

Case Study #4: Examining Completers' Teaching Effectiveness 2019-2020
During COVID-19 Pandemic

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
Component 4.1 Impact on P-12 Student Learning and Development

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Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to provide additional evidence of program completers' teaching skills using multiple measures; the influence of program completers on P-12 student learning and development, on classroom instruction, and on schools; and the satisfaction of completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation (CAEP Standard 4: Program Impact). The Randolph College EPP case study design was developed four years ago by EPP faculty as part of our quality assurance plan.

The Virginia Department of Education does not provide P-12 learning data or teacher effectiveness data to Educator Preparation Programs at Virginia colleges or universities. Therefore, a case study of program completers in their first three years of teaching allows us to evaluate our completers' teaching effectiveness. Using the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) teaching standards and learning progressions as a conceptual framework, we conducted this case study to understand five first-year teachers' perceptions of their preparation, classroom outcomes, level of confidence, and the ways in which they could have been better or more prepared for the classroom.

In order to analyze our program's effectiveness once candidates enter the classroom, we conducted a case study to explore the experiences of recent graduates in surrounding school divisions. The research team included all EPP faculty as well as a case study researcher (a college staff member with preparation, expertise, and experience in teaching and learning). The case study researcher helped gather data from participants through structured observation protocols and pre- and post-observation interviews. All four components of CAEP Standard 4 were addressed in the 2019-2020 case study and include the following: completer influence on P-12 student learning and development, indicators of teaching effectiveness, satisfaction of employers (principals), and satisfaction of completers. The case study elicits reflections by completers about their preparation and teaching practice and provides us an opportunity to conduct classroom observations. This observational component permits us to study our completers under natural conditions as they teach with no manipulation or control of variables. Continuation of the case study method is an effective way to demonstrate completers' teaching effectiveness in light of the lack of student achievement data from the Virginia Department of Education (i.e., Virginia SOL assessment data). Based on our previous case studies (Lindeman, Schimmoeller, & Woods, 2018; Lindeman, Schimmoeller, Duke, & Howell, 2019; Lindeman, Schimmoeller, Chamberlin, & Howell, 2020), we set the following goals for the current study:

- Gather quantitative and qualitative documentation to provide evidence that Randolph College EPP completers contribute to an expected level of student-learning growth; that completers effectively apply the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions the RC program is designed to foster; and that employers and completers are satisfied with the preparation program.
- Compare the current case study findings to those from the previous three case studies, examining trends or changes in perceptions about completers' teaching experience and P-12 student learning as well as teaching during a pandemic.
- Reflect on and suggest program modifications for the RC EPP and prepare the next case study protocol as part of continuous improvement.

Our first two case studies were grounded in Linda Darling-Hammond's (1999) claim that effective teachers are the product of exemplary teacher preparation programs. She purports candidates must "learn about learning and about the structures and modes of inquiry of their disciplines so they can translate what they know into effective curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessments" (p.19). Darling-Hammond asserts candidates who do not matriculate from exemplary preparation programs will not sustain research-based best teaching practices when they enter their own classrooms. Recently, Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) describe an updated framework for teacher preparation programs. Building on the construct of "deeper learning," Hammond and Oakes write that "classrooms where deeper learning is the goal are ones in which challenging academic content is paired with engaging, experiential, and innovative learning approaches" (p. 4), ultimately equipping students for lifelong learning. To this end, the field of learning sciences provides guiding principles for teacher preparation programs to establish practica and student teaching experiences where teacher candidates practice their skills assessing students' prior knowledge, helping students learn how to organize knowledge and apply skills outside of the classroom, and more important, assisting students in understanding how to manage their own learning (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019). The Virginia Department of Education's Five Cs initiative (<http://www.virginiaisforlearners.virginia.gov/media-library/>) aligns with this deeper learning focus. The profile of a Virginia graduate establishes a new set of expectations known as the 5 Cs: critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship skills. Therefore, our educator preparation program completers should be able to demonstrate how their students are learning skills to be lifelong learners.

The EPP's rigorous coursework, extensive and varied practica, and emphasis on teachers as researchers in their own classrooms results in effective teachers and teachers who remain in classrooms and engage with learning communities. Using a yearly case study allows the EPP faculty to assess and continually improve how we support our teacher candidates through licensure so they have a solid foundation from which to grow, gaining the confidence, knowledge, and skills needed to facilitate student learning and growth.

A long-term goal of this project is to examine the influence of the EPP over time. Moreover, a deeper investigation into various aspects of the program will assist education department faculty in providing completers with the skills and knowledge they need to maintain research-based teaching practices throughout their teaching careers. As we analyzed our previous two case study artifacts, and collected information from program completers, CAEP Standard 4 guided us in examining the broader scope of preparing candidates who, according to Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, and Shulman (2005), "support their students toward productive lives and careers" (p. 441). Furthermore, we continue to work diligently with our stakeholders to provide our candidates rigorous opportunities to move toward "deeper learning" to "upend the old but persistent views about uneven distribution for learning abilities across various student populations" (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019). The case study method is our best way to gather multiple artifacts about our completer cohorts with opportunities to uncover new ways to improve our program.

The RC EPP finds the case study helpful in our continuous improvement. Our focus on the use of student data to drive improvement in what we offer students and how we model research-based

instructional practices is support from analyzing our completers' comments, principals' perceptions, and supporting artifacts. We found our program completers understand how to ask good questions about student learning and are able to collect data which in turn drives more effective instructional practice and classroom processes. We find that the experiences at Randolph provide completers skills to make changes using a grassroots approach. Completers are able to look at data and analyze and use data to regularly inform instructional practices as recommended by the findings in the *Carnegie Continuous Improvement in Education* white paper (Park, Hironaka, Carver, & Nordstrum, 2013).

The use of data to support continuous improvement recommendations is key. Data collection is one of our challenges. Though meaningful, the case study approach is time and resource intensive. Beginning fall 2017 we have developed a specialized data management system to address our program goals related to continuous improvement and measures. We strive to emphasize the importance of candidate learning as much as student learning, recognizing that incorporating new skills and developing different mindsets about the professional work of teachers at all stages of their careers requires deliberate instruction and practice.

Method

Participants and Data Collection Schedule

The case study researcher was a college-assigned staff member with an education background and experience in observation and supervision; her role was to oversee the case study and to collect data. An initial cohort of five participants was invited to be part of the case study and reflected a purposeful stratified sample drawn from completer years 2018-2020. After IRB approval was obtained, the cohort group was contacted and a virtual focus group was scheduled for early October 2020. The participants work in rural, urban, and suburban settings within Virginia and other states. The completers include teachers of elementary, secondary, and special education. Participants are all practicing teachers who hold full-time positions and graduated from the EPP program within the last three years. See Table 1 for the list of participants' current teaching locations and licensure areas. The population of students taught by participants included second graders through twelfth graders, many of whom receive free or reduced lunch. Students are diverse in race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. In phase two (November – December 2020), the case study researcher scheduled virtual classroom observations and virtual post-observation interviews.

Table 1. Participant Teaching Assignments 2020-2021

Participant pseudonym	Teaching assignment Fall 2020	Teacher Licensure	Instructional Delivery/Observation	School Type
Jane	2nd grade / English, Math, Science, History	Elem PreK 6	Remote Observation: asynchronous	Public
John	Division Wide Program- Special Education K-5	Special Education: General Curriculum + Adaptive	Remote Observation: N.A.	Public
Carlos	5th Language Arts and Math	Elem PreK 6, Special Education: General Curriculum	Remote Observation: asynchronous	Public
Sally	4th Grade Math and Language Arts	Elem PreK 6	Hybrid (2 days in person) & Remote Observation: asynchronous	Public
Alice	Language Arts 6-12	English, Special Education: General Curriculum	Hybrid Observation: Synchronous	Private

Data Collection

Data collected include the focus group interview transcript, individual interviews after an observation of synchronous or asynchronous teaching, pre- and post-observation notes, and notes from principal interviews. Data also included low-inference classroom observation notes compiled on the Randolph College Educator Preparation Program Classroom Observation Form (Table 2A). The case study researcher met virtually with EPP faculty and created a checklist of suggested artifacts we anticipated the completers would be able to provide to demonstrate their influence on student learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The checklist included student assessments (division or teacher generated) from academic year 2018-2019 or fall 2020 through winter 2021 for pre/post data; an updated resume including leadership roles within the school or division; a record of projects completed within the school or classroom with examples of student growth and application of college/career readiness; other records highlighting professional growth, training, use of technology, or co-teaching experience as they relate to CAEP standards; an end-of-year evaluation by an administrator (optional); and sample SMART goals or a similar yearly project to show instructional growth (optional). While the list mirrored items collected for the 2018-2019 case study, it was noted that many of the items on the list would be impossible to gather given the current teaching conditions. This anticipated change in data collection resulted in the addition of two individual interview questions.

Individual surveys, focus group and interviews. The case study researcher scheduled the initial focus group meeting with completers during which they discussed the focus group questions (see Table 2). After each scheduled virtual classroom observation (four total), the case study researcher scheduled a separate thirty-minute Zoom meeting. The case study researcher submitted these documents to the EPP for analysis.

Classroom observations and completer artifacts. Observations of the teachers instructing in their classrooms were modified due to COVID-19. The case study researcher arranged to watch a synchronous or asynchronous class during late November. The researcher used a modified low-inference running record of what was observed by the teachers and the students. Low-inference features during instruction are examples of concrete and objective teaching behaviors. These behaviors are recorded by the observer with very little inference or opinion of student or teacher responses or reactions and may include things like how the teacher notifies students transitions will occur or how teachers maintain classroom management. (Rosenshine & Furst, 1971). Following each observation, the researcher met with the teacher for a virtual interview and then wrote a summary statement using the Randolph College Educator Preparation Program Classroom Observation Form (Table 2A). The researcher collected lesson plans, resumes, summative evaluations, and de-identified student data voluntarily provided by completers as evidence of teacher effectiveness. Due to COVID-19 restrictions related to testing and the handling of paperwork, all documents were submitted to the case study researcher by email. The case study researcher focused on individual Zoom meetings to acquire participants' description of their current status as a remote, hybrid, or in-person teacher. The case study researcher submitted these documents to the EPP for analysis.

Employer (principal) survey. The case study researcher contacted completers' principals by email due to COVID-19 on site restrictions. A follow-up phone call was made when appropriate. A link to the Google form employer survey was provided by the Randolph College IT Department to the case study researcher. Each participant's principal received an email link in mid-November and was asked to complete the survey within one week. All completed Google forms were submitted to the EPP for analysis.

At the completion of the case study researcher's data collection, the department's CAEP coordinator arranged a virtual post-data collection meeting to review the inventory of the artifacts collected. The discussion also included a review of the process along with notes about follow-up contacts. All artifacts were then stored in our secure cloud-based digital repository.

Table 2

Focus Group and Individual Questions for Participants

Question 1. Thinking about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why?

Question 2. Tell us about your successes and highlights so far during your teaching career.

Question 3. Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.

Question 4. How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain different approaches (formative and summative).

Question 5. What employment milestones have you reached (e.g., promotion, leadership positions)?

Question 6. What is your involvement in the school outside of your classroom?

Question 7. Do you perceive your teacher preparation you received at Randolph College as relevant to the responsibilities you confront on the job? Was your preparation experience effective? (*This was a new question added based on findings from last year's case study and CAEP Standard 4, component 4.4.*)

Question 8. Is there anything we haven't covered that you'd like to share about your preparation here at Randolph's teacher education program?

*Additional individual zoom interview questions were to capture the current state of teaching during a pandemic:

What evidence can you share showing academic success of your students?

How has COVID-19 affected your teaching? How were decisions related to lesson planning and implementation made? Did you develop your own or are lesson plans division-wide?

Table 2A. Randolph College Educator Preparation Program Classroom Observation Form

This EPP case study classroom observation form was created for the purposes of assessing the influence Randolph College's Educator Preparation Program completers have on Pk-12 students' learning and development. It is based on the Virginia Department of Education *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers* effective January 10, 2020 https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/performance_evaluation/teacher/index.shtml

The case study coordinator observed asynchronous or synchronous teaching and wrote a summary of the teacher and student interactions, method of delivery, Standards of Learning target, use of technology, and teaching strategies. Evidence of observed performance indicators was summarized for each case study participant.

Performance Standard 1: Professional Knowledge

The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, and the developmental needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.

Sample Performance Indicators

- 1.1 Effectively addresses appropriate curriculum standards.
- 1.2 Integrates key content elements and facilitates students' use of higher level thinking skills in instruction.

- 1.3 Demonstrates ability to link present content with past and future learning experiences, other subject areas, and real world experiences and applications.
- 1.4 Demonstrates an accurate knowledge of the subject matter.
- 1.5 Demonstrates skills relevant to the subject area(s) taught.
- 1.6 Bases instruction on goals that reflect high expectations and an understanding of the subject.
- 1.7 Demonstrates an understanding of the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of the age group.
- 1.8 Communicates clearly and checks for understanding.

Performance Standard 2: Instructional Planning

The teacher plans using the Virginia Standards of Learning, the school's curriculum, effective strategies, resources, and data to meet the needs of all students.

Sample Performance Indicators

- 2.1 Uses student learning data to guide planning.
- 2.2 Plans time realistically for pacing, content mastery, and transitions.
- 2.3 Plans for differentiated instruction.
- 2.4 Aligns lesson objectives to the school's curriculum and student learning needs.
- 2.5 Develops appropriate long- and short-range plans and adapts plans when needed.

Performance Standard 3: Instructional Delivery

The teacher effectively engages students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies in order to meet individual learning needs.

Sample Performance Indicators

- 3.1 Engages and maintains students in active learning.
- 3.2 Builds upon students' existing knowledge and skills.
- 3.3 Differentiates instruction to meet the students' needs.
- 3.4 Reinforces learning goals consistently throughout lessons.
- 3.5 Uses a variety of effective instructional strategies and resources.
- 3.6 Uses instructional technology to enhance student learning.
- 3.7 Communicates clearly and checks for understanding.

Performance Standard 4: Assessment of Student Learning

The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses all relevant data to measure student academic progress, guide instructional content and delivery methods, and provide timely feedback to both students and parents throughout the school year.

Sample Performance Indicators

- 4.1 Uses pre-assessment data to develop expectations for students, to differentiate instruction, and to document learning.

- 4.2 Involves students in setting learning goals and monitoring their own progress.
- 4.3 Uses a variety of assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and for the student population.
- 4.4 Aligns student assessment with established curriculum standards and benchmarks.
- 4.5 Uses assessment tools for both formative and summative purposes and uses grading practices that report final mastery in relationship to content goals and objectives.
- 4.6 Uses assessment tools for both formative and summative purposes to inform, guide, and adjust students' learning.
- 4.7 Gives constructive and frequent feedback to students on their learning.

Performance Standard 5: Learning Environment

The teacher uses resources, routines, and procedures to provide a respectful, positive, safe, student-centered environment that is conducive to learning.

Sample Performance Indicators

- 5.1 Arranges the classroom to maximize learning while providing a safe environment.
- 5.2 Establishes clear expectations, with student input, for classroom rules and procedures early in the school year, and enforces them consistently and fairly.
- 5.3 Maximizes instructional time and minimizes disruptions.
- 5.4 Establishes a climate of trust and teamwork by being fair, caring, respectful, and enthusiastic.
- 5.5 Promotes cultural sensitivity.
- 5.6 Respects students' diversity, including language, culture, race, gender, and special needs.
- 5.7 Actively listens and pays attention to students' needs and responses.
- 5.8 Maximizes instructional learning time by working with students individually as well as in small or whole groups.

Performance Standard 6: Professionalism

The teacher maintains a commitment to professional ethics, communicates effectively, and takes responsibility for and participates in professional growth that results in enhanced student learning.

Sample Performance Indicators

- 6.1 Collaborates and communicates effectively within the school community to promote students' well-being and success.
- 6.2 Adheres to federal and state laws, school and division policies, and ethical guidelines.
- 6.3 Incorporates learning from professional growth opportunities into instructional practice.
- 6.4 Sets goals for improvement of knowledge and skills.
- 6.5 Engages in activities outside the classroom intended for school and student enhancement.

- 6.6 Works in a collegial and collaborative manner with administrators, other school personnel, and the community.
- 6.7 Builds positive and professional relationships with parents/guardians through frequent and effective communication concerning students' progress.
- 6.8 Serves as a contributing member of the school's professional learning community through collaboration with teaching colleagues.
- 6.9 Demonstrates consistent mastery of standard oral and written English in all communication.

Data Analysis

Cross-case analysis was conducted in writing and with the case study researcher. All data were analyzed to capture completers' teaching effectiveness and perceptions about their educator preparation program experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The case study method described by Creswell and Poth (2018) was used as a guide for reviewing completers' artifacts. Our intent was to cast a wide net, gathering multiple pieces of evidence related to each of the InTASC standards. Each instrument had a target mean score or benchmark established by the EPP. Findings were organized by CAEP Standard 4 components.

Cohort group. Individual responses to the eight focus questions were coded using an etic approach, and themes related to attributes of teaching were developed from emergent codes (Wargo, 2013). Themes were tagged to the InTASC standards (1-10) and InTASC standard clusters (The Learner and Learning, Content Knowledge, Instructional Practice and Professional Responsibility). InTASC themes were tagged by question. Participant quotes were selected to support the themes for each question. The focus group recording was translated using the TacTiq Chrome extension and further editing was done by hand.

Student achievement data. Completers submitted student summative data in various formats. This was to be expected because they taught in three different school divisions and in varied teaching assignments. Again due to the pandemic, Virginia SOL assessment data were not available for Spring 2020. Divisions developed quarterly benchmark assessments in reading and math, which some participants were able to submit. Data submitted are described in Table 3.

Case study researcher lesson observations. Based on the recommendation from the 2020 case study review, rather than use the student teaching observation rubric, the case study researcher used a running record observation protocol to ascertain teacher and student interactions during the lesson. Per the New Teacher Project (2019), "one strategy for taking low-inference notes is to create a running record of what you are seeing in the classroom. The goal of a running record is to take objective notes that describe exactly what actions teachers and students are taking" (n. pag.). The researcher compiled the observations and a summary evaluation using the Randolph College Educator Preparation Program Classroom Observation Form (Table 2A). The researcher met with the completer virtually after reviewing the Zoom recordings to become familiar with the classroom environment, learning materials, and instructional technology along with the

completers' perceptions about the virtual learning experience, classroom management, and individual needs.

Employer (principal) surveys. The administrator/principal follow-up evaluation forms were returned to the EPP by the case study researcher. The data were recorded for the 22-item survey using a four-point Likert scale: 4=Highly Skilled (demonstrates the skill/disposition consistently), 3=Proficiently Skilled (demonstrates the skill on a regular basis with a minimum of support), 2=Not adequately skilled (requires regular support to demonstrate the skill), and 1=Skill level is not acceptable (is not able to demonstrate the skill without consistent support). Each item on the instrument was tagged to InTASC standards. Means and standard deviations were calculated for each item (see Table 8). A target mean score of 3.0 was established as acceptable competence in each skill. Comments were recorded anonymously. The researcher summarized the principal's comments after the meeting in a Word document. The summary comments were categorized by the four InTASC categories and are represented in Table 7.

Completer surveys. Two program completers submitted a Randolph College Graduate Follow-up Evaluation using the RC Google Forum. The four-point Likert scale for this instrument mirror the employer survey: 4=Highly Skilled (demonstrates the skill/disposition consistently), 3=Proficiently Skilled (demonstrates the skill on a regular basis with a minimum of support), 2=Not adequately skilled (requires regular support to demonstrate the skill), and 1=Skill level is not acceptable (is not able to demonstrate the skill without consistent support). Each item on the instrument was tagged to InTASC standards. Means and standard deviations were calculated for each item (see Table 10). A target mean of 3.0 was established.

Complete summative performance or SMART goals. Completers did not submit SMART goal data because their schools had waived this data collection requirement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional artifacts. One completer provided an updated resume with a list of technology skills, certifications, and information about leadership roles, committee work, awards, and additional comments about teaching. The resume was coded along with other qualitative data.

Results

It was a challenging data collection year thanks to COVID-19. The case study researcher, however, was able to view asynchronous teaching videos and schedule follow-up individual interviews to evaluate completers' teaching effectiveness. Gathered artifacts included completers' focus group comments, observation summaries by the case study researcher, employer (principal), completer surveys, student achievement data submitted by participants, and completer resumes. Traditionally, the case study researcher interviews the principal but it was determined it was not feasible. The findings are organized to show multiple ways the Randolph College completers in this cohort have an impact on P-12 student learning and development.

CAEP 4.1 Completer impact on P-12 student learning and development

Data reviewed for this section included student assessment data submitted by completers (Table 3) along with case study participants' responses to the focus group or individual interview questions (Table 4). Sample student performance data included division-created assessments for mathematics and reading (fourth and fifth grade). It was difficult to collect standardized assessment data during this case study cycle due to the pandemic, as end-of-year assessments were suspended in Spring 2020. Three participants submitted teacher-made assessments or division benchmark assessments from Fall 2020.

Table 3

Student Performance Data Submitted by Participants Revealing Student Achievement

Case Study Participant	School/Subject	Submitted Assessments (Identified Data)	Results/Comments
Jane	Rural/Elementary/ 2 nd grade	Focus group comments School has a state improvement plan	Daily formative questions to students: "Are you comfortable with this? Do you need more help with this?" Stated this process helped with assisting students who were struggling in math with remote support.
Sally	Urban/Elementary 4 th grade	ReFlex Math and IXL math progression n=12 Fall 2020 – Jan 2021	Due to the hybrid and remote learning the data did not show growth trends. 90% of the students need supports to review 4 th grade math skills.
Carlos	Urban/Elementary 5th	Reading Benchmark Q1 st and 2 nd Q 9weeks n=12 Q1 n=15 Q2 Division created reading assessment	Q1 25% scored 80% or higher Q2 40% scored 80% or higher Result: student growth
John	Urban/Elementary/Special Education Division level	Focus Group comments Spring 2020 observation	Reported about success with behavior supports for students with special needs transitioning to the traditional school routines
Alice	Private School/Language Arts/ Grades 6-12	Student prewriting samples and post writing samples (4)	Paragraph structure, thesis statement and supporting arguments were improved.

Further evidence was gathered by connecting the teaching effectiveness themes derived from participants' individual survey responses and focus group comments (see Table 4) to the InTASC teaching performance standards. Instances of each of the ten InTASC categories were found in participant interview data. These data demonstrate intentional planning, teaching strategies, assessments, collaboration, and leadership. Table 5 shows how data sources and the InTASC standards aligned.

Table 4

Participants' Responses to Focus or Individual Interview Questions Aggregated by InTASC Standards

InTASC Standard	Completer Comments
1 Learner Development	Carlos "Student motivation is very poor and by 5th grade, it is hard to recover it. Pacing is too fast. I am trying to teach students how to add and subtract fractions when they hardly know how to add and subtract whole numbers. Their prior knowledge is low."
2 Learning Differences	<p>Sally "feel that the only thing ...was blind-sighted by was how unprepared..to handle emotional/emergency situations with the students."</p> <p>Alice "Had several students that other teachers have told me "never talk" or "never do any work." This blows my mind because they are so comfortable speaking and doing assignments in my class. This has made me feel quite successful in my abilities and clearly leads to their success."</p>
3 Learning Environments	<p>Alice "confidently say that I find a way to make connections with every student. feel comfortable with my students, and they are comfortable with me. can keep it light and fun, and we can get real and serious"</p> <p>Sally "There was absolutely a lot of idealized classrooms when discussing what to do in the classroom and how to handle problems a, b, and c. And every piece of instruction in the program was about handling problems face-to-face. Of course, Randolph didn't know the pandemic was coming, but I can't do a lot of the things I was told were best practices simply because I have never met half my students in person."</p>
4 Content Knowledge	No tagged responses

InTASC Standard	Completer Comments
5 Application of Content	Jane “the creativity aspect of teaching to be difficult to achieve because of lack of time, lack of student motivation, lack of ability to relate the creative aspects to SOLs quickly enough.”
6 Assessment	<p>John “would have liked to learn or study a few more methods about data tracking.”</p> <p>Carlos “am having a hard time keeping meaningful data on students. This is in-part due to remote learning, but also in part to how many students there are vs. how many topics we cover quickly.”</p> <p>Carlos “don’t really have much evidence of academic success yet due to remote learning. I did learn that the majority of my students passed the Q1 math assessment created by...school based teachers. it was very taxing on the students. Hopefully in the future, there will be better metrics for analyzing student success and growth.”</p> <p>Sally “Within seven months last year my students increased their fact fluency by over 100%. And share data for math and reading growth from the program IXL”</p>
7 Planning for Instruction	<p>Sally “summer practicum [at a local elementary school] was most beneficial as it helped me be a good co-teacher in and out of the classroom. Now...plan so much with coaches, other 4th grade teachers, and even teachers from other grades. It was great to have the experience of working with another teacher who may have different opinions and teaching styles before having to do so professionally.”</p> <p>Carlos “I never seem to have enough time or materials to complete lessons that I think would be fun. I want to have a life outside of teaching, which cuts down on work outside of work hours. Unfortunately, teaching and home life seems to be a zero sum game.”</p> <p>Alice “Although I went into teaching with all intentions of teaching in public school, I have found myself at a private school with no standards I have to teach. It is a double-edged sword. I</p>

InTASC Standard	Completer Comments
	<p>have done it for a full semester and am realizing I am much more capable than I give myself credit for.”</p> <p>Carlos: “Real teaching, I sometimes find it difficult to find materials quickly enough. Also, we were able to plan really fun activities with students without having to worry about the student results on SOLs. With SOLs looming in the back of my mind now, I want to make sure they know content even if the teaching is not the most creative.”</p> <p>Alice “was prepared to take on my own classroom. Everyone experiences some imposter syndrome, and I definitely did in the first couple weeks to a month. However, I have grown much more comfortable and know that Randolph prepared me.”</p>
8 Instructional Strategies	<p>Sally “recently been awarded a grant for my classroom which I have purchased a new document camera and 2 new whiteboard tables”</p> <p>Jane “During my first year teaching the mindset shifted to working smarter not harder. I'm still doing a lot of work but trying to streamline the process.”</p>
9 Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	<p>Alice “I learn so much from my students every single day, and I really don't think there could be a more rewarding profession.”</p> <p>Carlos “the most beneficial classes at Randolph were the student teaching courses. The time to debrief with professors about what was going on in classes was very helpful.”</p>

InTASC Standard	Completer Comments
10 Leadership and Collaboration	Jane “the inconsistency within the pacing guides/curriculum. Teachers within the division have different interpretations of the standards due to lack of clarity and without a solid teaching program to follow there are gaps between the schools in the division and frustrations amongst teachers.”
How has COVID-19 affected your teaching? How were decisions related to lesson planning and implementation made? Did you develop your own or are lesson plans division-wide?	<p>Carlos “100% remote. I have to plan remotely, and interact with students over Google Classroom. It’s hard to motivate students to participate in lessons and create interesting lessons in the first place...have neither the proper tech or the time to create meaningful and engaging lessons online. Also, it is hard to have any continuity online because students don’t always complete work. Primarily completing my lesson plans on my own even though we are supposed to be working within a POD. The POD seems to be creating the bare minimum”</p> <p>Sally “Remote teacher for 4th grade...create every lesson from scratch...do enjoy making the materials and many other 4th grade teachers in the division use my material daily. We have POD work, work done by all teachers within that grade level in the school, but it mainly is used for creating common assessments and attempting to have equity within the division.”</p> <p>Alice “How has it NOT affected my teaching? ...working with students both on campus and online at the same time every single day. It has caused me a great deal of stress because I worry the ones at home are not getting as robust instruction as the ones here...worry about the ones here because I know the ones at home are cheating on their assessments and assignments and getting higher grades because of it. We've had a lot of school-wide decisions made for us, but as far as lesson planning goes, I've made almost all my own decisions. At first, it was crazy...have really come into my own and feel very confident about teaching in this crazy way. I can't imagine how nice it will feel to get to go back to traditional instruction one day.”</p>

CAEP 4.2 Indicators of teaching effectiveness

Table 5 delineates how we triangulated focus group questions, completers' submitted artifacts, and completer and employer (principal) surveys. The employer (principal) and program completer survey data are tagged to multiple InTASC standards.

Table 5

Alignment of Case Study Data Sources with the InTASC Standards

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Theme)	Completer Survey & Artifacts Collected	Employer (Principal) Survey	Comments from Individual Reflection Questions
1. Learner Development	Resume Lesson plans	understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas. (1)	Question 2 Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career. Question 3 Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.
2. Learning Differences	Running record observations by case study researcher Completers' lesson plans	uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards. (2)	Question 2 Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career. Question 3 Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.

3. Learning Environments	Running record observations by case study researcher	works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning. (4)	Question 2 Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career.
		encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. (5)	Question 3 Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.
			Question 8 COVID-19 teaching

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Theme)	Completer Survey & Artifacts Collected	Employer (Principal) Survey	Comments from Individual Reflection Questions
4. Content Knowledge	Running record observations by case study researcher Virtual Observation	works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning. (4)	Question 1 Think about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why?
5. Application of Content	Running record observations by case study researcher & Virtual Observation	understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues. (8)	Question 1 Think about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why? Question 3 Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.

6. Assessment	DE identified student assessment data submitted by completers Running record observations by case study researcher	understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth. (9)	<p>Question 2 Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career.</p> <p>Question 3 Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.</p> <p>Question 4 How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain different approaches- formative and summative.</p>
7. Planning for Instruction	Completers' lesson plans.	designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.	<p>Question 4 How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain different approaches- formative and summative.</p>

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Theme)	Completer Survey & Artifacts Collected	Employer (Principal) Survey	Comments from Individual Reflection Questions
8. Instructional Strategies	Running record observations by case study researcher	uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections. (12)	<p>Question 1 Think about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why?</p> <p>Question 2 Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career.</p> <p>Question 4 How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain</p>

9. Professional Learning & Ethical Practice	Completers' resumes Completers' surveys	engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her teaching practice. (9)	different approaches- formative and summative. Question 6 What is your involvement in the school outside of your classroom? Question 8 If there is anything we haven't covered, and you'd like to share about your preparation here at Randolph's teacher education program?
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InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Theme)	Completer Survey & Artifacts Collected	Employer (Principal) Survey	Comments from Individual Reflection Questions
10. Leadership and Collaboration	Completers' resumes Completers' surveys	seeks leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.(16)	Question 5 What employment milestones have you reached (e.g., promotion, leadership positions)? Question 6 What is your involvement in the school outside of your classroom?

We continued the practice established in 2020 to include Question 7 in the focus group interview protocol asking completers to reflect on the EPP as it relates to their current job and if their preparation experience was effective in preparing them for their teaching responsibilities. Question 7 included two parts: Do you perceive your teacher preparation you received at Randolph College as relevant to the responsibilities you confront on the job? Was your preparation experience effective? Table 7 reflects responses to question seven based on the following themes: feedback and continuous improvement, developing professional confidence, research knowledge, and preparation relevance.

Table 7

Completers' Responses to Focus Group Question 7

Themes	Responses
Feedback and continuous improvement	John "definitely I think that Randolph sets us up almost to a level of perfection of like this is how you should be as a teacher. This is how your classroom should be. And of course they teach that in great great detail over the programs course and my one hesitation of that would be, you know, during your first time and especially like the first two weeks of school. They're gonna throw so much at you that there's no way you could possibly remember at all. And so it's kind of like fighting against yourself of knowing like I want to be better. I am better because you know, Randolph has made me better. As well as this is an amount of information that no one could possibly digest. very understandable"
Developing professional confidence	Jane "I feel like all the classes I've taken over the course of my education program there. There was a really no class that I can think of that was just completely useless and I didn't use something that I've learned from that class. So I feel like they really prepare me. I mean besides being a first-year teacher and just having that genuine stress and uncertainty. I feel like if I had gone anywhere else I probably wouldn't have been as prepared or as confident and what I know and what I can do as I had when I did with Randolph, that's great."

	Sally “and knowing what I was taught to be the best way to teach and then actually being in the classroom and wanting to achieve those things and realizing like I can't expect that much of myself right now...Like I do feel very prepared because of Randolph and I did learn so much and all the classes and I had learned how to be essentially the perfect teacher the lesson like Carlos said the lesson.”
Research knowledge	Nothing tagged here
Preparation Relevance	<p>Sally “Well, especially being in a school where there's a lot of teachers from other universities where they don't have as much practice with time management because they don't do their student teaching while they're taking classes”</p> <p>Carlos “So sometimes looking back at Randolph. I feel like I'm not doing a good job teaching. Because I can't meet those standards that we were we learned in our classes. But we also didn't have students in the classes who couldn't add. When you're trying to teach fractions, so I think it was just certain aspects of each class was just a little idealistic and not as much grounded and what's reality. But in the end, I think it balanced because we did have a lot of student teaching.”</p>

4.1 CAEP Satisfaction of employers (principals)

Table 8 includes data collected via the employer surveys and aligned with InTASC standards. The means and standard deviations for each item are reported with a target mean of 3.0. All items had means of 3.3 or greater, indicating that the target was met for all survey items. The final summative question “Please rate the overall effectiveness of the teacher on a scale of 1 to 5.” The mean employer rating was 3.75 with 3.0 “the teacher is average” to 4.0 “the teacher is good.”

Table 8

Employer (Principal) Survey Data tagged using InTASC Core Teaching Standards

Four principals completed the survey The case study researcher's virtual classroom observations align with the principal's ratings.

Survey Question: The Teacher:	InTASC Standard	mean	STDE Vs	RC Target Mean score	% met
1. uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.	2	3.25	.58	Average 3	100%
2. understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas.	1	3.25	.5	Average 3	100%
3. designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.	7	3.5	.58	Average 3	100%
4. works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning.	3	3.5	0	Average 3	100%
5. encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.	1,2,3	3.5	.5	Average 3	100%

Survey Question: The Teacher:	InTASC Standard	n	STDE Vs	RC Target Mean score	% met
6. understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches.	4,5,8	3.5	.5	Average 3	100%
7. creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.	3	3.5	.5	Average 3	100%
8. understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.	4,5	3.2	.5	Average 3	100%
9. understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth.	6	3.2	.5	Average 3	100%
10. monitors learner progress.	6	3.5	.5	Average 3	100%
11. plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals.	7	3.5	0	Average 3	100%
12. uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections.	5,8	3.2	.5	Average 3	100%

Survey Question: The Teacher:	InTASC Standard	mean	STD EVs	RC Target Mean score	% met
13.uses a variety of instructional strategies to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.	8	3.25	.5	Average 3	100%
14. engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her teaching practice.	9	3.25	.5	Average 3	100%
15. adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.	6	3.25	.5	Average 3	100%
16. seeks leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to	9,10	3.25	.5	Average 3	100%
17. is familiar with IDEA and 504 regulations, and is able to contribute to a student's IEP or 504 during meetings.	2	3.25	.5	Average 3	100%
Overall Evaluation of the Teacher's Effectiveness 18. Please rate the overall effectiveness of the teacher on a scale of 1 to 5**	1-10	3.75	.5	Average 3	100%

To understand the completers' perspective of their own practice and participation in leadership positions or applications for grants to support student success, a completer survey was given to each of the four participants who continued after the focus group. In addition, completers were asked to submit a current resume and identify the key technology skills they use to monitor student success or deliver instruction. We received only one resume and two completer surveys. The Likert scale on the completer survey had a four-point rating scale as follows: 4 (highly skilled), 3 (proficiently skilled), 2 (not adequately skilled), and 1 (skill level is not acceptable). The mean score was 3.6 with a SD of .5. The target was 3.0 was met. The completers rated themselves as "good teachers."

Discussion

- Gather quantitative and qualitative documentation to provide evidence that Randolph College EPP completers contribute to an expected level of student-learning growth; that completers effectively apply the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions the RC program is designed to foster; and that employers and completers are satisfied with the preparation program.
- Compare the current case study findings to those from the previous three case studies, examining trends or changes in perceptions about completers' teaching experience and P-12 student learning as well as teaching during a pandemic.
- Reflect on and suggest program modifications for the RC EPP and prepare the next case study protocol as part of continuous improvement.

The case study goal was to gather substantial quantitative and qualitative evidence to support our claim that Randolph College EPP completers have a positive influence on students' learning. The case study, using multiple measures to determine completers' teaching effectiveness, provided data that was not anticipated due to our completers teaching during a pandemic. Findings indicated Randolph College EPP completers understand multiple facets of teaching effectiveness demonstrated by the content analysis of the individual survey questions administered by the case study researcher, virtual classroom observations, and principal satisfaction surveys. Principal surveys and the virtual classroom observations validated the teaching effectiveness of the case study completers even when they were teaching either remote, hybrid, or in person. Several completers submitted student assessments with the option to select their own data sets to represent measured growth in student achievement, further supporting their teaching effectiveness. Completers shared their strategies for differentiating instruction along with ways to support students one on one in special education settings during the virtual focus group meeting. Additional artifacts were limited do to the nature of the teaching environment and additional technology learning demands.

Organizing data using CAEP 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 components along with the InTASC standards crosswalk across multiple measures helped us triangulate findings and support our claims. The case study participants (N=5) represented a range of licensure areas (special education, secondary, and elementary) and one to three years of teaching experience. The individual completer answers provided descriptive examples that aligned with InTASC standards indicating our completers are knowledgeable about content, pedagogy, student learning and development, leadership, and assessments. Our completers are articulate about the skills and support needed to be effective teachers and to guide their students toward learning how to learn. In other words, our completers understand what deeper learning is all about even during a pandemic.

Multiple measures including employer (principal) and completer surveys, individual case study focus group question responses, and the case study researcher's classroom observations support

the EPP's claim that our program completers share a vision of effective teaching and learning. The case study completers expressed high praise for their extensive clinical experiences which prepared them for teaching. Completers provided anecdotal evidence of what helping students learn means as it relates to student development, critical thinking, collaborative learning, and achievement. Leadership activities and professional development artifacts were shared in their individual responses to the focus questions, resumes, and face-to-face discussion with the case study researcher. Several completers are involved in leadership roles or have participated in professional development tied to student success for learning and career readiness. Principals' anecdotal comments during their interviews with the case study researcher provided a clear indication that our completers are reflective, regularly show evidence of student growth, and understand continuous improvement. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2005), striving for a shared vision of good teaching along with action research, assessments, and portfolios relating to teaching practice provides a foundation for candidates who are prepared for teaching and are highly rated by their principals.

Without a blueprint or state data system, it will continue to be challenging to gather evidence of a direct link between what our candidates learn in our EPP and how they impact student learning. We know, however, that supporting completers during their first years of teaching is a vital responsibility we share with our P-12 school partners. As a result, maintaining relationships with completers remains one of our continuous improvement aims. We also learned that they were working under challenging and changing learning demands;

For this case study design, our goal was to replicate the same process as our previous two case studies (Lindeman et al., 2018, 2019, 2020). For the current year this goal was not possible. Instead we were able to have one focus group and the case study researcher arranged zoom observations and individual interviews. The timeline for completing the process was shortened, and it helped to collect the artifacts within one month prior to the end of fall semester. We improved on obtaining student achievement data, and the completers provided explanations about how they administer their assessments and benchmarks for student growth assessments.

Recommendations

The evidence provided to the EPP through analysis of case study data support our claim that Randolph College EPP completers contribute to an expected level of student-learning growth, effectively apply the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the RC program is designed to achieve, and that employers and completers are satisfied with the preparation program. We continue to struggle with maintaining five or six participants during the months-long cycle of data collection, and COVID-19 only exacerbated that struggle. However, our data management protocols and checklists provided valuable structure during a year of frequent change (and including a new case study researcher). Moving forward, we will continue to refine and rely on these structures.

Three key areas for consideration emerged from this year's case study: (1) additional experience with virtual and hybrid teaching practices; (2) more practice managing, analyzing, and making decision based on student data; and (3) continued focus on rich practica and student teaching experiences. Although these considerations were indelibly marked by the pandemic, they still offer valuable guidance we shape our program.

Additional experience with virtual and hybrid teaching practices

Program completers in their first two years of teaching reported that switching to virtual and hybrid teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic was very challenging and because the veteran teachers were experiencing similar challenges, the amount of support the novice teachers received was limited. We recognize that including opportunities to explore and use a variety of online delivery packages and software instructional programs will assist our candidates as schools are likely to continue to use virtual teaching, even beyond the end of the pandemic.

More practice managing, analyzing, and making decisions based on student data

Completers reported a need for additional practice reviewing and interpreting student data and developing instructional interventions based on student data. In addition to the senior research project and the M.A.T. action research thesis project, we have included additional practice using student data in our EDUC 216 assessment course at the undergraduate level and in our EDUC 605 instructional methods course at the graduate level.

Continued focus on rich practica and student teaching experiences

EPP elementary education and special education graduates who completed the M.A.T. program reported that the summer practicum experience, which requires co-teaching, was beneficial to their teaching practices. This field experience prepared them to work collaboratively with other teachers in co-teaching and in department co-planning situations. They identified this as a strength of the program. Participants also describe how the student teaching placements helped prepare them for the unexpected elements of teaching, a contrast to discussions in class more focused on ideal practices.

Preparing for the unexpected relates to the data we gather from the employer survey. Table 8 shows the results from the employer survey given to the supervising principal of all completes who participated in the case study. Four principals completed the survey and averaged above the EPP benchmark of 3 in all areas. All questions are on a four-point scale except the last question and reflected the following skills: understands diverse cultures (3.25), growth and development (3.25), developmentally appropriate learning experiences (3.5), creates supportive environment (3.5), encourages positive interactions (3.5), understands content (3.5), makes connections to engage learners (3.2), uses multiple methods (3.2), monitors learning (3.5), plans instruction to support learners (3.5), implements a variety of learning experience (3.2), engages in professional development (3.25), meets learner needs (3.25), seeks leadership roles (3.25), and is familiar with special education (3.25). The final questions asks principals to rate our completers on their overall effectiveness in the classroom. This question includes a 5-point scale, and the reported average of 3.75 indicated satisfaction but reflected a lower score than we expected. EPP faculty ©Randolph College EPP 2021

will include additional reflections on this question in our weekly faculty meetings, and we will include a review and discussion of student performance during practica and student teaching. In addition, we will bring this to the EPP Advisory Committee that includes teachers, principals, and one superintendent. Their feedback will help as we design experiences for our candidates to meet these expectations in the first and second year of teaching.

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