Utilizing Common Goals and Assessments Across Programs for Improvement

Introduction

The College of Education (COE) was facing a challenge of developing a shared goal for program improvement across the college’s teacher preparation programs. Utilizing the research of improvement science, we implemented a process of disciplined inquiry to examine the variances and outcomes between COE teacher preparation programs. We determined that the COE needed to better align candidate intake, assessment, and graduation processes across our five teacher education programs. We have now taken strategic steps to create a set of common assessments for use across all of our teacher licensure programs.

UHM COE Theory of Action and Key Metrics

Goal: By FY 2016-17, COE will prepare 100% of graduates to serve as effective new teachers (aligned by HAC/NCES standards for purposes of this project) capable of increasing P12 student learning.

1. Establish consistent high quality of assessment and developmental experience, using manufacturer assessment study and COE data to triangulate evidence that our candidates are well-prepared.
2. Develop and implement a common data system to allow for research of improvement science, standardized tests, and related evidence from reports of other assessments (e.g., NCEA, TEAS, etc.) to be used to support the creation of a common assessment system.
3. Use the data from the COE system of surveys, observations, practitioner work, and dispositions assessments used across the program areas to ensure that COE attracts, retains, and graduates diverse, high needs candidates.
4. Follow a process of disciplined inquiry to examine the variances and outcomes between COE teacher preparation programs, and aligned to revised areas of improvement (CAEP standard 3).

Principles of Improvement Science

1. Make the work problem-specific and user-centered.
2. Focus on variation in performance.
3. See the system that produces the current outcomes.
4. We cannot improve at scale what we cannot measure.
5. Use disciplined inquiry to drive improvement.
6. Accelerate learning through networked communities.

Setting Improvement Goals

- **Inputs**
  - What are we doing within our programs to prepare teachers?
- **Outputs**
  - Is it working? (Outcomes)
- **Metrics**
  - What will we do together to improve?

Example: Professional Dispositions Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Mentor Teacher</th>
<th>COE Field Supervisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Needs improvement (low observed)</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs improvement (moderate observed)</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs improvement (high observed)</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs improvement (very high observed)</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four Main Insights

1. A process is required to measure and manage the work of improvement;
2. Change is difficult, and, without clear goals and work-specific levers for change, programs stay stuck in their current position;
3. Stakeholder input is critical, but it requires strategic facilitation so that input leads to action;
4. Providing data is not enough - understanding what it means and how it drives future action is a skill that is built over time and best done when driven by practitioners.

Identifying Critical Action Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Expected Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop common assessments for measuring candidate performance (content knowledge, planning, instruction, assessment, dispositions)</td>
<td>Assessments now in use vary widely between programs and may not always tell us what we need to know about the performance of our candidates in the context of our definition of effective teaching.</td>
<td><em>Assessments provide accurate measures of relevant content knowledge, pedagogy and teaching skills required for effective first year service</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Align candidate content, planning, instruction, assessment, dispositions assessments used across the program areas will indicate future performance on Danielson domains for our teacher candidates</td>
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