria was absent and the competency form begins to lose validity.

Part of the problem with that form and this was brought up during the re-creation of it, when you average averages; you lose some of the detail of it. You could have a student teacher who has a very low area in one of those four categories, but because the other ones are high enough, that one can be pulled up

by the other three. Well the problem with that is once you start averaging averages, you lose some of those details and you lose some of the most important areas. The other problem with it is that we are equating, because we are using an average, we are equating that all of these are equal. So if you look at something like, I will give you an example, a student community work for the student that is one of the collaborations with the community. We are saying that is the same as knowledge of students and knowing that students are diverse and teaching things that are developmentally appropriate. (university supervisor, Tom)

Implications

The members of INTASC propose that teaching is complex and requires performance-based standards and assessment strategies. Similar to other assessments, INTASC developed a common core of knowledge and skills that all new teachers must know and be able to do. The assessment involves the university supervisor and cooperating teacher, self-assessment, and portfolios. Pilot uses of the assessment have revealed problems with inconsistency among evaluators and with converting the assessments into grades. The assessment is also very time and labor intensive (Alban et al., 1998).

Suggestions that I would recommend for Riverview University to improve the formative/summative competency form include the following:

1. Develop a shorter form that would include the criteria you might expect a student teacher to have accomplished within the first 3 weeks or implement an “NA” rating, representing Not Applicable, for all criteria.
2. Meet in a small group with triad members from the same discipline to determine what criteria might be missing from the form.
3. Clarify the purpose of the assessment form.

4. Provide an informative meeting with cooperating teachers and university supervisors to discuss/define the meaning of the criteria and rating terms.

5. Revisit the procedure for grading the form and determine a weight for each criterion based on its importance.

There is a need for consistency among the cooperating teachers when completing the form. An informational session with cooperating teachers and university supervisors and a written description to refer to would help to decrease the ambiguity and confusion from those completing the form. Gardner & Boix-Mansilla (1994) state that students must encounter individual benchmarks on the trail from novice to expert, as well as road maps of how to get from one milestone to the next. Given these landmarks, along with ample opportunity to perform their understanding with appropriate feedback, most individuals should be able to steadily enhance their competence in any discipline. If the competency form is confusing and difficult to interpret for the cooperating teachers then it would also be difficult to map out future goals based on the competency form.

There is a national quest to develop reliable, valid forms of assessment to administer during the student teaching practicum. Charlotte Danielson's (1996) assessment tool based on the INTASC standards is a good start to that goal however there is a need for more research on the effectiveness of the tool itself. From the literature, some of the schools that have adopted Danielson's assessment tool have done so with modifications. It is my contention that the improvements for assessment methods should start with the cooperating teachers, since they have the responsibility of completing the form. Other valuable input should be solicited from student teachers and university supervisors as well. One important point that I found through this research is what

cooperating teachers didn't know and what their understanding was pertaining to the competency form. By implementing a qualitative approach to further research on specific assessment methods we are more likely to discover the thoughts and experiences of assessment that are unique to each triad group.

Observations

Student teachers advocated for more supervisor visitations in order to provide more feedback to the student teacher and more opportunities to showcase their teaching skills. Tannehill & Zakrajsek, (1988) found that student teachers desire more specific feedback and that student teachers may not always receive this from their cooperating teachers. While supervisors state that due to time constraints caused by the distances they need to travel for each student teacher, it is difficult to visit more than the 3 required visits. Announced visits were viewed by the student teachers as helpful as long as the supervisor arrived when expected. Cooperating teachers and university supervisors believed they observed a more realistic teaching episode when the observation was unannounced.

Immediate conferencing was a concern for student teachers and university supervisors. Student teachers and supervisors alike contended that when the conference was not immediately after the observation then both student teachers and supervisors experienced difficulty recalling details. Both triad members became confused when ensuing responsibilities continued and during a later conference they were required to distinguish specific behaviors from a prior observation.

Implications

The discussion of limited time was a reoccurring issue that affected the university supervisor. The cooperating teachers were cognizant of the hurried schedules of the supervisors however it was the student teachers that felt frustrated with quick observations and at times conferences held at later times. There is a need for Riverview University to explore feasible distances for supervisors that offer ample time to observe and conference with student teachers. This may require the hiring of more university supervisors.

From the data collected, I would recommend that university supervisors announce their first visit or even give the student teacher an opportunity to identify a specific lesson to observe. Announcing the first observation would provide an opportunity for the student teacher to be prepared and become familiar with the visit. All other observations should be unannounced in order to avoid the “dog and pony” show. Further research is warranted in this area to explore the processes and beliefs behind affective administration of assessments by cooperating teachers and university supervisors.

Journaling

Christenbury (1994) advised preservice teachers to make a habit of journal writing, suggesting that “a journal is a good place for student teachers to consider issues about themselves, their ideas, and why and how they are making the journey of becoming a teacher” (xi). Because interactive journaling focuses on reflection rather than correctness of expression, it provides a comfortable arena for communication and informal assessment (Weasmer & Woods, 1997). Journaling was accepted by the student

teachers as a helpful, meaningful assessment tool provided it was implemented as a method of communication and the student teachers were asked to focus their writing on a specific aspect of teaching. Student teachers that were just asked to write a journal but not given teaching aspects to focus on were more apt to define journaling as busy work and unproductive. Journaling was also inconsistent from supervisor to supervisor. Some student teachers were asked to write each day, others were to write each week, others wrote up until the last 2 weeks and others were given the option to write a journal. This sends a mixed message to student teachers about the importance of journaling. This same inconsistency was observed of the video tape assessment. Some supervisors required it, some did not, but all student teachers agreed that video taping is a valuable and meaningful tool for self assessment. Videotaping, as described by Nolan & Hoover (2004), offers student teachers an in-depth, uninterrupted, concentrated picture of their instruction, their interactions with students, and their students' interactions with one another. Viewing unsatisfactory student teacher behaviors on tape validates the need for improvement. On the other hand, observing mastery teaching techniques on film provides positive reinforcement and a feeling of accomplishment. Other forms of assessment rely on someone else's interpretation. The videotape can be viewed at a later time and allows the student teacher an opportunity for self-reflection through pre-determined criteria.

Implications

From the data collected by the student teachers and university supervisors, journaling is an important form of self-reflection and communication. It is my

recommendation that all student teachers from Riverview University be provided specific criteria to reflect on, discontinue the journal during the last 2 weeks and be encouraged to ask questions in their journal. It was also clear from the student teachers responses that video taping is a valuable assessment tool and that all student teachers should be required to video tape at least one lesson during the semester and complete a self evaluation using a checksheet of pre-determined criteria.

Perceived Roles in Assessment of the Triad

The Student Teacher's Role

When members of the triad were asked to describe the student teacher's role in assessment, they all responded "to effectively self-evaluate". This particular role was viewed as critical to all teachers and an on-going process throughout every teacher's career. It was not only deemed important that student teachers could determine their own strengths and weaknesses but that they could also identify specific behavior changes to improve their teaching. Student teachers are then expected to implement those behavior changes prior to the next visit by the supervisor. Providing an honest evaluation was identified by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor as an important role of the student teacher, cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. Maintaining a professional attitude, which is a foundation for many appropriate teaching behaviors, was identified by supervisors as an important role of the student teacher in assessment.

A feeling of cautiousness or being caught "between a rock and a hard place" has occurred when the university supervisor asks the student teacher to self evaluate and then assign themselves a grade after an observed lesson. At that moment, student teachers

would like to believe the effort they just put into teaching would be considered an “A” or “A-“. If the student teacher suggests a lower grade, the fear of it impacting their final grade becomes a factor and students worry about what final grade they will earn. I question this practice especially during the first conference. Who can they compare themselves with? What does an “A”, “A-“, “B+”, etc. student teacher look like? At the very least, after the university supervisor grades the first observation, the student teacher can then compare their first graded observation with the second observation. The implications here are that if a student teacher assigns an “A” grade to their own lesson, they risk the supervisor disagreeing and interpreting the inflated grade as poor self reflection skills. If the student teacher grades their lesson low, they risk the supervisor accepting that grade and having a negative impact on their final grade. An experience was described by Ellen where her honesty backfired and she received the grade she assigned herself, even though her supervisor would have graded the lesson higher. Supervisors agree that in most cases the student teachers rate themselves lower than supervisors rate them.

Especially my second placement supervisor he asked us every time before he asked us our grade of the post observation what we thought our grade should be. And he said he would never give us a grade lower than what I thought I should have. Then he asked us why we should have the grade we thought and if he agreed well most of the time he gave a higher grade. For the summative and formative assessment we had to fill out one on ourselves and if we gave ourselves a lower grade than our co-op did then he would give us that grade so it's what we thought that we got for a grade. My first supervisor said she would not give us a lower grade than what our co-op gave us. I think that was important because the co-op is there every day. The supervisor is there 3 lessons and the co-op is watching you everyday every lesson. I think that is a good idea that the supervisor doesn't give you a lower grade than what your co-op did. (student teacher, Tim)

That if you say to someone, “you have a grade resting on this” how honest are they really going to be? How deeply self-reflective are they going to be about how that lesson went or how their unit looks or anything else if being honest

might cost them points? So I really struggle with that. (cooperating teacher, Sara)

Consistency between the assigned ratings and the written critique was an issue with student teacher Ian. He appeared frustrated that the feedback he received from his cooperating teacher was very good, but the rating that was checked did not indicate the same. I observed Ellen's completed observation form from her supervisor and even though she was given a glowing written evaluation, her ratings on all of the criteria listed at the top were a "3" or Good, one level below a "4" or Excellent. There is a mixed message when we rate students lower than what is warranted with the expectation to motivate students to do even better to attain a higher rating.

I think it's different from the co-op, well with the supervisor you have a blank copy of the grading sheet, you know exactly what you're going to see. So I think having that consistency and being true to it, the comments that say that you did well with classroom management, make sure you check the box that says you did well in classroom management and not that you did poorly there. Be consistent in that regard. (student teacher, Ian)

Implications

There was a consensus among the triad groups concerning the importance of good self-reflection skills for student teachers. It was also deemed important that student teachers be honest when evaluating their strengths and weaknesses, although I would question whether the student teachers are placed in a situation that would recognize honesty. Student teachers need a non-threatening environment to disclose weaknesses without the fear of it ultimately lowering their grade. As discussed earlier, students that are asked to assign a grade to an observed lesson take the chance of influencing the supervisor toward a lower grade or demonstrating poor self-reflection skills. Is it more important that students can identify specific strengths and weaknesses of their teaching

and define behavior changes or be able to identify a grade that represents the level of performance as defined by the university supervisor? I would note that not every supervisor would critique the same lesson in the same manner. If we need to ask student teachers to assign a grade to their lesson, then I would recommend the student teachers be asked during the second lesson, when they have had an opportunity to compare their second lesson with the grade they were assigned from the supervisor after the first lesson.

Future research might explore motivational factors during student teaching. Some cooperating teachers and university supervisors operate under the assumption that they should assign the student teacher a rating lower than the highest rating so that the student teacher will be motivated to work harder. Although as Tom noted, some students are just not motivated by grades, yet many are overly grade conscious. Since the students in this study were identified as better students they exhibited a lot of self confidence and did not appear concerned that they would not receive an “A”.

The Cooperating Teacher’s Role

Three roles of the cooperating teacher in assessment were found to be repeated among all three groups of the triad: observations/feedback, completion of the formative/summative competency form and grade input. Student teachers were able to describe the cooperating teacher’s role in terms of their own experience but there were little similarities in responses between the student teachers. Student teachers agreed with cooperating teachers that the cooperating teacher’s role included orienting the student teacher to the school setting. To ease the anxiety that student teachers experience, cooperating teachers should take the time to inform beginning teachers of the culture of

their school and the quirks of the job (Sherblom & McElone, 1996). As well, student teachers should request that cooperating teachers inform them about their rules and expectations and about the personnel and administration of the school. The student teachers in this study also expressed the need for the cooperating teacher to take on the role of a good listener in order that the student teacher had the opportunity to analyze their own behaviors before cooperating teacher input. Coulon and Byra (1997) examined the educational focus, type of feedback, and amount of dialogue between cooperating teachers and their student teachers during post-lesson conferences. It was found that during post-lesson conferences, the cooperating teachers dominated discussions. It is suggested that student teachers need to have the chance to freely express their opinions and ideas during conferences to allow them to take control in the student teaching process. It was unusual that none of the triad members mentioned mentoring as one of the cooperating teacher's roles.

Interestingly, both student teachers and university supervisors viewed the role of the cooperating teacher as determining a progressive plan toward eventually assuming a full teaching load. Cooperating teachers should progressively sequence teaching experiences and activities so that student teachers are successful, gain confidence, feel less stressed, and become self-sufficient. The problem that Jones and Sparks (1996) explain is that cooperating teachers rarely receive training by universities to do their job, nor are they given any information on what to do in order to insure a positive and /or progressive experience for the student teacher. Cooperating teacher, Tina remarked that she would like to see a plan provided to the cooperating teacher by the university supervisor outlining a recommended workload. It is my thought that student teachers

may remark to the cooperating teacher that they are assigned too many classes at the beginning of the practicum and the cooperating teacher would like to have some recommendation from the university so that the student teacher doesn't have an opportunity to negate any teaching responsibilities by stating what they believe to be the university policy.

The cooperating teacher and student teacher must be comfortable assigning and accepting responsibilities, respectively. This should occur early in the student teaching experience, and the prospect of progression toward more advanced teaching assignments should be offered (Rhea, 1999). Cooperating teachers commented that the assignment of classes for student teachers was not well defined and typically up to the cooperating teacher's discretion. The Riverview University's student teacher guidelines do suggest implementing a progressive workload however a starting point is not defined. It would appear that some student teachers are eager to begin teaching and welcome a partial day of teaching at the beginning of the experience; other student teachers may indicate that a small number of classes to begin their experience is more appropriate. Since cooperating teachers do not have a sense of an incoming student teacher's comfort level, it is difficult to determine what workload should be assigned at the start of the practicum. Student teachers not only mention needing a comfort level with class assignments but also requiring that the cooperating teacher orient the student teacher to the school procedures, facilities, students, and educational community. Tom recommends to assign student teachers the managerial duties immediately and to introduce the student teacher in the school as a collegial equal. He also recommends not assigning student teachers to teach a class immediately following a class that they, the cooperating teacher, have taught.

Tom's experience has taught him that student teachers will mimic the same teaching. He believes that giving student teachers the worse class at the beginning of their practicum sets them up for failure and recommends assigning the more difficult classes later in the practicum.

We tell them early on that the supervision part; the lunch duty, the hall duty and the other things. Your student teacher needs to be exposed to that early, so that they see you with this person and we always tell them to introduce the student teacher as an equal, not this is my student teacher and give them the little desk and that type of thing...I have forewarned cooperating teachers not to give student teachers the worst classes. I have had co-ops who say this is my class from heck and I don't want them, I am giving them to the student teacher. I think you are setting the person up for failure. You had difficulty. I am not saying you should never give them, but start them out with a good class. These are great kids no matter what you do. They are going to be okay. Then give them the biggest class that you have. Then give them where you have the troublemakers. Don't set them up to fail. (university supervisor, Tom)

Although each group referenced grade input as a role of the cooperating teacher, there is much debate over what weight their input carries. Most student teachers were adamant that the cooperating teacher should have a lot of input into the final assessment/grade of the student teacher. Some student teachers thought they did have a lot of input others did not think they had much input at all. Carla's supervisor documented the breakdown of criteria in percentages that would equal the total of the student teacher's final grade. The cooperating teacher's grade input equaled 15% of the total make-up of Carla's grade. She was disappointed that her cooperating teacher contributed a very minor percentage of the total grade. Carla and other student teachers repeated the opinion that the cooperating teachers are with the student teachers 5 days a week, 6 hours a day, they should have a great deal of input into the student teachers final assessment/grade. The student teachers in this study were all considered excellent

students in their methods courses and most likely put forth tremendous effort throughout every day. For student teachers that are exhibiting excellence throughout every day, it seems logical that they would want the person most able to attest to their total performance providing a sufficient contribution into their grade.

Cooperating teachers' perspective regarding their input toward the student teacher's grade and the weight it carried when calculating the student teacher's final grade included a wide range of responses; a fair amount of input, a small amount of input, input is given but not really considered, no weight is given to the cooperating teacher's input and prefers not to be involved in the grading process. From the interview data, there was no doubt that 7 out of the 8 interviewed cooperating teachers were confident that they had an accurate depiction of the student teacher's overall performance and could provide a valid grade.

I think it's a fair amount of input because we are with them all of the time. And they value our opinion. Which I think is good. We do talk about it so if we do have a difference of opinion we know where both of us stand and then you come to a compromise. Because they see them only those certain amount of times but sometimes it's a good show. It's like Oh it's my supervisor I really have to do well. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

But overall I think at the end I feel my role is very small in the actual grading of the student teacher. And by that I feel that because there's three of us and if the student teacher rates herself pretty high and the supervisor rates her high, and I have maybe some things I'm considering or things that I have reservations about, it doesn't really matter a whole lot. I think the student teacher still gets the high grade. (cooperating teacher, Judy)

I'd like to say 50/50. I don't know if I've ever have an opportunity to test that because the kids (student teachers) have been so good recently. All said and done I think the cooperating teacher should hold the same weight as the supervisor because I really think that the coop teacher sees the real thing. I'm not sure the supervisor always sees the real thing. I'm willing to concede that the supervisor knows a whole lot but the cooperating teacher sees a whole lot. (cooperating teacher, Jean)

University supervisors have strong feelings toward maintaining their gatekeeper role over the grade assignment for student teachers. They believe it is their ultimate responsibility to keep the grade in check. Tom views some of his cooperating teachers as those that are just happy to see a student teacher and if the student teacher shows up, they have earned an “A”. As well he believes that there are cooperating teachers who have difficulty assigning any student teacher an “A”. All university supervisors stated that they acquire input from the cooperating teachers and some supervisors went as far as to say they would not give a grade below what the cooperating teacher suggests. All of the supervisors declared that they held the role of ultimately determining the student teacher’s final grade. Some cooperating teachers portray university supervisors as out of touch with what they call the real world of public schools and believe the university supervisors need to get back in touch. These criticisms reflect the tensions when the university supervisors are the primary evaluators of student teachers and when cooperating teachers are left out of the decision-making process (Veal, M.L. & Rickard, L., 1998).

Implications

There is a need for Riverview University to develop more specific guidelines pertaining to suggestions for a progressive student teacher workload. A recommendation should be offered that provides for differences in the readiness level of the student teacher.

It seems that in most cases, cooperating teachers have varying degrees of input into the student teachers final grade. University supervisors value cooperating teachers’

input, however the supervisors maintain that they have the ultimate responsibility of assigning the final grade. From the cooperating teachers' interviews, only one cooperating teacher noted one time where she was not asked for her input. Although all student teachers and cooperating teachers agreed that the cooperating teacher had a more comprehensive observation of the student teacher, the cooperating teachers as a whole were not dissatisfied with the grading practice. It appeared that in most cases the cooperating teacher and university supervisor would come to an agreement or compromise if necessary. Two problems found in cooperating teachers' evaluations, that have been researched rather extensively include rater errors of leniency and the halo effect (Phelps, Schmitz & Boatman, 1986). The university supervisor's role of gatekeeper does help to keep the grade in check and avoid these two problems.

Further research might investigate the differences in student teachers' final grades between what cooperating teachers would assign and what supervisors would assign and how are the differences resolved. This is a complex issue due to the hierarchal nature of the triad, the university supervisor's job responsibility, and the variety of assessments and assignments that make up the final grade.

The University Supervisor's Role

All of the three groups of the triad agreed that supervisors assumed the role for observing, conferencing, providing feedback, communicating with the student teacher and cooperating teacher, overseeing the assignment of university requirements, and giving positive encouragement to the student teacher. Student teachers and university supervisors agreed that the university supervisor's role included assigning the final grade.

While the university supervisors were the only group to identify the role of mentoring as a role of the supervisors.

The large distances assigned to the university supervisors appeared to limit their ability to spend long periods of time with each student teacher and also posed an occasional problem that resulted in late or absent visits and delayed post-observation conferences. Both student teachers and university supervisors commented on the adverse affect this condition caused. Student teachers lost trust and became frustrated when the university supervisor was unable to visit due to a busy schedule, as well university supervisors were frustrated and felt rushed.

Implications

Implications here were addressed under assessment methods.

The Purpose of Assessment as Perceived by the Triad

The responses from the three groups of the triad regarding what they perceived to be the purpose of assessment were in agreement. Responses that were echoed among all three of the triad groups included the following: to determine strengths and weaknesses, to provide direction for improvement, to inform the student teacher of the skill competency level they had achieved, and to drive instruction. Providing documentation to future employers and instilling self-evaluation as an everyday process were purposes identified by only the cooperating teachers. The final teaching evaluation and letter of recommendation from the cooperating teacher will, in most cases, have a direct impact on the hiring of the student teacher by future employers (Pellett, Strayve, & Pellett, 1999).

Only university supervisors stated that assessment serves the purpose as a motivational tool. We would hope that student teachers would be motivated to achieve

higher levels of performance but as Tom, university supervisor, noted earlier it's possible that some student teachers are satisfied moving through their experience without the interest to achieve a higher level of performance.

Implications

Some commented that assessment is a form of motivation. What I would question is it the assessment tool or the rating assigned to the assessment criteria that motivates student teachers? And what motivational impact, if any, does a low rating have to motivate a student teacher to work harder, especially when the student teacher believes their teaching performance to be of a higher level. As discussed earlier, this is a common tactic of both cooperating teachers and university supervisors to motivate students. Cooperating teachers and university supervisors purposely do not assign the highest grade at an initial visit because they do not want the student teacher to discontinue trying to improve.

Factors Affecting Assessment as Perceived by the Triad

Triad members were asked to recall what they perceived to be the factors that affect assessment outcomes. Many triad members concurred on some of the factors described, while other responses were isolated but not necessarily less important. Factors mentioned less frequently may have been due to the individual circumstances of the placement. Only 1 factor was repeated by all of the groups of the triad. The student teacher's attitude was described by triad members in details of what a good attitude and poor attitude would look like. It was in the forefront of their minds when they considered

what factor would have an impact on assessment outcomes. Other factors that were repeated by the student teachers and cooperating teachers only included: the need for communication, having many opportunities for feedback, and being well-prepared during their professional semester immediately prior to student teaching. Students' coming into teacher education having prior experiences voluntarily working with youth was a positive factor identified by cooperating teachers and university supervisors.

By focusing on the significance of this study, the following are factors expressed by the triad members that affect assessment outcomes and thereby discovering effective practices and ascertaining the factors that negatively affect assessment. Some factors can be readily identified and suggestions for improvement can be offered, other factors are more difficult to change due to the contextual structure of the student teaching practicum or due to individual constraints of the triad members.

Attitude

Each of the triad members recognized attitude as an important factor that can affect assessment outcomes. Student teachers that were interviewed recognized the difference between appropriate and inappropriate student teacher attitude. Student teachers that welcomed suggestions, offered their own suggestions and implemented them, didn't become defensive or argue, and didn't look for excuses were viewed as demonstrating a good attitude by cooperating teachers and supervisors. There was no doubt that a student teacher, demonstrating what would be perceived as a poor attitude, would be rated lower on the assessments. It may affect their ability to self-reflect or in

their ability to establish a good rapport with students. However the poor attitude surfaced, it would surely affect the student teacher's assessment outcomes.

You just need to walk in with a good attitude and be very upbeat even if your students are first period tomorrow and you still have to sleep, you need to be the one up on the desk doing a song and dance to get them excited, and just know your material and be prepared are the factors that lead to successful assessments. Walking in disheveled, not being properly clothed is really a bad idea. (student teacher, Brett)

Well attitude, some come in with a good attitude and some come in with not a good attitude. Yes, some of them get a little bit upset because again they think they know it all and that they are perfect and can do it better than anyone else. They're the kind that really needs to sit down and say, "Let's backtrack here because that's not the real world". We've had some that argue with you back and forth and say, "no, no this is right this is the way it has to be done". And will go out and try it and it doesn't work. Yes there is a wide variety. That's still few and far between. (cooperating teacher, Tina)

Differences in Cooperating Teacher's and Supervisor's Expectations

Some of the student teachers experienced differences in expectations from one cooperating teacher to another and from one supervisor to another. From the student teachers descriptions, some of the differences affected the outcome of their experience and other differences the student teachers just adapted. Some cooperating teachers had higher performance expectations than other cooperating teachers. Some supervisors required certain assessments to be completed while others did not. Benefits cited for maintaining the same supervisor for both placements included; a longer period to develop a relationship and consistent assessment requirements and expectations. A benefit recited by Tom, a university supervisor, in favor of assigning 2 different supervisors is to provide the student teacher with another supervisor's viewpoint of their performance. Lori experienced a different approach to the final conference by 2 different supervisors. One

supervisor met for a 3-way conference, the other supervisor met with the student teacher and separately with the cooperating teacher. Lori preferred the 3-way conference to provide feedback and keep every one on the same page. Veal and Rickard (1998) recommend 3-way conversations, meaning that all written materials and verbal information on evaluation and feedback are shared among the group members. Sharing information encourages open and honest interactions; thru fostering a community involved in the student teaching experiences. Tom does suggest that the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor meet without the student teacher present prior to the 3-way conference to discuss grading, in order to avoid any disagreements in front of the student teacher.

Now I've had two different ones, different supervisors, which I kind of prefer a certain way that we do sit down, the three of us, because it gives me a chance to go over the evaluation. There's two times that I evaluate them, written, grading-wise, and when the three of us are sitting there the student must grade themselves. I grade them, and then the supervisor will talk about what he feels needs to be done. We kind of compare our goals and see if we're on the same page type of thing which works very well, where at another time it was not done. It was not a three-way conversation. It was kind of here's mine, here's yours. He turned it in. It was sent back and it's kind of like I didn't get the good feeling that the student really understood where he was with me or the supervisor.
(cooperating teacher, Lori)

Communication

Linda contends that continued communication between the triad members helps to keep everyone on the same page. Communication was cited by all triad members as important. When communication was missing it affected student teacher performance. Communication was defined as providing valuable feedback from an observed lesson, orienting the student teacher to routines and expectations in the educational community,

providing information regarding performance expectations, and providing emotional support. Zimpher, de Voss, and Nott (1980) noted that the chief activity of the university supervisor was to define and communicate university purposes and expectations for the student teacher and cooperating teacher. Linda explains that when there is a lack of communication between the supervisor and the cooperating teacher and differences in expectations arise, it places the student teacher in a very compromising position.

Just to make sure the co-op and supervisor have a lot of communication and that the co-op knows exactly what the student teacher has to do like the requirements and what they should be looking for in the student teacher. (student teacher, Tim)

Maybe a meeting might be good with the supervisor and the coop and you. Just so the 3 of you have a chance to sit down and make sure everyone is on the same page, make sure everyone is expecting the same things out of you. Because I think that could be frustrating if you're cooperating teacher is expecting one thing and your supervisor expects something else. And you're trying to please both of them. (student teacher, Linda)

Rapport/Personality Conflict

All triad members identified "personality conflict" as an unforeseen factor that when it occurs can make for a very uncomfortable experience. For whatever the reason there are times when either the university supervisor or the cooperating teacher incurs ongoing friction in the relationship with the student teacher. In reality, we have a multitude of personalities and occasionally the student teacher is assigned to someone where the temperaments of the 2 individuals become at odds with each other. Handling such an occurrence can be difficult because it may mean a reassignment for the student teacher or getting through the experience with frustration. Mayer and Goldsberry (1993) assert that the university supervisor's task is to diffuse interpersonal tensions between the

cooperating teacher and student teacher, clearing the way for the student teacher's growth. Some student teachers learn to adapt and avoid confrontation while others are more assertive and risk igniting a tense relationship. Sudzina & Knowles (1993) found that for reasons such as personality conflicts, philosophical differences, and cultural misunderstandings, some student teacher-cooperating teacher pairs failed to develop into successful mentor-mentee relationships. Unfortunately few choices are open to these student teachers: some remain in their placements and struggle through their practices receiving weak letters of recommendation; others fail at the conclusion of their practices; still others request to be withdrawn from their initial placements and to repeat their practices at new sites.

Student teachers that had established a good rapport with their cooperating teacher had the attitude such as Tim's, "you're a guest in their classroom, do what they ask of you and more".

I think if you have a co-op that you do not personality-wise get a long with that's going to affect everything that you do. And I also think in my own experience what I was allowed to do in the classroom. I mean, it's their classroom and you can go in there and you have tons of ideas and these really cool things you want to do and if they say no, it's no. "Okay, check that off, great idea, but not going to be doing it." I think personality-wise, how you get along with your co-op, do you mesh, and do you click. It's going to be a huge part because it's going to affect everything you do in the classroom. So I think how you interact with your co-op can have a direct affect. (student teacher, Carla)

Sometimes it's just a personality conflict too, and you can sense that pretty easily. I feel badly when that happens, as well as the cooperating teacher, but I think you need to learn to try to get along and you're not going to get along well with everyone. But in the role that's established with the cooperating teacher and student teacher hopefully you're able to get over those personality things and work with them short term and know they are off to their next placement. But more often than not if it's a lower grade than I have it is probably personality rated. (university supervisor, Terry)

Previous Experiences with Children

Cooperating teacher Jean has said to colleagues, “If I had my way we wouldn’t even consider someone to be a teacher unless before or while they were in college they demonstrated an interest in working with children in a little league, soccer, basketball or something like that”. Both cooperating teachers and university supervisors agreed that students in teacher education that had volunteered to work with youth were more apt to demonstrate “natural” teaching skills. Cooperating teachers as well recommended that students in teacher education be required to spend more time in the classroom setting prior to the student teaching practicum.

I think some people are natural teachers so this is not hard for them. They’ve had experiences all along. I think it’s good that they get kids out more than they use to when I was in school. They need to have more and more of those so that when they are thrown in here for 6 weeks if they haven’t had a lot of chances. I think that 6 week participation thing they have or 3 weeks I think that is really good. They do that the year before they student teach. (cooperating teacher, Christine)

Well, obviously if they've had experience working with children in whatever setting, summer camps, YMCA work, coaching, whatever, if they've had experience with children they know what's appropriate for that grade level. If you don't have any experience working with children it's going to be difficult. So I think that's one factor. (university supervisor, Terry)

All members of the triad recalled factors that they perceived to have an impact on assessment outcomes. Although some of the recalled factors were not directly related to the administration or content of the assessment form, they were perceived to affect the assessment outcomes.

Issues Rising from Power or Hierarchical Positions

A key theme that emerged from the data was how power affected the roles and practices of the triad members. Supervisors are at the top of the hierarchy structure of the triad. They demonstrate power over the cooperating teachers and the student teachers. University supervisors maintain that their role is to assign the student teacher a final grade and although it would appear that in most cases the university supervisor and cooperating teacher come to a final grade agreement if there was a disagreement the university supervisor would determine the final grade. Student teachers have an understanding that although the cooperating teacher may have input, the final grade is determined by the university supervisor. This may be one of the reasons that student teachers produce the “dog and pony” show. They view the observations of their supervisors as more important and attempt to put all of their eggs in one basket. The few visits that occur by the university supervisor also presents an impression that the student teacher has a very good chance of earning an “A” if they can demonstrate “A” skills during the supervisor’s visits. Most of the cooperating teachers felt that determining a final grade was really out of their hands and that they could provide input but they really didn’t have the final say. Cooperating teachers did view the letter of recommendation as a power they held to express their own personal evaluation and help contribute to the student teacher’s search for a teaching position. Much importance is placed on the assessments that provide the basis for the final grade. Although the cooperating teacher completes a competency form, it is interpreted and graded by the university supervisor and is weighted by each supervisor to help justify the final grade.

The cooperating teachers have power over the student teachers

Implications

There is a need for further studies to explore in more depth the factors that affect a student teacher's practicum experience and ultimately assessment outcomes. How attitude affects assessment outcomes and what behaviors are characteristic of a poor attitude? How are students identified with a poor attitude handled? How the triad relationships affect the practicum/assessment outcomes? Some literature has been written with recommendations for placing student teachers with cooperating teachers that had compatible characteristics. This is an ideal situation but in reality this process can become very cumbersome when there are limited cooperating teachers, standards that must be satisfied, student teacher needs such as transportation and other factors that limit the flexibility for placements.

How do the experiences/achievements of a student prior to entering a teacher education undergraduate program indicate the future success of a student in a teacher education program?

Further research would be recommended to discover how triad members perceive the experience of having the same cooperating teacher for an entire semester versus having 2 different cooperating teachers and/or supervisors each half of the semester.

Communication is critical within each connection of a university's student teaching program. The Director of Student Teaching, university departments, school administrators, supervisors, cooperating teachers, and student teachers all form a network for communication. It is important that communication is on-going among the triad members throughout the experience. Further research might explore communication and

how each of the triad members becomes informed. What methods are more or less affective than others? What are the problems associated with a lack of communication?

Summary

In analyzing the data from the triad members, I connected the common themes from the perspectives of each triad member. I did not pursue the individual triads and differences in gender or school type. It did not appear that any of the data was specifically affected by gender or school demographics. However, further investigation may have uncovered some data relevant to urban, suburban, rural school settings and gender differences.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and State teacher education standards require universities to assess and evaluate regularly students in teacher education. Setting benchmarks and minimal acceptance levels provide the blueprints for students to improve teaching effectiveness. The student teaching practicum is the final experience prior to graduation and securing a teaching position. Developing valid, reliable methods of assessment are critical for all of the triad players. The assessment documents provide essential feedback of strengths and weaknesses, determine future goals, identify levels of competency, instill motivation and drive instruction. All assessment methods identified in the study were found to be valuable, some with modifications. The primary role in assessment of the student teacher, identified by all triad members was self evaluation. The most common roles identified for the cooperating teacher were observation/feedback and completing the formative/summative

competency form. And the most common roles identified for the university supervisors included observation/conferencing, communication and supporter. The most common factors cited as affecting assessment outcomes included: many opportunities to receive feedback; attitude of the student teacher, differences in cooperating teacher or university supervisor expectations; communication; time limitations; student teacher-cooperating teacher rapport; preparation from their professional semester prior to student teaching; and previous experiences with children.

This study focused on the case of assessment and how the triad members perceived assessment. Including 8 from the student teacher and cooperating teacher groups provided ample opportunity to saturate the categories. By including more university supervisors additional information may have been gained. By implementing a qualitative approach, universities have the opportunity to discover both the strengths and weaknesses of their student teaching programs and satisfy accreditation requirements for program assessment.

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Appendix A

Name _____ Date _____

School _____

Setting _____

Student Teacher Interview Guide

1. What methods of assessment were used to assess your performance during student teaching? What is your reaction to each of these methods?

2. What is the purpose(s) of the various assessment methods? Benefit of each?
What are the most important criteria that are assessed? What conditions would provide for a fair assessment?

3. If you were given the opportunity to change the way student teachers are assessed, what would you change? How do you vision those changes affecting student teachers? Cooperating teachers? Supervisors?

4. How has the experience of assessment impacted your student teaching?

5. What role did you play in assessment? What role did the cooperating teacher play? What role did the supervisor play?

6. What experiences were different in the assessment process from one placement to another?

7. How comfortable were you during the assessment process? How were you prepared for being assessed?
8. What factors contribute to assessment outcomes?
9. How was evaluation and grading related to assessment during your student teaching experience?
10. When you think of assessment are there any thoughts that come to your mind that we didn't talk about?

Name _____ Date _____
School _____ Yrs as Coop _____
Setting _____

Cooperating Teacher Interview Guide

1. What methods of assessment were used to assess the student teacher's performance during student teaching?
What is your reaction to each of these methods?

2. What is the purpose(s) of the various assessment methods?

3. What are your thoughts about the criteria that are found listed on the assessments?

4. What role do you, as the cooperating teacher, play in assessment?
What role does the supervisor play in assessment?
What role does the student teacher play in assessment?

5. How does the experience of assessment impact student teaching?
How do student teachers react to assessment?

6. What current practices or factors contribute to the student teacher's assessment outcomes? Are there factors that might contribute to the outcomes that are not in the student teacher's control?

7. What difficulties have you experienced from the process of assessing student teachers?
8. How were you prepared to assess student teachers?
How are you kept informed?
9. If you were given the opportunity to change the process of student teacher assessment, what would you change? How would the change affect student teachers? cooperating teachers? university supervisors?
10. What is your reaction to the process of evaluation and grading as it relates to assessment?
11. How much input do you as the cooperating teacher have during the final assessment of a student teacher?
12. Are there any thoughts that came to your mind regarding assessment that we didn't talk about?

Name _____ Date _____

School _____ Yrs as Supervisor _____

Setting _____

University Supervisor Interview Guide

1. What methods of assessment were used to assess the student teacher's performance during student teaching?
What is your reaction to each of these methods?

2. What is the purpose(s) of the various assessment methods?

3. What are your thoughts about the criteria that are found listed on the assessments?

4. What role do you, as the university supervisor, play in assessment?
What role does the cooperating teacher play in assessment?
What role does the student teacher play in assessment?

5. How does the experience of assessment impact student teaching?
How do student teachers react to assessment?

6. What practices or factors contribute to the student teacher's assessment outcomes? Are there factors that might contribute to the outcomes that are not in the student teacher's control?

7. What challenges have you experienced from the process of assessing student teachers?

8. How are you informed as a beginning university supervisor of assessment information?

How are you kept informed of new assessment information?

9. If you were given the opportunity to change the process of student teacher assessment, what would you change? How would the change affect student teachers? cooperating teachers? university supervisors?

10. What is your reaction to the process of evaluation and grading as it relates to assessment?

11. How are differences in assessment evaluation handled between the US and ST?

between the US and CT?

12. Are there any thoughts that came to your mind regarding assessment that we didn't talk about?

Appendix B

“From this College shall go forth compassionate, productive, ethical lifelong learners who contribute interdependently to a global society”

Student Teaching Observation Form

Student Teacher:
Cooperating Teacher:
School:

Date:
Grade:
Content:

Interpretation: 0=Failure, 3=Good, 4=Excellent → 0 1 2 3 4

What to Teach

Knowledge of Subject Matter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instructional Planning Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How to Teach

Knowledge of Human Development and Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adapting Instruction for Individual Needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multiple Instructional Strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom Motivation & Man. skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How to Have Caring Communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How to Self Evaluate

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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A Reflective Decision Maker

Professional Commitment and Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NOTE: Due to changes in the margins to accommodate the thesis document requirements, in the actual document, this comment section is much larger and the top section is much smaller.

Student Teacher

Supervisor

Cooperating Teacher

Appendix C

1. What to Teach: KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT MATTER**Level of Performance**

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST uses incorrect information or does not correct content errors students make.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays knowledge of major concepts and basic content central to the discipline he/she presents but cannot articulate connections between other parts of the discipline or with other disciplines.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays solid content knowledge and makes connections between the content and other parts of the discipline and other disciplines.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays extensive content knowledge and actively pursues further learning.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays little understanding of prerequisite knowledge important for student learning of the content.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST demonstrates some awareness of prerequisite learning as evidenced by a few references to prior learning, but makes incomplete or inaccurate links to current content.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST creates plans and practices which reflect understanding of prerequisite learning by creating relationships and making complete and accurate links to current content.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST effectively uses multiple representations and explanations of subject matter concepts that capture key ideas and links them to students' prior understandings.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST exhibits a minimal understanding of the fit between the curriculum materials and content development.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST evaluates teaching resources and curriculum materials for their comprehensiveness, accuracy and usefulness for presenting particular ideas and concepts.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST develops and uses curricula that encourage students to see, question, and interpret ideas from diverse perspectives.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;">S</div> <p>The ST creates interdisciplinary learning experiences that allow students to integrate knowledge, skills, and methods of inquiry from several areas and make connections to everyday life.</p>

Comments:

2. What to Teach: INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING SKILLS

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays minimal understanding of child development, different approaches to learning, student interests or cultural heritage.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays general understanding of child development, different approaches to learning, student interests, and cultural heritage.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays thorough understanding of child development, different approaches to learning, student interests, and cultural heritage.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays thorough knowledge of child development and learning styles, including exceptionalities.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST provides materials and resources which offer no variety and do not support the instructional goals.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST provides some materials and resources which support the instructional goals while engaging students in meaningful learning.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST provides most materials and resources which support the instructional goals, and which engages most students in meaningful learning.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST provides materials and resources which support instructional goals, and engage students in meaningful learning. There is evidence of student participation in selecting materials.</p>

Comments:

3. How to Teach: KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays little knowledge of developmental characteristics of age groups.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays generally accurate knowledge of developmental characteristics.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays knowledge of typical developmental characteristics.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">S</div> <p>The ST displays knowledge of developmental characteristics, with an understanding of individual variation within each area of development (social, emotional, cognitive, physical)</p>

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The ST displays no evidence that students' skills and knowledge are important.	The ST displays evidence that students' skills and knowledge are important, but only for the class as a whole.	The ST displays evidence that the knowledge and skills of groups of students are being considered.	The ST displays evidence that the knowledge and skills of each student in the class are being considered.								

Comments:

4. How to Teach: ADAPTING INSTRUCTION FOR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S
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F	S										
The ST conveys a passive attitude toward students.	The ST plans for students as individuals and assists them in the learning process.	Students can learn and assists them in learning at their highest levels and persists in helping all children achieve success.	The ST not only makes students feel valued for their potential as people but also helps them to value each other.								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S
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The ST displays little understanding as to how diversity affects learning.	The ST recognizes that students do have different needs and learn in different ways.	The ST is fully aware that students are different and that learning can be influenced by these differences.	The ST demonstrates a clear understanding that students' learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents, and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family and community values.								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table>	F	S
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The ST displays a minimal knowledge of the various approaches to learning and makes few attempts to design	The ST displays different approaches to learning and makes few attempts to	The ST employs various approaches to learning and usually uses appropriate	The ST uses different approaches to learning (i.e., learning styles, multiple intelligences, performance modes, etc.) and consistently uses this information when designing								

instruction that focuses on student needs.	incorporate appropriate strategies when designing instruction.	strategies when designing instruction.	instruction.								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST displays little knowledge of the various areas of exceptionality and makes no accommodations for instruction.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST displays limited knowledge of the various areas of exceptionality and changes in instructional practices and makes few accommodations for instruction.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST displays solid understanding of the various areas of exceptionality and shows consistency when adapting instructional practices.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST displays knowledge in all areas of exceptionality (i.e., learning disabilities, perceptual difficulties, physical, mental and emotional challenges) and willingly uses high quality accommodations when instructing diverse learners.</p>	F	S
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F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

Comments:

5. How to Teach: MULTIPLE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST selects content which is inappropriate and unclear or uses poor examples and analogies.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST selects content which is inconsistent in quality. Some are done skillfully, with good examples; other portions are difficult to follow.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST selects content which is appropriate and links well with students' knowledge and experience.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST selects content which is appropriate and links well with students' knowledge and experience. The ST provides opportunities for the students to apply their knowledge.</p>	F	S
F	S										
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<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides activities and assignments which are inappropriate for</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides some activities and assignments</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides most activities and assignments which are</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides activities which cognitively engage all students as they explore content. The ST initiates or adapts activities and projects to enhance</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
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F	S										

students in terms of their age or backgrounds. Students are not engaged mentally.	which are appropriate for students and engage them mentally, but other lessons do not.	developmentally and age appropriate to students. Almost all students are cognitively engaged.	understanding.								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides instructional materials and resources which are unsuitable to the instructional goals.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>ST's instructional materials and resources are partially suitable to the instructional goals. The students' level of mental engagement is moderate.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>ST's instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional goals and engage students mentally.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides instructional materials and resources which are suitable for instructional goals and engage students mentally. The ST initiates the choice, adaptations, or creation of material to enhance their instructional purposes.</p>	F	S
F	S										
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F	S										
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<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST adheres rigidly to an instructional plan, even when a change will clearly improve a lesson.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST attempts to adjust a lesson, with mixed results.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST makes minor adjustments to lessons, and the adjustments occur smoothly.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST successfully makes a major adjustment to a lesson.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

Comments:

6. How to Teach: CLASSROOM MOTIVATION AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST displays negative interactions with students and is sarcastic and uncaring.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST uses understandings of how social groups function and</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST uses caring communications and is generally warm, friendly, and</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides many opportunities for critical thinking, independent problem</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

<p>The students exhibit disrespect towards the ST. A negative learning environment exists.</p>	<p>influence people, and how people influence groups to establish a positive learning environment. A neutral learning environment exists.</p>	<p>collaborative with students and peers. The ST varies his/her role (instructor, facilitator, coach, audience, team member) to promote optimum learning. A positive learning environment exists.</p>	<p>solving and performance. The ST uses a range of effective strategies such as composure, and models mutual respect to develop positive relationships, cooperation, and purposeful learning. A constant positive learning environment exists.</p>								
<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST and student interactions are generally negative and nonproductive.</p>	F	S	<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST and student interactions are positive and little negative behavior is exhibited toward each other.</p>	F	S	<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST and student assume responsibility for their actions and responsibilities. Attitudes and behaviors are positive and caring.</p>	F	S	<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST and students maintain continuous mutual respect and a high level of trust for each other. Attitudes and behaviors are at the highest level to effect a positive and productive learning environment.</p>	F	S
F	S										
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<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST cannot utilize the environmental variables of resources, time, space, activities and attention to provide a learning environment.</p>	F	S	<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST occasionally plans for a few environmental variables to extend the daily lessons and promote learning.</p>	F	S	<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST regularly plans for the integration of environmental variables (e.g., outdoor activities, local projects and initiatives) to provide activities for most students, as an extension of daily lessons.</p>	F	S	<p style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">F</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S</td> </tr> </table> </p> <p>The ST consistently organizes, allocates and manages resources of time, space, activities, and attention to provide active and equitable engagement of students in productive tasks.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

Comments:

7. How to Have Caring Communication: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>
The ST's questions are virtually all of poor quality (e.g. questions do not invite a response or require single word responses).	The ST provides a few questions which invite a response.	The ST provides adequate time for students to respond. ST's questions are age appropriate and divergent.	The ST provides adequate time for students to respond. Students formulate questions, too. The ST's questions are consistently age appropriate and divergent.
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>
The ST mediates all questions and answers using predominantly recitation style. The ST does not demonstrate sensitivity to culture and gender differences.	The ST makes some attempt to engage students in a true discussion, with uneven results and is somewhat conscious of gender and cultural differences during discussion.	Classroom interaction represents true discussion, with the ST stepping, when appropriate, to the side. The ST communicates in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and gender differences but is not consistent in doing so all the time.	The ST facilitates students assuming responsibility for success of the discussion, initiating topics and making unsolicited contributions. The ST consistently communicates in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and gender differences, such as appropriate eye contact and interpretation of body language and verbal statements.
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">F</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-left: 10px;">S</div>
The ST does not use visuals to enhance the lesson.	The ST periodically uses a few visuals to enhance the lesson.	The ST frequently uses media visuals to enhance the lesson.	The ST uses a variety of media communication tools to enhance the lesson, including audio-visual aids and computers to enrich learning opportunities as a regular part of the learning experience.

Comments:

8. How to Self Evaluate: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED								
<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST uses little or no assessment techniques to evaluate student achievement, or the proposed assessment contains no clear criteria or standards.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST uses assessment techniques to evaluate student achievement and progress throughout the placement, but the criteria developed are unclear.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST uses a variety of assessment techniques to evaluate student achievement and progress throughout the placement, and the criteria developed are clear.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST uses a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques (e.g., observation, authentic assessment, teacher-made tests, and peer assessments) to evaluate student achievement and progress throughout the placement, the criteria are clear, and there is evidence of pre-assessment.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains few useful records of student performance and is unable to communicate student progress to students, parents, and colleagues.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains records of student performance, but demonstrates limited ability to communicate student progress to students, parents, and colleagues.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains useful records of student performance and communicates student progress to students, parents, and colleagues in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains detailed records of student performance and consistently communicates student progress to students, parents, and colleagues.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST lacks congruence between content and methods of assessment.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST appropriately assesses some, but not all, of the instructional outcomes and objectives through the proposed approach.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST appropriately assesses all instructional outcomes and objectives, but the approach is more suitable for some than others.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST appropriately selects, constructs and/or uses assessment strategies completely congruent with instructional outcomes and objectives necessary for meeting curriculum-based standards.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

Comments:

9. A Reflective Decision Maker: PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST is unable to assess the effectiveness of the lesson and makes no suggestions for improvement.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST accurately evaluates the lesson's effectiveness and makes general suggestions for improvement of the lesson. The ST follows the curriculum directed by manuals and materials provided by the school system as the teaching and learning base.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST accurately assesses the lesson's effectiveness and extent to which it achieved its goals and makes a few specific suggestions to improve the lesson. The ST uses the materials provided by the district and supplements activities with materials, books, and research to create a more in-depth understanding for student learning.</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST accurately assesses the lesson's effectiveness and extent to which goals were met, citing specific examples from the lesson and drawing on an extensive repertoire of skills, sites specific alternative actions for success of the lesson. The ST uses materials provided by the district as a supplement to instruction, which is created by the ST and the student for a more in-depth knowledge base. The ST uses classroom observation, information about the students, and research as sources for evaluating the outcome of teaching and learning, and as a basis for experimenting with, reflecting on, and revising practice.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

Comments:

10. A Reflective Decision Maker: PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains disorganized information concerning students' completion of assignments,</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains rudimentary information concerning student completion of assignments, student</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains complete information concerning student completion of assignments,</p>	F	S	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST and student collaborate in maintaining information concerning student completion of assignments, student progress in learning, and non-instructional</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

information on student progress, and non-instructional activities.	progress, and non-instructional activities.	student progress, and non-instructional activities.	activities.								
<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides little information about instructional programs, does not respond to parents (e.g., parent letter, telephone calls, or email) in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST participates in school activities for parent communication and adheres to school's required procedures in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST communicates and provides frequent information to parents concerning student progress and programs in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST provides frequent information concerning both positive and negative aspects of student progress. The ST involves both students and families in planning projects and preparing materials in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST's relationships with faculty and staff are negative or self-serving. The ST avoids becoming involved in school projects or events.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains cordial relationships with faculty and staff to fulfill duties the school requires. The ST participates in school events when specifically asked.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST displays a supportive, cooperative role with faculty and staff. The ST volunteers to participate in school events, making a substantial contribution.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST volunteers to participate in school events making a substantial contribution as he/she assumes a leadership role in at least some aspect of school life.</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

Comments:

**11. A Reflective Decision Maker:
FOSTERS RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOL COLLEAGUES, PARENTS, AND
COMMUNITY AGENCIES**

Level of Performance

UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED								
<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST does not display evidence of positive relationships with colleagues and does not participate in school events (colleagues defined as</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains a cordial relationship with colleagues and participates in school events only when asked.</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST maintains a cooperative relationship with colleagues. There is an occasional sharing of ideas, student information</p>	F	S	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> </tr> </table> <p>The ST actively seeks and shares with colleagues concerning student history, materials, strategies, and available resources. There is a willingness to further peer collaboration and accept responsibilities beyond</p>	F	S
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										
F	S										

University administration and faculty and placement administration and faculty).		and materials, and accepts leadership roles in school projects and events.	the regular schedule.
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST shares little information with parents or guardians in conjunction with cooperating teacher; parent concerns are not addressed.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST completes required conferences with parents and guardians, keeping responses to a minimum in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST provides frequent information to parents regarding the instructional program and student progress; she/he is available to respond to concerns as are appropriate and related to the ST in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST maintains close contact with parents in order to share information regarding the instructional program, to apprise parents of student progress and to respond to all such concerns with sensitivity in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST does not pursue community outreach or involvement of other professional agencies in planning for and meeting the needs of individual students in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST pursues links with community agencies when a specific need arises in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST pursues links with professionals from the learner's other environments and recognizes the on-going influence community factors have on student success in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">F S</div> <p>The ST identifies and uses community resources to foster student learning, outreach reflects student interests and student needs. The ST values and respects all aspects of the student's life and learning in conjunction with cooperating teacher.</p>

Comments:

This evaluation instrument was developed from the INTASC Standards and the work of Charlotte Danielson.

Appendix D

Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation Form for Student Professional Knowledge and Practice

 Student/Candidate's Last Name First Middle

Subject(s) Taught _____ Grade Level _____

This form is to serve as a permanent record of a student teacher/candidate's professional performance evaluation during a specific time period, based on specific criteria. This form must be used at least twice during the 12-week (minimum) student teaching experience.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Directions: Examine all sources of evidence provided by the student teacher/candidate and bear in mind the aspects of teaching for each of the four categories used in this form.

Check the appropriate aspects of student teaching, and indicate the sources of evidence used to determine the evaluation of the results in each category. Assign an evaluation for each of the four categories and then assign an overall evaluation of performance. Sign the form and gain the signature of the student teacher.

Category I: Planning and Preparation — Student teacher/candidate demonstrates thorough knowledge of content and pedagogical skills in planning and preparation. Student teacher makes plans and sets goals based on the content to be taught/learned, knowledge of assigned students, and the instructional context.

Alignment: 354.33. (1)(i)(A), (B), (C), (G), (H)

Student Teacher/Candidate's performance appropriately demonstrates:

- Knowledge of content
- Knowledge of pedagogy
- Knowledge of Pennsylvania's K-12 Academic Standards
- Knowledge of students and how to use this knowledge to impart instruction
- Use of resources, materials, or technology available through the school or district
- Instructional goals that show a recognizable sequence with adaptations for individual student needs
- Assessments of student learning aligned to the instructional goals and adapted as required for student needs
- Use of educational psychological principles/theories in the construction of lesson plans and setting instructional goals

Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles and number)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson/Unit Plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Teacher Interviews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information About Students
(Including IEP's) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Category	Exemplary 3 Points	Superior 2 Points	Satisfactory 1 Point	Unsatisfactory 0 Points
Criteria for Rating	<u>The candidate consistently and thoroughly demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate usually and extensively demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate sometimes and adequately demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate rarely or never and inappropriately or superficially demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>
Rating (Indicate ✓)				
<u>Justification for Evaluation</u>				

Student/Candidate's Last Name _____ First _____ Middle _____

Category II: Classroom Environment – Student teacher/candidate establishes and maintains a purposeful and equitable environment for learning, in which students feel safe, valued, and respected, by instituting routines and setting clear expectations for student behavior.
Alignment: 354.33. (1)(i)(E), (B)

Student Teacher/Candidate's performance appropriately demonstrates:

- Expectations for student achievement with value placed on the quality of student work
- Attention to equitable learning opportunities for students
- Appropriate interactions between teacher and students and among students
- Effective classroom routines and procedures resulting in little or no loss of instructional time
- Clear standards of conduct and effective management of student behavior
- Appropriate attention given to safety in the classroom to the extent that it is under the control of the student teacher
- Ability to establish and maintain rapport with students

Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, and number)

<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources/Materials/Technology/Space
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Teacher/Candidate Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

<u>Category</u>	<u>Exemplary 3 Points</u>	<u>Superior 2 Points</u>	<u>Satisfactory 1 Point</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory 0 Points</u>
<u>Criteria for Rating</u>	<u>The candidate consistently and thoroughly demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate usually and extensively demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate sometimes and adequately demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate rarely or never and inappropriately or superficially demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>
<u>Rating</u> (Indicate √)				

Justification for Evaluation

Student/Candidate's Last Name _____ First _____ Middle _____

Category III – Instructional Delivery - Student teacher/candidate, through knowledge of content, pedagogy and skill in delivering instruction, engages students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies.
Alignment: 354.33. (1)(i)(D),(F),(G)

Student Teacher/candidate's performance appropriately demonstrates:

- Use of knowledge of content and pedagogical theory through his/her instructional delivery
- Instructional goals reflecting Pennsylvania K-12 standards
- Communication of procedures and clear explanations of content
- Use of instructional goals that show a recognizable sequence, clear student expectations, and adaptations for individual student needs
- Use of questioning and discussion strategies that encourage many students to participate
- Engagement of students in learning and adequate pacing of instruction
- Feedback to students on their learning
- Use of informal and formal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor student learning
- Flexibility and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of students
- Integration of disciplines within the educational curriculum

Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)

<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Assignment Sheets
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Work
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Teacher/Candidate Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Category	Exemplary 3 Points	Superior 2 Points	Satisfactory 1 Point	Unsatisfactory 0 Points
Criteria for Rating	<u>The candidate consistently and thoroughly demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate usually and extensively demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate sometimes and adequately demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate rarely or never and inappropriately or superficially demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>
Rating (Indicate √)				

Justification for Evaluation

 Student/Candidate's Last Name First Middle

Category IV – Professionalism - Student teacher/candidate demonstrates qualities that characterize a professional person in aspects that occur in and beyond the classroom/building.
Alignment: 354.33. (1)(i)(I),(J)

- Student Teacher/Candidate's performance appropriately demonstrates:
- Knowledge of school and district procedures and regulations related to attendance, punctuality and the like
 - Knowledge of school or district requirements for maintaining accurate records and communicating with families
 - Knowledge of school and/or district events
 - Knowledge of district or college's professional growth and development opportunities
 - Integrity and ethical behavior, professional conduct as stated in Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators; and local, state, and federal, laws and regulations
 - Effective communication, both oral and written with students, colleagues, paraprofessionals, related service personnel, and administrators
 - Ability to cultivate professional relationships with school colleagues
 - Knowledge of Commonwealth requirements for continuing professional development and licensure

- Sources of Evidence** (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Observations | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Assignment Sheets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informal Observations/Visits | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Teacher Interviews | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Written Documentation | |

Category	Exemplary 3 Points	Superior 2 Points	Satisfactory 1 Point	Unsatisfactory 0 Points
Criteria for Rating	<u>The candidate consistently and thoroughly demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate usually and extensively demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate sometimes and adequately demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate rarely or never and inappropriately or superficially demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>
Rating (Indicate √)				

Justification for Evaluation

<u>Overall Rating</u>				
<u>Category</u>	<u>Exemplary (Minimum of 12 Points)</u>	<u>Superior (Minimum of 8 Points)</u>	<u>Satisfactory (Minimum of 4 Points)</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory (0 Points)</u>
<u>Criteria for Rating</u>	<u>The candidate consistently and thoroughly demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate usually and extensively demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate sometimes and adequately demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>	<u>The candidate rarely or never and inappropriately or superficially demonstrates indicators of performance.</u>
<u>Rating</u> (Indicate ✓)				

Note: This assessment instrument must be used a minimum of two times. **A satisfactory rating (1) in each of the 4 categories, resulting in a minimum total of at least (4) points, must be achieved on the final summative rating to favorably complete this assessment.**

Justification for Overall Rating:

Student Teacher/Candidate's Last Name First Middle

District/IU School

Interview/Conference Date

School Year: _____ Term: _____

Required Signatures:
Supervisor/Evaluator:

Date:

Student/Teacher
Candidate:

Date:

(Confidential Document)

Catherine A. Traister
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Educational Background

- 2005 D.Ed. The Pennsylvania State University
Major Program: Curriculum & Instruction
Emphasis: Supervision and Instruction
- 1993 M.S. The Pennsylvania State University
Health Education
- 1980 B.S. Lock Haven University
Health, Physical Education and Recreation

Professional Experiences

- 2004-Present Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, PA.
Chair, Department of Health and Physical Education
- 1991-Present Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, PA.
Associate Professor
Department of Health and Physical Education
- 1/91-6/91 Warrior Run High School, Turbotville, PA
Long-term Substitute; Health and Physical Education Teacher
- 8/90-1/91 South Williamsport Area School District, PA.
Long-term Substitute; Elementary Physical Education Teacher