

A DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION EVALUATED

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The evaluation of students, teachers, administrators and vo-ag departments goes on continually. How often does a department of teacher education look at itself? Probably more than most persons would guess; nevertheless if teacher education is to grow and improve itself, evaluation must be an on-going part of the program. While there are many facets to total evaluation of a teacher education program, certainly the performance of its product--teachers--and the reactions of the teachers produced are keys to analyzing the progress of a department of teacher education.

Too often evaluation may be the result of an emergency or crisis so studies are made to refute charges or gather data to counteract a particular viewpoint. While brushfires may be extinguished by this procedure, meaningful evaluation should be continuous and as inclusive as possible in gathering data about the effectiveness of a program. In this regard gathering data and reactions from students still in school may be helpful but how much more meaningful when they have been out on the job for a year or two and can reflect back on what helped them most and where they and the program were deficient. With this in mind the Agricultural Education Department (now called Applied Behavioral Sciences) at the University of California, Davis, reviewed its teacher education program in agriculture by surveying the teachers who had completed the program and were now engaged in teaching or had done so for a time. The results are reported for three groups which made up the population for the respective years indicated.

1949-1959	Approximately a ten-year population
1964-1969	Approximately a five-year population
1968-1969	This group which most recently completed the program was analyzed separately.

While everyone who completed the program is not included because of lack of address, etc., well over 90 percent are included. And in all of those surveyed, replies were received back in all

but one or two instances. Furthermore, teachers seemed anxious to comment and in almost all cases wrote a thoughtful lengthy critic even if not always complimentary.

The teacher education program at UC Davis is a five-year program. Candidates first obtain a bachelor's degree in agriculture and then spend one graduate year earning the credential. Ideally there is a blending of both during the entire five years, but many persons decide late in college or life to enter teaching, so contact is only for a one-year period prior to their first teaching position.

In reading this report it should be borne in mind that candidates come from a wide variety of backgrounds and institutions. In addition, in late years a considerable percentage (almost half) have been in the agriculture industry from one to fifteen years prior to beginning the year of teacher education. Students may start the fifth year program at any quarter, but here at UC Davis student teaching is always completed during the fall quarter, including one month of summer experience and seminars prior to the start of actual classroom activity in the high school.

The following letter is a copy of the form used to survey the teachers in the study:

Department of Applied Behavioral
Sciences
University of California, Davis

TO: Former Students - Teacher of Agriculture
University of California at Davis

FROM: Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences
University of California at Davis

By now you have probably had time to reflect on the various courses, especially in the Agricultural Education Department, which you took in preparation for your teaching career. Even though you may have taught only a short period or may not currently be teaching, we would greatly appreciate if you would take time to give us your evaluation of a number of the courses needed to obtain your credential.

Rate the following courses according to whether or not they have been helpful to you in teaching:

	<u>Very Helpful</u>	<u>Some Help</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Little Help</u>	<u>No Help</u>
Ag. Ed. 160 Vocational Education	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ed. 120 Educational Sociology	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ed. 110 Educational Psychology	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ag. Ed. 198 Directed Group Study	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ag. Ed. 320B Instructional Materials and Procedures (Audio-Visual)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ag. Ed. 320C Student Teaching including Methods	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Eng. 317 Methods Ag. Mechanics	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ag. 49 Agricultural Practices	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Currently teaching? Yes No Number of years taught _____

How adequate was your overall preparation for teaching?

Additional Comments:

The two Tables A and B indicate the replies from those just completing 1968-69 and from the 1964-68 group.

TABLE A

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION OF NEW TEACHERS COMPLETING
THE PROGRAM AT UCD WITHIN LAST FIVE YEARS - 1964-1968

	Very Helpful	Some Help	Undecided	Little Help	No Help
Ag. Ed. 160	11	14	1	-	-
Ed. 120	-	9	2	6	2
Ed. 110	4	11	1	8	-
Ag. Ed. 198	19	9	-	-	-
Ag. Ed. 320B	11	12	-	-	-
Ag. Ed. 320C	26	1	-	-	-
Eng. 317	5	12	2	4	3
Ag. 49	7	13	1	4	1

TABLE B

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION OF AG. ED. PROGRAM UCD -
STUDENT TEACHERS 1969-69

	Very Helpful	Some Help	Undecided	Little Help	No Help
Ag. Ed. 160	3	8	2	1	-
Ed. 120	1	4	2	2	3
Ed. 110	2	1	2	3	4
Ag. Ed. 198	2	8	1	3	-
Ag. Ed. 320B	5	6	1	1	-
Ag. Ed. 320C	13	-	-	-	-
Eng. 317	1	3	3	3	3
Ag. 49	7	5	-	1	1

The group that had been out teaching gave a more favorable rating to its preparation than the one just completing. While this may be due to differences within the group, it could indicate that experienced teachers reflecting back may see more relevance in their preparation than those without teaching experience. Student

teachers frequently seek refuge in subject matter, feeling that this side of their education is more important than professional preparation. After teaching for awhile they realize that professional preparation designed to help teachers work with people may be significant. Teachers seldom fail for lack of technical ability, rather they fail because of their inability to work with students, and a realization of this may not be apparent as a new teacher is going through the program.

A direct comparison of all courses with the 10-year group, 1949-59, cannot be made, as some courses have been changed and some discontinued. However, the key courses and especially the student teaching and methods courses have been retained although the content and procedure may have changed greatly within these courses.

	Very help- ful	Some help	Unde- cided	Little help	No help	Didn't take course
Ed. 170 Secondary Education*	13	35	12	21	4	8
Ed. 110 Ed. Psychology	18	40	11	10	3	10
Ed. 198 Directed Group Study	45	18	10	4	0	14
Ed. 320B Instructional Pro- cedures and Materials	63	25	2	3	1	1
Ed. 320C Student Teaching	66	14	1	1	0	8
Ed. 320E Methods in Teaching (Taken during Student Teaching Semester)						

*Not offered since 1963.

The summations of replies provide evidence as to how effective or ineffective a program is and indicate trends for future growth. However, the most interesting and often the clue that sparks insight comes from the written comments of individual responders.

The two individual survey sheets listed below indicate the range of comments and suggestions in the replies; however, both are from persons who have completed only student teaching.

Rate the following courses according to whether or not they have been helpful to you in teaching:

	Very help- ful	Some help	Unde- cided	Little help	No help
Ag. Ed. 160 Vocational Education	_____	<u> X </u>	_____	_____	_____
Ed. 120 Educational Sociology	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u> X </u>
Ed. 110 Educational Psychology	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u> X </u>
Ag. Ed. 198 Directed Group Study	_____	_____	_____	<u> X </u>	_____
Ag. Ed. 320B Instructional Materials and Procedures (AV)	_____	_____	<u> X </u>	_____	_____
Ag. Ed. 320C Student Teaching	<u> X </u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
Eng. 317 Methods Ag. Mechanics	_____	_____	_____	_____	<u> X </u>
Ag. 49 Agricultural Practices	<u> X </u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

Other:

Ag. Etom. 119 - good class, I recommend it.

Ag. Practices - a very good course, really helpful, something you can use.

How adequate was your overall preparation for teaching?

I felt there were very few classes at UC Davis which prepare a student or an individual for teaching. This is especially true in the shop area. Very impractical with the exception of a few classes in different departments.

Rate the following courses according to whether or not they have been helpful to you in teaching:

	Very help- ful	Some help	Unde- cided	Little help	No help
Ag. Ed. 160 Vocational Education	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Ed. 120 Educational Sociology	<u>Have not</u>	<u>taken</u>	<u>course</u>	<u>yet</u>	<u> </u>
Ed. 110 Educational Psychology	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Ag. Ed. 198 Directed Group Study	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Ag. Ed. 320B Instructional Materials and Procedures (AV)	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Ag. Ed. 320C Student Teaching	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Eng. 317 Methods Ag. Mechanics	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Ag. 49 Agricultural Practices	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Other:</u>					
Apiculture 119	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Wildlife and Land Use 151	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

How adequate was your overall preparation for teaching?

I feel that the program is very effective and a good one. I think doing student teaching before course work is extremely helpful and meaningful.

Additional comments:

- 1) Ag. 49 should be expanded or combined with Eng. 317 so that more time could be spent on each phase covered and credit given for the course. It was a valuable course.
- 2) Each cadet should be given a directory of schools, administrators and teachers and when job lists are put out, each cadet should receive a copy. This would facilitate a better overall view of the job picture and make possible a planned interview situation. It would also cut down on time that is required to hunt names and phone numbers for contact with schools.

The greatest danger is to ask for advise, reaction, and comment and then do nothing about it. Equally dangerous would be to alter every course and procedure because of a vocal minority. Education saw the latter happen once with "sputnik", when immediately some schools shifted their entire focus in an attempt to make a nuclear physicist out of every student regardless of interest or aptitude. Those schools with well thought-

out curricula shifted very little but they did make some changes and improvements designed to meet the needs of students, not changes based on fads or fashions.

Students or teachers responding to a poll can use such an instrument as an opportunity to react to a particular teacher with whom a personality conflict existed. In other cases teachers may evaluate their preparation only in terms of the single school in which they teach. Had they gone to another school, their reactions may have been completely different.

If teacher education is to function and improve, we need to look and listen. We need to evaluate, we need to do it continuously, and we need to tap as many sources as possible, but whatever changes are made must be done against the background of a teacher educator's own experience and observation. Perhaps we need to look at our product, to observe what he is actually doing, rather than what he is saying. In the final analysis the important record may be written in the student our new teacher produces rather than in the teacher himself.

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BOOK REVIEW

RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
by Gordon F. Law. Washington, D. C.: American Vocational Association, Inc., 1969, 23 pp., 60¢.

This booklet deals with the significance of research and its implementation in vocational education. The author focuses upon: (1) the position that research in vocational education is everybody's concern; (2) relating the major recommendations of the 1968 Report of the Advisory Council on Vocational Education, and the provisions of the Vocational Education Amendment of 1968; and (3) identifying some of the directions and contemporary issues that relate to vocational education research.

A section in the publication is devoted to the role of the research specialist and the vocational education practitioner in research and developmental activities. The author challenges institutions preparing vocational education personnel to provide substantial orientation to research in the professional training

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