Evaluation of Student Teaching Based Upon Scriven’s Duties of the Teacher

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In the fall of 1990, Northern Michigan University (NMU) teacher education personnel, students and area teachers began to discuss the evaluation of student teachers and the need to develop an evaluation process and form that was based upon a strong philosophical and theoretical framework, a sound knowledge base and a well-articulated set of values. The difficulty of finding a reliable and valid evaluation model was challenging. An evaluation based upon Scriven’s duties of the teacher was finally agreed upon and was incorporated into the University Supervisor’s Report and the First Progress Report during the winter term of 1993 and into the Mid-Term Evaluation of Student Teacher and Final Evaluation of Student Teacher forms during fall term 1993.

Scriven, Wheeler, and Haertel state “virtually all current models of teacher evaluation are invalid and hence unfair to many teachers—and to students and the citizenry. The invalidity is always multiple and serious, not some matter of academic nit-picking” (1993, p. 7). They cite as some of the most common faults of current teacher evaluation models such things as a limited view of the teachers tasks, limited and atypical observations, too much weight on the way of teaching and too little on the content and effect, and faulty use of indicators based upon statistical conclusions. Scriven considers his “Duties of the Teacher” to be “the only legitimate basis for teacher evaluation” (1993, p. 4). Those who would like more information concerning Scriven’s Duties-Based Teacher Evaluation model may contact the Director of Laboratory Field Experiences at the NMU Department of Education. The outline of the duties of the teacher by Scriven is given at the end of this paper. Below we will briefly summarize the concepts behind the categories listed on the NMU evaluation of student teacher forms. We have changed the names of some of Scriven’s categories and combined others to make them more in line with our terminology and purpose.

Scriven has five main categories of duties: Knowledge of subject matter, instructional competence, assessment competence, professionalism, and other services to the school and community. The teacher education curriculum and the field experiences should equip the students to carry out these duties at the highest level possible, but at the least should see to it that all students who are certified can demonstrate a minimum level of competence. Supervising teachers of student teachers should see that these competencies are demonstrated by the student teacher to an adequate degree and make comments to explain or support their assessments.

Knowledge Base

Scriven calls the first domain of duty knowledge of subject matter. This duty includes two elements: a) knowledge in the fields of special competence and b) knowledge in across-the-curriculum subjects. The student teachers’ knowledge about the topics taught should be accurate, appropriate, and comprehensive to the degree needed to effectively teach the curriculum (content areas). They must also have the general skills of such things as speaking, listening, reading, writing, and studying (general knowledge). The university is
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responsible to determine that a satisfactory level of competence is achieved by the students in both of these areas before they are allowed to participate in field experiences, especially student teaching. Competency in their teaching areas and their general knowledge is measured by satisfactory performance in required courses and the passage of standardized tests. The supervising teacher should evaluate whether the student teacher has adequate knowledge of the content they are teaching, as well as a satisfactory general knowledge in order effectively function and teach.

**Instructional Competence**

Instructional competence involves communication skills, management skills, and course construction and improvement skills. The student teacher needs to be able to communicate to the students what is to be learned, and to communicate it so that students understand and value the learning (communication skills).

Student teachers must also be able to control classroom behavior in an effective and fair manner (management of student's behavior). They should be able to manage learning progress so that the curriculum is covered appropriately and efficiently (management of learning progress). Teachers and student teachers have a legal responsibility to prevent disasters and deal with emergencies. As this duty might not occur during a student teaching experience or might be taken care of by the supervising teacher, we have expanded it to include contingencies. A teacher should be able to reasonably cope with the frequent contingencies and occasional emergencies of classroom teaching (management of contingencies/emergencies).

Course construction involves the skills of course planning, selection and creation of materials, and use of available resources. Because of the duration of student teaching, course planning, which involves the development of an entire course based upon numerous factors, i.e. local, state, and national curricula; local needs, abilities, and resources, is generally done by the teacher. The student teachers are responsible to develop effective lessons and units within the contexts of the course using detailed lesson plans (lesson planning). They also need to be able to present these lessons and units so that the instructional objectives are efficiently realized (lesson presentation). Student teachers are expected to be familiar with and be able to properly select and/or create materials and use available resources needed for instruction (use of materials and resources).

**Assessment Competence**

Assessment competence requires a knowledge of student assessment, test construction and administration, grading, and reporting student achievement. Student teachers should know about testing and assessment, including test construction and administration (selection, creation and use of student assessments). This includes knowledge about the ways of determining the merit of a student's work and the value and uses of such information. The ability to use and/or develop reliable and valid measures is important.

Student teachers often find a challenge in the grading/ranking/scoring process and in knowing how to report achievement (grading and reporting student achievement). The ability to grade and report fairly, honestly, clearly, consistently, efficiently, and helpfully is a necessary skill for a teacher.
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Just as important as assessing students’ work is being able to assess your instructional, assessment, and professional competence, as well as the course, materials, and curriculum (evaluation of self and teaching). Student teachers who have not developed this responsibility will not be able to make needed teaching and course improvements in the future.

Professionalism

The professionalism category includes subcategories of ethics, attitude, development, service, knowledge of duties, and knowledge of the school and its context. A teacher has certain moral standards that are expected in the profession (professional ethics). These standards include confidentiality, fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, and other matters of professional integrity.

There is an expectation that teachers value learning, students, teaching, and schooling. These attitudes, along with others such as openness, courtesy, conscientiousness, reliability, caring, and compassion, are important for a teacher (professional attitude).

Student teachers are at the beginning stages of their careers. For them to continue they will need to demonstrate a commitment to professional development and service to the profession (professional development/service). They will need to develop and carry out professional development activities based upon a reasonable assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. They will also need to begin to explore how they can be of service to others in the profession, as well as the profession itself through such things as professional organizations.

If a student teachers are to be effective in carrying out their duties, they must be knowledgeable of the duties of a teacher (knowledge and execution of duties). These duties include such things as state and federal laws and regulations, school policies, curricular requirements, and school procedures.

All of the above duties require some understanding of the special characteristics and circumstances related to the students, staff, school, and community with which the student teacher is to work (knowledge of the school and its context). This understanding will affect instruction, assessment and general perspective.

Scrivens final category, other services to the school and community, refers to the non-teaching duties required of a teacher such as administrative tasks (attendance, out-of-class supervision) and school or community services (committee work, participation in events). These may be beyond the expectation of a student teacher who is spending no more than sixteen weeks in a school or may be incorporated into other areas. We have added another duty that Scriven does not separately identify: human relations. Human relations refers to having a multicultural and global perspective and being able to work well with others. The student teachers should as much as possible be free of prejudice and not unfairly discriminate against any student or person and not allow prejudice and unfair discrimination to occur in their classrooms.

References