

Using Qualtrics to Monitor Student Teacher Progress

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Introduction/Need for Innovation

The student teaching process is a capstone experience for agricultural education students (Myers & Dyer, 2004; Smalley, Retallick, & Paulsen, 2015) that causes change within the student (Smith & Rayfield, 2017). The quality of the student teaching process has implications for the profession. According to Fives, Hammon, and Olivarez (2007), high workload placed on student teachers may be causing early burnout in student teachers, ultimately impacting their decision to enter the field. Torres and Ulmer (2007) and later Robinson, Krysher, Haynes, and Edwards (2010) identified different areas student teachers spend their time related to classroom instruction. Many of these areas align with activities found to be important to student teachers as determined in a study by Paulsen, Smalley, and Retallick (2016).

In order to monitor activities and attempt to identify when changes take place during student teaching, [University] has their student teachers complete weekly reports summarizing activities taking place during the experience and reporting time spent doing various agricultural education teacher responsibilities identified in previous studies (Torres & Ulmer, 2007; Robinson, Krysher, Haynes, & Edwards, 2010; Paulsen, Smalley, & Retallick, 2016). For the past two years, student teachers in the 2017 ($n = 15$) and 2018 ($n = 21$) student teaching cohorts were writing weekly reports and emailing it to their university supervisor. This resulted in a large amount of work to compile and analyze the data. In order to continue this programmatic evaluation, a more efficient method was needed for data collection. The use of a weekly Qualtrics™ survey was employed for the 2019 ($n = 22$) student teaching cohort to improve the data collection process and improve accuracy. This form of programmatic evaluation could easily be used by other teacher preparation programs across the country to track progress of their own student teachers.

Methodology/How it Works/Program Phases

In order to collect programmatic data on the student teachers a Qualtrics™ survey was designed. There are two questions for each week day and for the weekend. The first question is open ended asking for a brief summary of the events of the day. This gives the opportunity for supervisors to see good things or any problems that may be happening. The second question asks student teachers to quantify their time spent doing the following activities: observing their cooperating teacher, conference time with cooperating teacher, preparation for instruction, classroom and laboratory teaching, grading student work, administrative duties related to program management, professional activities and meetings, SAE observation, FFA activities on the local level, FFA activities on the district, area, and state level, CDE preparation, adult education, and time off. A sliding bar is used for each of the categories with a maximum of 24 hours set for each week day. The constant sum setting in Qualtrics™ that will limit the maximum value to 24 hours helps to ensure accuracy of reported time. The survey is designed where student teachers can access it online daily and submit it at the conclusion of the week.

The online Qualtrics™ survey is distributed on Monday during each week of the student teaching process. The Qualtrics™ survey software is used to distribute the survey through the students' university email. A reminder email is sent through Qualtrics™ on Sunday afternoon to ensure all students on the cohort complete the survey. A new survey is made from the original

for each week using the copy feature in Qualtrics™ and is distributed using the same procedures. Once all responses have been recorded in Qualtrics™, the data is easily exported into an Excel spreadsheet where it can be analyzed and distributed to all university supervisors.

Results to Date/Implications

To date all student teachers from the 2019 student teaching cohort ($n = 22$) have recorded 17 weeks of data using the online Qualtrics™ survey. It has provided an organized set of data that is easily analyzed in Microsoft Excel and could be easily imported into SPSS for further analysis. The reports generated weekly from Qualtrics™ has allowed the university supervisors to monitor student teacher successes and difficulties. It has also been valuable in providing a way for students to accurately report time spent in the various responsibilities of a student teacher in agricultural education. The functions in Qualtrics™ that provide a check by allowing a maximum of 24 hours to be reported in a day forces the students to report accurate times. The time off is reported on each day to ensure times in all categories will total to 24 hours.

One of the implications of using the Qualtrics™ survey is a consistent way of collecting programmatic data on student teachers that can be employed each year in the future. Reports exported from Qualtrics™ provides workable data on demand for university supervisors to analyze. The data collected from this online survey has provided a way to see how student teachers spend their time throughout the experience and how time spent changes as they progress.

Future Plans/Advice to Others

Based on the results of using Qualtrics™ to collect programmatic data on student teachers, our program will continue to use this survey software to monitor student teacher progress. We plan on expanding the amount of data collected during the student teaching progress by asking students to rate their efficacy in the different areas of agricultural education teacher responsibilities as well as monitor how their intention to teach changes throughout the process.

Advice to others would be to explain the purpose of the data collection to student teachers before they leave to work in their cooperating centers. While the design of the survey is easy for student teachers to use, explanation as to what activities constitute each category provided may be helpful for the student teachers. It is also helpful to make the student teacher weekly reports a course requirement to ensure their completion and accuracy.

Costs/Resources Needed

The cost of using the Qualtrics™ online survey software was free to our department. A fee for using the software is paid for by the College of Agriculture. Other free online survey software could be used for the same purpose such as SurveyMonkey®. A computer with Microsoft Excel and an internet connection is needed. A person to monitor the data collection process is necessary with a total time of approximately 15 minutes per week needed to check on response rates, export the data, and create reports.

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