

Preparing Student Teachers' for the edTPA-Agriculture

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Introduction

Negative publicity has surrounded teacher education programs and called into question their ability to prepare and graduate highly qualified teachers (Greenburg, McKee, & Walsh, 2013). Scholars (i.e. Darling –Hammond, 2010) have repeatedly emphasized a lack of consistency in standards and assessments created and implemented to ensure new teachers are prepared and ready to teach. In an effort to establish a uniform and impartial process to evaluate student teachers, Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) developed the edTPA (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2015). Completion of edTPA is akin to completion of the rigorous National Board of Professional Teaching Standards certification process.

The edTPA is composed of three tasks: (1) planning, (2) instruction, and (3) assessment. In Task 1, student teachers plan three to five hours of instruction to develop “agricultural-related conceptual understanding, relevant skills, and problem solving strategies by either conducting an investigation or creating an agricultural technology/design product” (SCALE, 2015, p. 6). For Task 2, student teachers videotape instruction and select two, ten-minute clips for submission. In Task 3 student teachers analyze student work and summarize learning. Each task is supported with artifacts (i.e. lesson plans, videos) and up to 25 pages of commentaries that prompt clarification about teaching decisions. In sum, student teachers prepare and submit a 50-60 page document with video support. They need assistance in preparing such a robust portfolio of their teaching.

How it Works/Methodology

Creating and implementing a viable timeline to assist student teachers in completing the edTPA was vital to their success. Our faculty met and decided on principles to guide implementation of edTPA, including (a) modeling edTPA in courses, (b) allowing for general feedback to student teachers, (c) completing edTPA when student teachers have few other obligations at school, and (d) returning scores prior to the end of the semester. We decided on the timeline in Table 1.

Table 1

edTPA timeline for completion.

Date	Task
Fall prior to ST	Model edTPA Task 1 in AEE 426 <i>Method of Teaching Agriculture</i>
January 10	In seminar, review edTPA rubrics and academic language integration
January 31	edTPA Task 1 due to student teaching coordinator
Early February	Student teaching coordinator reviews all Task 1 documents and provides general feedback in the form of a checklist to student teachers
~February 7	Student teachers teach and videotape their edTPA lessons this week
Late February	Student teachers revise Task 1 and complete Tasks 2 and 3
March 1	Student teachers submit entire edTPA to the student teaching coordinator
March 10	In seminar, student teaching coordinator provides general feedback about missing components and page length of edTPA commentaries
Late March	Student teachers revise edTPA based on feedback.
~March 26	Student teachers upload edTPA to Pearson website for official scoring
~ April 23	Pearson provides edTPA scores back to student teachers

Results to Date/Implications

Data were gathered from Pearson edTPA scores and Google Drive folders shared between student teachers and the student teaching supervisor. After the mid-March seminar feedback, 13 (61.9%) student teachers revised their edTPA, and eight (38.1%) did not. All ($n = 8$) student teachers who both revised their edTPA and wrote more than 19 pages of commentary scored higher than 41 on the edTPA. All ($n = 5$) student teachers who neither revised their edTPA nor wrote more than 19 pages scored below 41 points on the edTPA. Disaggregated results are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2

edTPA revisions and edTPA scoring analysis

	Revised	Did Not Revise
Overall edTPA score ($x/75$)	47.9	40.9
Pass ($n \geq 41$)	11	4
Fail ($n \leq 41$)	2	4
Pass (%)	85	50

Table 3

edTPA commentaries total page length ($x/25$) and edTPA scoring analysis

	≥ 19 pages	16 – 18 pages	≤ 15 pages
Overall edTPA score ($x/75$)	52.2	42.4	38.9
Pass ($n \geq 41$)	9	3	3
Fail ($n \leq 41$)	0	1	5
Pass (%)	100	75	38

Future Plans/Advice to Others

In spite of this support four student teachers submitted sections of their edTPA which were unscorable. Still, our faculty, and other programs in the College of Education, determined that the timeline seems to present the most advantages for students to complete the edTPA successfully. College of Education administration have promoted this timeline and feedback plan with other teacher preparation programs.

The primary disadvantage with this timeline is that student teachers are delivering and videotaping their edTPA early in their student teaching semester. They may lack the confidence and comfort level to represent their best teaching efforts. However, student teachers are teaching only one course and have nearly the entire month of January to prepare for the edTPA teaching segment, which we feel accommodates for the early teaching date. Plus, once the segment has been taught, then student teachers have four to six weeks to complete and revise Task 2 and 3 commentaries.

Costs/Resources Needed

Few resources aside from faculty time are required to deliver this timeline.

References

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