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# Special Issue
# Designing and Using Program Evaluation as a Tool for Reform

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*The Auburn University Educational Leadership Team and its K-12 practitioner and community partners collaboratively developed a comprehensive, on-going evaluation plan to assess a newly implemented field-based graduate program. The purpose of the present manuscript was to describe the evaluation guidelines and plans. The leadership team and partners designed the assessment and evaluation plan to incorporate and integrate components from a variety of evaluation approaches to address various program, stakeholder, and governing body data needs. By drawing on a variety of evaluation approaches the team and partners generated an array of data or sources of knowledge to better inform decisions about program implementation processes and outcome effectiveness and, thereby, enhance the team's ability to reform and reshape the program to meet on-going and changing stakeholder and participant needs.*

Program evaluation can be a daunting task considering the wide array of alternative models and approaches, ranging from early Tylerian objectives-oriented to recently developed participant-oriented approaches (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004). Popham (1993) writes that "[t]o evaluate something is to appraise its quality" (p. 7). In order to develop an evaluation plan that provides the basis for program appraisal, answers to a number of questions are needed, including: What should be evaluated? Who should be involved in evaluation planning and decision making? What data should be collected? These questions address just a few issues facing educational program evaluators.

The purpose of this manuscript is to describe an evaluation plan designed to address the data and decision-making needs of Auburn University's newly redesigned Educational Leadership Master's Degree Program that brings together as partners, or collaborators, Auburn University faculty, K-12 administrators and practitioners, and Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) as both program creators and evaluators. The following sections include (a) an outline of assumptions, (b) an overview of program evaluation approaches, (c) a discussion of the literature on educational leadership

programs, and (d) the a description of the evaluation plan for the redesigned Auburn University Educational Leadership Program.

***Assumptions***

Wiggins (1992) writes that "we must be more critical in our diagnoses of problems and how problems change as we vary the paradigms used in the diagnosis. This necessitates systematically confronting and challenging existing paradigms, shifting paradigms, and reassessing paradigms lost (p. 9)." Based on the premise that paradigms
shift, this author makes three major assumptions:

(1) Education is a constantly changing and multi-faceted endeavor. This assumption implies that educators must be willing to constantly confront and challenge the status quo.
(2) Because education is a complex and changing endeavor, the preparation of educational leaders is multi-faceted and complex and requires the willingness of faculty, students, and administrators to confront and challenge existing paradigms and methods and to change and rearrange the various components of a program, forming different patterns as does a kaleidoscope each time it is turned.
(3) Consistently and continuously confronting and challenging multiple existing educational perspectives necessitates the use of multiple approaches to evaluation in order to accommodate different data uses and evaluation purposes.

In the next section, a brief synopsis of various program evaluation approaches is provided and a discussion of underlying dimensions and implications in relation to the choice of evaluation tools and processes is given.

***Program Evaluation Approaches***

Fitzpatrick et al. (2004) indicate that during the era encompassing 1960 through 1990, almost sixty approaches or evaluation proposals were developed. Differences in approaches imply differences in methodology and different evaluation needs lead to various evaluation approaches. Fitzpatrick et al. identify five classifications of evaluation approaches as described in the following paragraphs.

***Objectives-oriented Approaches.*** The major defining feature of objectives-oriented program evaluation approaches is that the program goals and objectives are explicitly stated and the evaluation activities assess the extent to which these goals and objectives have been met. Tyler (1991) is credited with conceptualizing this approach and others have expanded and refined it (Fitzpatrick et al., 2004; Popham, 1993; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007; Tyler, 1991).

***Management-oriented Approach.*** The management-oriented approach emphasizes the program decision-maker's need for evaluation results, reasoning that "evaluative information

is an essential part of good decision-making" (p. 88). A well-known management-oriented approach is the CIPP model proposed by Stufflebeam (Fitzpatrick et al., 2004; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). The model name (CIPP) is an acronym based on a framework that addresses decisions related to Context (population, problems), Input (strategies, budgets, schedules), Process (procedures, refinement decisions), and Product (outcomes, program continuation decisions) (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield).

***Consumer-oriented Approach.*** The consumer-oriented approach seeks to inform consumers about products so that they (the consumers) have the informational basis for making judgments about human service products, such as commercial educational programs and materials. Consumer-oriented evaluators use a variety of data collection methods, including checklists, needs assessments, cost analysis, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, and codes (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007).

***Expertise-oriented Approaches.*** The expertise-oriented evaluator relies on his or her expert judgment about the worth of the object of evaluation (Eisner, 1991; Fitzpatrick et al., 2004). For example, a leadership graduate program evaluation might rely on the expertise of faculty, school administrators, and teachers to judge the program's effectiveness.

***Participant-oriented Approaches.*** Participant-oriented approaches place much emphasis on the needs of the program participants. Robert Stake, an early proponent of this approach, began writing about a "responsive evaluation" approach in the 1970s (Fitzpatrick et al., 2004). His major focus is attending and responding to the participant and stakeholder need for information. Out of Stake's responsive evaluation approach grew the participant-oriented approaches, including the utilization-focused evaluation that specifically attends to and gives power to the evaluation user (Patton, 1994) and empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 2002), an approach that involves the participants in the evaluation process. This approach seems particularly useful in education as all members of a democratic society have a stake in the making sure the citizens are well educated in order to make informed societal decisions.

The different approaches imply different underlying assumptions and views on how research should be conducted. House (1978) classifies the objectives, management, and consumer-oriented approaches as 'objectivist' (positivist/post-positivist) and the expert and the expertise and participant-oriented approaches as 'subjectivist' or constructivist. Positivists and post-positivists rely more on quantitative methods whereas constructivists tend to use qualitative methods (Creswell, 2003). Fitzpatrick et al. (2004) purport that their classification schema is based on the "driving force behind doing the evaluation" (p. 68) including (a) questions addressed and (b) underlying organizers related to who is involved in the evaluation processes and decisions…evaluator, managers, stakeholders. The objectives-oriented and management-oriented approaches,

for example, emphasize the decision-making needs of those in charge while the other approaches, to varying degrees, consider or involve stakeholders. The Educational Leadership team, like Fitzpatrick et al. base their evaluation plan on questions and underlying organizers and integrate approaches.

***Integrating Approaches.*** Kirkhart (2000) proposes an integrated theory of evaluation influence that he conceives to be multifaceted. He conceptualizes three dimensions: intended versus unintended, process and results, and time (immediate, end-of cycle, and long-term). In planning the evaluation, the Auburn University Leadership Team decided upon a multifaceted approach that encompasses evaluation influences, but also evaluation needs, such as data needs of accreditation boards, hiring needs of public schools, and contexts such as the campus-based classroom and the field-based public school setting. The goal was to identify aspects or components of approaches that best serve the evaluation purposes and needs of the Educational Leadership Master's Degree Program. The integrated approach described in this paper is much like Patton's Utilization-focused evaluation (1997) in which various approaches are combined to form a distinct approach. For example, an accreditation system such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), an expertise-oriented approach to regulating educational institutions, holds the institution to standards developed by the field. Perhaps best classified as expertise-oriented, the accreditation system can also be conceptualized in terms of goals with standards representing the goals that are assessed. The participant-oriented approach involves stakeholders, such as students, in the evaluation process, which also supports the educational institution in understanding and attending to the needs of its consumers, the students. By drawing from and integrating different approaches into the evaluation plan, a wider variety of stakeholder and program needs are addressed in the evaluation plan.

The first task of those developing an evaluation plan is to define criteria used for judging worth of either processes or products (Guskey, 1999). What do successful programs look like and what information is needed to make judgments about success? Thus, the initial step was to identify and review literature on leadership preparation programs. It became apparent that one difficulty in both designing and planning for evaluation, however, lies in the complexity of principal preparation programs as well as the varying, intertwined, and, at times, conflicting interests of program faculty, students, the K-12 institutions, and accreditation agencies. To further complicate planning for evaluation, even principal preparation programs considered to be 'good' vary widely in content, design, and mode of delivery (Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Wallace Foundation, 2008). In the next section the literature on principal preparation programs recommended program elements are discussed.

***Designing and Evaluating Educational Leadership Programs***

A number of educational leadership experts and researchers (Barnett & Muth, 2008; Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007; Hart & Pounder, 1999; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Murphy, 2002; Orr, 2006; Wallace Foundation, 2008; Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002) studied innovative leadership preparation programs and, though programs looked quite different, specific program features considered to facilitate success were teased out. For example, Jackson and Kelley (2002) studied six principal preparation programs across the United States, and The Wallace Foundation (2008) commissioned a team of researchers to study 'exemplary' principal preparation programs based on "evidence of strong outcomes in preparing school leaders" (p. 2). Principal preparation program features that seemed to permeate 'innovative' or 'exemplary' principal preparation programs included (a) alignment between curriculum and professional standards, (b) rigorous selection of candidates, (c) cohort structure, (d) instructional leadership, and (e) authentic, problem-based learning experiences (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Jackson & Kelley, 2002)

The importance of aligning the curriculum with professional standards is emphasized in much of the literature on school leadership education (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Hart & Pounder, 1999; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2007; Young et al., 2002). The Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards are often touted as being effective and influential in guiding the design of 'exemplary' programs. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2007), "[a]t least 46 states…have adopted the ISLLC standards for principal preparation as part of their program approval process" One important and defining feature of the ISLLC model noted in the literature is that the standards focus on the importance instructional leadership and school improvement.

Emphasizing instruction as a part of leadership necessitates that principals see themselves as educators rather than managers (Murphy, 2002). Instructional leadership encompasses "a school-wide focus on better teaching and learning" (Wallace Foundation, 2008, p. 2). Student learning success is highlighted and the school leader, along with teachers, develops a school vision that incorporates learning success as a school-wide goal.

Given the importance of excellence in instructional leadership, educational programs need to ensure they are matriculating quality candidates. Thus, a rigorous candidate selection process (Young et al., 2002; Murphy, 1999) is important. Darling-Hammond et al. recommend that leadership education programs actively recruit teachers who are proficient in teaching, exhibit leadership ability, and who represent the community in which they reside and teach. Active recruitment of high quality candidates is vital to educational program success as "the knowledge and skills of those who

enter a program determine to a great extent what kind of curriculum can be effective and what kind of leader will emerge" (p. 21).

Successful educational leadership programs provide social and professional support through a cohort structure that facilitates collaborative research, group learning, reflective practice, and sense of community (Burnett & Muth, 2008; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Kelly & Jackson, 2002). Barnett and Muth contend it is a moral obligation to facilitate program completion. The cohort structure yields not only higher completion rates, but also helps students construct professional networks (Jackson & Kelley) and creates scholar-practitioners, in part, through action research experiences.

Action research and field-based experiences are avenues through which students are exposed to authentic problem-based experiences. Many educational leadership scholars emphasize the importance of these types of learning experiences (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Eagle, 2005; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; McCarthy, 1999; Murphy 1999; Hart & Pounder, 1999; Van Meter, 1999), learning methods considered to be "powerful pedagogical practices, rooted in adult learning" (Orr, 2006, p. 495) Other such powerful practices include experience-based learning, reflective practice, and structures through which communication and collaboration are facilitated (Orr, 2006; Barnette & Muth, 2008; Goodwin et al., 2005; Kottkamp & Silverberg, 2003; Murphy, 2006)

In the next section the evaluation plan for the Auburn University Educational Leadership Master's Program is reviewed, linking program elements to evaluation approaches. These components and approaches are discussed using overarching framework with three major components: collaboration, comprehensiveness, and the on-going process of evaluation as a driving force for program reform.

### *The Educational Leadership Program Redesign and Integrated Evaluation*

Patton (1996) argues that evaluation should be broadly conceptualized as a knowledge-generating activity. In Patton's view, evaluation is "too rich and varied to be pigeon-holed into a single dichotomy" (A Menu of Evaluation Purpose section, paragraph 2). Along these lines, the Auburn University Educational Leadership Team and its partners conceptualized evaluation for Auburn University's Educational Leadership Master's Program to be an activity that incorporates a variety of approaches and methods to accommodate different evaluation needs. Hence, the leadership team and partners adopt facets of program evaluation models that facilitate collaboration, emphasize learning, and generate knowledge that can be used to inform program implementation processes, such as quality of internship experience; progress, for example, mid program review of student progress, and products, such as quality of K-12 school leadership of Auburn University graduates (Guskey, 2001; Reed, Kochan, Ross, & Kunkel, 2001) such that the

program evolves to meet on-going needs.

The redesigned Educational Leadership Master's Degree Program incorporates the features of exemplary schools described in the literature reviewed previously with revised admission procedures that emphasize candidate quality, curriculum that is developmental and field-based, and a cohort structure that facilitates collaboration (e.g. Jackson & Kelley, 2002). The evaluation plan for the program borrows from (a) objectives-oriented, (b) management-oriented, (c) consumer-oriented, (d) expertise-oriented, and (e) participant-oriented approaches evaluation approaches. In the succeeding section, the Auburn University Educational Leadership Program evaluation plan elements in conjunction with the approach utilized is discussed with emphasis on the collaborative, comprehensive, and on-going aspects of the plan.

***Collaboration.*** A strong proponent of the consumer-oriented approach is Michael Scriven (1991, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999; Scriven & Coryn, 2008**)**. He is concerned with the impact the evaluation has on program participants and other stakeholders stating that

> it [consumer-oriented evaluation] regards the main function of an applied evaluation field to be the determination of the merit and worth of programs (etc.) in terms of how effectively and efficiently they are serving those they impact, particularly those receiving—or who should be receiving—the services the programs provide, and those who pay for the program (1994, p 161).

Tineke and Stake (2001) emphasize that different stakeholders have different expectations and values and that these should be considered by evaluators. One approach to integrating stakeholder voices is participatory evaluation. Cousins and Whitmore (1998) state that "[p]articipatory evaluation implies that, when doing an evaluation, researchers, facilitators, or professional evaluators collaborate in some way with individuals, groups, or communities who have a decided stake in the program, development project, or other entity being evaluated" (p. 5), and Young et al. (2002) assert that "[c]ollaboration is…a necessary ingredient for the improvement of preparation programs (p. 142)." These authors contend that collaboration with key stakeholders is fundamental to making substantive program changes that support the development of successful school leaders.

The Auburn University Educational Leadership Team places heavy emphasis on participatory approaches as it considers collaboration with all stakeholders to enhance team members' ability to assess, judge, and reform the program as needed. Collaboration with partners began at the design stage: the team initiated the curriculum redesign efforts through conversations with partner school practitioners and students seeking to discover beliefs and assumptions of both Auburn University Educational

Leadership faculty and K-12 stakeholders (Cambron-McCabe, 2003; Young et al., 2002). The conversations led the leadership team and partners to develop admissions and curriculum changes closely tied to school and pK-20 student learning needs (e.g. developmentally appropriate instruction, practical application of material learned) and to state standards.

*Partners as stakeholders in the redesign.* Planning for the redesign began in the fall of 2005 and in December of that year, Auburn University and its K-12 partners presented an overview of the plan to the governor's Congress Implementation Committee. In early 2006, four committees were established to address curriculum, admissions, partnerships and advisory council, and evaluation and the committees met throughout the summer and fall of 2006 and the spring and summer of 2007. Through these committees, the Auburn University Educational Leadership Team, K-12 partners, and leaders from the ALSDE developed a vision for the program and established an innovative new curriculum. The vision emphasized the development of instructional leaders (Murphy, 2002; Wallace Foundation, 2008)—leaders that have the capacity to improve education for all and to lead schools with a strong focus on student learning. The curriculum was based on a thorough review of the literature pertaining to leadership program design, leadership effectiveness, and ALSDE Standards for Instructional Leaders. The Auburn University team and partners also developed an evaluation plan that incorporated on-going student, instructor, and course assessments. Residency internship requirements were outlined along with internship assessment guidelines. Additionally, the team and its partners developed guidelines for assessment portfolios that students build through coursework, wrote an internship handbook, and agreed that assessment would include a capstone event in which students would present action research (completed through coursework) to program faculty, school-based partners, and fellow cohort students and receive feedback. Our first cohort of students began the program in the summer of 2008, with a completion date of the summer of 2009.

*Students as stakeholders in evaluation.* Auburn University Educational Leadership faculty assumes that the Auburn Leadership graduate students, as future school leaders, genuinely want to improve the quality of public school education for their K-12 students and understand what they need in terms of professional growth to do so. Therefore, faculty and administrators must listen to students' in order to fully understand what they are facing in their public school settings. They must also ascertain what the graduate faculty does or does not do for them in terms of learning to lead effective schools. Thereby, faculty and administrators empower them to help shape the direction of the program. For example, the Educational Leadership team seeks their feedback at the formative stage through course evaluations. In addition, students are also given voice through seminar discussions and a learning community

consisting of university faculty, students, and K-12 administrators from partner school districts.

***Partner school districts as collaborators.*** The team, additionally, draws on the expertise of partners as public school consumers of the program's product. Input and insights of field-based coaches who work with internship students, as well as students, the consumers, help the faculty evaluate individual courses, field internships, the graduate participants, faculty, and program implementation.

The leadership team considers collaboration with partners essential at the student application stage. This is consistent with the recommendations of such researchers as Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) and Young et al. (2002) who underscore the need to recruit quality students (e.g. excellent teachers with strong communication skills) who are team players and who have demonstrated leadership skill (e.g. ability to take the lead on school committees). Toward this end, the interview process includes student demonstration of individual and group-based problem solving as well as presentations, which are collaboratively evaluated based on the expertise of both university and K-12 administrators. The faculty continues to draw on the expertise of the partners through the use of field-based coaches and school administrators who provide input about student internship experiences and follow-up assessment which includes employer surveys which become a part of an overall comprehensive program review that addresses admissions, students, instructors, and the curriculum.

***Comprehensive Evaluation Design.*** A comprehensive evaluation plan must include all program processes and outcomes. In conceptualizing our evaluation, the leadership team and its partners borrow from Stufflebeam's management-oriented CIPP approach (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007) which encompasses context (C), input (I), process (P), and product (P) decisions, and spans the planning stage through program completion and subsequent leadership effectiveness of our graduates. CIPP also includes assessments of students, instructors, and the curriculum. Context evaluation encompasses identifying the target population and the needs or problems to be addressed. Much of this work was completed in the planning stage.

*Context evaluation.* Context evaluation begins with the planning of the redesign. Thus, at the program and evaluation design (planning) stage (Guskey, 1999) K-12 partners were sought through the creation of an Advisory Council (university faculty, K-12 practitioners, an ALSDE representative, and students) and an Admissions Committee (Auburn University faculty and K-12 administrators). Through collaborating with these partners, school hiring and leadership needs were identified. Consistent with the literature summarized in this paper, leadership needs centered on the development of sound admissions criteria, alignment of curriculum with standards, and school improvement through student-centered instruction (Barnett & Muth, 2008;

Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Hart & Pounder, 1999; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Murphy, 2002; Orr, 2006; Wallace Foundation, 2008; Young et al., 2002). Following this, the input evaluation step involves evaluating and redesigning the existing program based on identified needs, including need for quality school leaders and the need for student-centered instruction. An initial step is to look at the literature on leadership education and the standards for quality in the programs.

*Input evaluation.* A part of redesigning the Auburn University educational leadership program was to align our curriculum with state standards as well as ISLLC and the NCATE standards. The purpose of accreditation boards such as NCATE is to provide oversight using an expertise-approach to evaluation with site visits by 'expert' teams. Accreditation helps ensure that the educational leadership program and curriculum maintain high standards that provide a foundation for high quality educational leadership graduates, the purpose for the redesign. Thus, the leadership team redesigned the curriculum, incorporating ALSDE state standards into course goals and objectives. These standards address:

(1) Planning for continuous improvement. Evaluation must be continuous so that the Auburn University Educational Leadership Team and partners can refine and improve the program as issues are identified.
(2) Teaching and learning practices. The Auburn University Leadership faculty emphasizes instructional leadership that maintains student learning must be the focal point for all educators.
(3) Human resources development. For example, Auburn University leadership faculty members seek to develop educational leadership graduates that demonstrate ability to recruit, select, evaluate, and mentor new faculty in their schools.
(4) Diversity. The team strives to ensure that all of educational leadership graduates have the capacity to respond to a variety of contexts, such as political, social, cultural, and economic contexts.
(5) Community and stakeholder relations. Graduates of the Auburn University Educational Leadership program are expected to see schools as a part of a larger community which necessitates collaboration among all groups of stakeholders (e.g. parents, community agencies).
(6) Technology. Educational leaders that graduate from the Auburn University graduate program will demonstrate ability to integrate technology as tools for managing, teaching, and communication.
(7) Management of the learning organization. To be good managers, Auburn University

leadership faculty expects our graduates to have the ability to manage components of the organization including facilities, financial resources, and the learning environment.

(8) Ethics. Faculty expects that its graduates guide their school policies and practices with honesty, integrity, and fairness**.** (Governor's Congress on School Leadership Final Report, 2005)

These standards, as well as standards set forth other educational leadership organizations, such as NCATE, ISLLC, Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB), and the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC), are identified as goals to be aspired to in our leadership program; thus, the Auburn University Educational Leadership Team draws on the objectives-oriented approaches developed by Tyler (1991) to assess the alignment between the ALSDE leadership preparation standards and the curriculum. Advocates of this approach base the evaluation on goals and objectives and collect data that inform program decision makers about the extent to which these goals and objectives were met. Sanders and Cunningham (in Fitzpatrick et al., 2004**)** specifically recommended both logical and empirical methods, including content analysis of records such as meeting minutes or syllabi. To evaluate the alignment between curriculum and state standards, the Auburn University faculty, along with its partners, created a "crosscheck" matrix to align the state standards (Appendix A) with courses. Additionally, the team reviewed syllabi as they were developed to assess whether courses addressed all standards. To further check adherence to these standards, the evaluation plan calls for the collection and analysis of student work products (portfolio) and the solicitation feedback from K-12 partners after student engagement in field-based activities. For example, surveys disseminated to both students and K-12 partners and students can contain items that directly ask about how activities addressed specific standards as well as perceptions of student progress.

***Process evaluation.*** Process evaluation takes place continuously and encompasses the evaluation of students, instructors, courses, and program structures. Student evaluation begins with a rigorous comprehensive admissions process: candidates submit an application portfolio that includes evidence of accomplishments as an education as well as a letter of intent and recommendations. Candidates also interview with a team of faculty members and administrators from partner schools as a part of the process. At the interview, candidates work in teams to problem-solve and then present their solutions to faculty and school partner representatives. In addition, an on-site writing example is required as part of the admissions process. Through a rigorous admissions process, the level at which candidates demonstrate strong teaching and leadership ability, willingness to work hard and collaborate with others, and communication proficiency is assessed.

Once admitted, students attend a three-day summer institute to orient themselves to the program. By bringing in well-known guest presenters and incorporating small group discussions and activities related to topics presented, the institute also acts as a professional development workshop the leadership program can offer to faculty and school-based partners such as field-based coaches, mentors, and Advisory Council members. Evaluations of the institute by participants help faculty and partners refine the design and plan for future summer institutes and also sets the stage for student development through an intense schedule of courses over three semesters.

The team accentuates instructional leadership in the coursework…school leadership that places much value and emphasis on the teaching and learning process and authentic or "real world" learning experiences (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Goodwin et al., 2005; Leithwood et al., 2004). Throughout coursework, student cohorts are tasked with authentic group think tank projects through which the processes of content knowledge and skill acquisition, application of learning, cognitive complexity, and professional dispositions, such as openness, positive attitude, and belief that all students can learn (Murphy et al., 2007), are assessed by faculty as content experts and judged by field-based leadership experts such as school administrators.

In addition to instructor assessments of student acquisition of course content, students formally self assess as part of their residency internship. The internship consists of 10 consecutive days in each summer and five consecutive days during the fall and the spring semesters. Students develop an internship plan for personal growth (Appendix B) and keep an activity log (Appendix C), collect artifacts, and pre- and post-rate their progress toward meeting standards and goals. See Appendix D for internship portfolio checklist.

Students also participate in the evaluation process through assessing individual courses and instructors. Instructors can the use this feedback to refine course content and adjust teaching activities. Further, students and school-based partners, as stakeholders, assess satisfaction with progress and outcomes (products) through written feedback and surveys as well as on-the-job assessments.

***Product evaluation.*** Outcome evaluation is a test of overall program product quality. For example, at the end of their studies, students are required to demonstrate learning to faculty and K-12 practitioners from local partner districts through a capstone presentation of think tank project outcomes and recommendations to faculty, the district administrative teams, and cohort group members. Outcomes assessed include, along with dispositions such as a deep appreciation for diversity, knowledge and skill acquisition and impact on both school improvement and student achievement**.** End of program written student feedback, surveys, and follow-up satisfaction surveys after graduation provide summative outcome evaluations of the program that then can

be used to inform program reform and refinement for future students.

***Ongoing Evaluation.*** Scriven (2007, 1991) defines two types of evaluation, summative and formative. He states that "[f]ormative evaluation is evaluation designed, done, and intended to support the process of improvement," and that '[s]summative evaluation…is done for, or by, any observers or decisions makers…who need evaluative conclusions for any other reasons besides development" (p. 20). Given that the evaluations of students, faculty, partnerships, and program components are all used to inform program or student development decisions, even those evaluations at concluding points, such as at the end of a semester, can be considered formative and in the service of on-going improvement. However, in the following sections, specific student and program on-going, formative assessment tools, and activities are highlighted.

***Student assessment.*** The student portfolio acts as both a formative and summative assessment tool. It is formative in that students receive feedback on progress demonstrated by the artifacts throughout the program, and it is summative in that it acts as a final assessment tool at the end of the program. The internship portfolios are developed over the course of four separate internship residencies. As each residency is completed, artifacts are added to the portfolio and progress toward meeting internship goals is assessed. Student self assessments of their progress includes a description of the activity and a reflection statement (Appendix C). Field-based coach assessments include ratings of performance, a description of strengths, and a statement of areas for continued growth (Appendix E)

Another student learning and assessment activity that the faculty conducts on an on-going (semester) bases is the think tank. For example, during the 2008-2009 year, students researched problems or issues related to proration, school supports, and extracurricular activities. Results of the think tank research are presented to K-12 practitioners from local partner districts and faculty at the end of the semester. These on-going assessments, along with other assessments of students and faculty, provide data that informs the leadership team of the overall effectiveness of the educational leadership program.

***Program assessment.*** Program assessments are conducted each semester through Advisory Council meetings. These meetings bring together College of Education faculty and school-based personnel to discuss and assess what has worked and what has not worked so that the leadership team and its stakeholders can improve the program to address hiring needs of schools. Topics of discussion at the last Advisory Council meeting included think tank activities and internships. Practitioners and school leaders from partner districts reported on student internship activities and their assessments of the usefulness of the activities the student participated in terms of learning. These K-12 practitioners and leaders were also asked about what future think tank

research they would consider useful to them, which triggered discussion about the need for data base where all education related data can be readily accessible. The practitioners and leaders suggested that think tank research might include investigating what educational data might be useful and how to organize it. Activities like the think tank provide avenues through positive educational reform or transformation can take place.

Preskill and Torres (2000) advocated the adoption of transformative goals that facilitate learning. They state that '[t]ransformative learning can be facilitated when employees seek to understand something, address critical organizational issues, and improve their work through a participatory, dialogic, reflective, and inquiry-oriented approach to evaluation and the use of findings." (p. 29). Reflection, inquiry, and dialogue are routinely a part of scheduled Educational Leadership Team meetings and the Advisory Committee meetings, through which self-assessment and self-evaluation is conducted to make program process reform (implementation) decisions on an on-going basis.

***Discussion***

***Conclusions.*** As Patton (1996) advocates, the graduate program evaluation is designed to integrate rich and varied sources of information for the purpose of generating knowledge that can be used to inform, define, reform, and transform (Reed et al., 2001) the program, participants, faculty, and stakeholders. Though some researchers are purists and do not integrate qualitative and quantitative methods, many researchers and evaluators use some blend (Ross, Narayanan, Hendrix & Myneni, 2009). The Auburn University Educational Leadership Team took a pragmatic approach to designing the evaluation and drew from many evaluation approaches to identify the best methods based on questions asked, context, and stakeholder needs, and often an evaluation strategy was conceptualized through more than one evaluation lens to evaluate all program components such as individual courses and field internships, program participants and faculty, and program implementation. Additionally, the Auburn University faculty and partners will continue to utilize a wide variety of data collection methods, including questionnaires, observations, examinations, portfolios, reflections. As Sander (2002) recommends, in order to sustain a high-quality program the evaluation became a part of the program's culture.

When evaluation is part of the culture of the program, it is on-going and intertwined with all the program components, stakeholders, and structures. The Auburn University Educational Leadership team began the redesign of the master's program through a review of literature and seeking input from local K-12 practitioners. The knowledge gained from these activities formed the basis for defining a new program. Collaboration with both K-12 practitioners from local school districts and the ALSDE representatives was essential as the evaluative feedback they provided

throughout the planning process and initial implementation of the program helped shape the program such that the graduates are highly prepared to become leaders that make a difference in student learning. On-going evaluation is needed to continue to refine and transform the program to meet stakeholder emerging and changing needs.

***Initial Assessments.*** The Auburn University Educational Leadership Master's program began implementation in the summer of 2008. The first cohort is now in their second semester of coursework and all 16 of the students that matriculated as continuing in good standing. Residency portfolios have been assessed with all students meeting their goals and the expectations of the field-based coaches and faculty supervisor. Initial think tank research outcomes have been presented and well received, and the next presentation will take place at the summer institute orientation meeting where participants will formally rate all program components, including the student presentations. Evaluation of the program by K-12 practitioners has generally been positive and useful. Due to their feedback in the recent Advisory Council meeting information about graduates will be distributed to school districts for hiring purposes. Student evaluations of the program have also been generally positive and useful. Based on feedback the graduate students, course sequencing changes will take place to better prepare students in a timely manner for their licensure exam in the spring.

***Recommendations.*** Any graduate level educational leadership faculty seeking to continually reform and transform to better meet the needs of their stakeholders should engage in discussions about their underlying assumptions and needs in order to develop a coherent and consistent program. The assumption that because education in multi-faceted and changing endeavor leading to the need to confront and challenge the status quo was an assumption this author made that wasn't necessarily shared by all others. Throughout the course of the initial implementation the team has always been able to discuss issues and concerns and come to a consensus about how to proceed. Other assumptions do seem to be held by most or all team members. The faculty and its partners did confront existing paradigms and methods by completely redesigning the program from scratch and incorporating innovative methods such as coordinating projects across courses and semesters, building in multiple opportunities for authentic field-based learning activities, and emphasizing instructional and curricular leadership rather than a management style leadership. Because of the willingness to challenge existing paradigms, the leadership team and its partners built in multiple approaches to evaluation to accommodate different data uses and evaluation purposes.

In the field of education, collaboration appears to be a particularly effective approach to designing and evaluating programs. At the higher education level, collaboration often takes place across universities by

individual or groups of researchers who seek to strengthen conclusions. Collaboration at the K-12 level strengthens programs through the sharing of ideas and resources. For example the Auburn University Truman Pierce Institute directed by Cindy Reed creates opportunities for students, teachers, and school leaders to meet and discuss problems, issues, and solutions. Given that evaluative decisions in education are often made for program improvement purposes rather than decisions related to program continuation, this author recommends that educational program evaluation efforts include not only program managers or those who implement the program, but also participants and other stakeholders. In this manuscript, program evaluation approaches were very briefly discussed and some not discussed at all. It is this author's recommendation that any education team that endeavors to evaluate their program should become familiar with program evaluation approaches, especially collaborative ones, and possibly explore innovative approaches such as considering stakeholders as 'critical friends' (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2005) who provide evaluative information seen from the perspective of one who is not a part of the program.

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# Appendices

# Appendix A

Course 'crosscheck' with State Standards

*This matrix cross-references each of the Alabama Standards with program courses and curricula.*

| Alabama | | Summer I | | Fall | | Spring | | Summer II | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Standard | | Leader | Action | LO | Plan | Int/Cur | HR | Ethics | Fres | EdSys |
| 290-3-3-.48 | Instructional Leadership | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| (2)(a) | With regard to planning for continuous improvement…[prior] to program completion prospective | | | | | | | | | |
| | instructional leaders shall demonstrate: | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)1. | Knowledge to: | **** | | *** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)1.(i) | Lead the articulation, development, and implementation of a shared vision and strategic plan for the school that | ** | | * | | | | | | |
| | places student and faculty learning at the center. | | | | | *** | | | | |
| (2)(a)1.(ii) | Align instructional objectives and curricular goals with the shared vision. | * | | * | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)1.(iii) | Allocate and guard instruction time for the achievement of goals. | * | | * | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)1.(iv) | Create a school leadership team that is skillful in using data. | ** | | * | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)1.(v) | Use approved methods and principles of program evaluation in the school improvement process. | * | | * | | | | * | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2. | Ability to: | *** | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(i) | Lead and motivate staff, students, and families to achieve the school's vision. | ** | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(ii) | Work with faculty to identify instructional and curricular needs that align with vision and resources. | * | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(iii) | Interact with the community concerning the school's vision, mission, and priorities. | * | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(iv) | Work with staff and others to establish and accomplish goals. | * | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(v) | Relate the vision, mission, and goals to the instructional needs of students. | * | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(vi) | Use goals to manage activities. | * | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(vii) | Use a variety of problem-solving techniques and decision-making skills to resolve problems. | ** | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(viii) | Delegate tasks clearly and appropriately to accomplish organizational goals. | * | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(ix) | Focus upon student learning as a driving force for curriculum, instruction, and institutional decision-making. | ** | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(x) | Use a process for gathering information to use when making decisions. | ** | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(xi) | Use multiple sources of data to manage the accountability process. | ** | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(xii) | Assess student progress using a variety of techniques and information. | ** | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(xiii) | Monitor and assess instructional programs, activities, and materials. | ** | | ** | | | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(xiv) | Use diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement. | ** | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(a)2.(xv) | Use external resources as sources for ideas for improving student achievement. | * | | ** | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| (2)(b) | With regard to teaching and learning…[prior] to program completion prospective instructional leaders shall | | | | | | | | | |
| | demonstrate: | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| (2)(b)1. | Knowledge to: | | | | | * | | | | |
| (2)(b)1.(i) | Plan for the achievement of annual learning gains, school improvement goals, and other targets related to the | | | | | | | | | |
| | shared vision. | ** | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(b)1.(ii) | Collaborate with community, staff, district, state, and university personnel to develop the instructional program. | *** | | ** | | * | | | | |
| (2)(b)1.(iii) | Align curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments to district, state, and national standards. | * | | ** | | ** | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| (2)(b) | With regard to teaching and learning…[prior] to program completion prospective instructional leaders shall | | | | | | | | | |
| | demonstrate: (continued) | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

# Appendix B

Auburn University Instructional Leadership Program
Spring Semester 2009 Internship Plan

This plan specifies the standards/indicators that will guide the internship for this semester. Under each standard/indicator are listed activities that the intern should engage in during the internship. It is essential that interns are allowed ample opportunity to **observe, participate and lead** activities from this list.

**Standard:** Develop a written plan of action for the development of a vision for comprehensive integration of technology into a school curriculum
**Suggested Activity:** Participate in a school-level committee discussion of technology needs and develop/submit a plan of action for integrating technology in the coming school year based on school needs/faculty input

**Standard:** Apply research in the area of management
**Suggested Activity:** Lead an analysis of building level "non-instructional" services and costs at the direction of the principal and develop a profile of expenditures in management areas that can be evaluated for cost savings.

**Standard:** Participate in designing a class schedule utilizing appropriate technological resources
**Suggested Activity:** Observe and/or participate in a review of class schedule design for 2009-2010 school year based on budget forecasts, program priorities and existing staffing patterns (focusing on such areas as earned teacher units versus needs based on programming decisions).

**Standard:** Knowledge of political factors which impact on schools and school systems
**Suggested Activity:** Interview (may be done as a small group) a central office administrator and a school level administrator regarding funding processes at the state and local levels, including political realities of state funding and how decisions made at those levels impact the decisions administrators must make regarding staffing, program offerings, etc.

# Appendix C

**Auburn University**
**College of Education**
**EDLD 7930**
**Administrative Intern Activity Log**

Name: Semester:
Date of Activity:
School Site:
*Type of Experience: Observing Participating Leading
Activity #: ___
Activity Title:

| Standard #/Key Indicator | COURSE # |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Type Standard # only. Write out the key indicator (Alabama Instructional Standards handout). Course # for Summer will either be EDLD 7540 Curriculum or EDLD 7530 Continuous Improvement. If you engaged in an activity that doesn't fit either course, leave it blank.
Description of Activity:

Reflection:

Action Taken or Action Needed:
Artifacts for the activity should follow this Activity Log form in the portfolio.
***There must be no more than:**
**50% observation**
**and at least: 30% participating &**
**20% leading**

# Appendix D

Administrative Internship Portfolio Checklist

____ Competency Verification Form-pages 1 & 2 (One form for the year.)

____Cooperating Administrator's Evaluation Form w/signatures– page 3(each internship assignment)

____ Professional Growth Statement (1 for Summer and Fall, 1 for Spring and Summer 2009)

____ Activity Log Form (as many as you need)

____ Artifacts to support Activity Log Form (schedules, programs, letters, data sheets, power points…)

_____ Internship Plan (with signatures)

_____ EDLD 7930 Pre- Post- (Should only have pre- rated now. Will rate post- after your last internship.)

# Appendix E

## Field-based Coach Evaluation Form

**Auburn University**
**College of Education**
**EDLD 7930 – Residency Internship**
**Field-based Coach Evaluation Form**

The graduate student is to include this form in his/her portfolio and submit it to the Clinical Professor at Auburn University at the end of the internship.

Clinical Professor: Dr. Lynne Patrick
Clinical/Associate Professor
EFLT Department
Auburn University, AL 36849-5221
rlp0004@auburn.edu
334-844-3024

Brief description of what the intern has done.

What strengths have you observed in working with the administrative intern?

What areas of continued growth would you suggest?

What is your overall rating of the administrative intern's performance this semester? Circle one:
Excellent Satisfactory Unsatisfactory
Please explain your rating:

Field-based Coach's Signature: _____ Date: _____
Administrative Intern's Signature: _____Date:_____