Authentic Assessment at National Network for Educational Renewal Universities

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The purpose of this inquiry study was to identify and determine the use of authentic assessment procedures at selected universities affiliated with the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER). Also, this project explored what assessment methods were being used by the select NNER universities to verify the establishment of the 19 Goodlad Postulates. In March 1994 a survey instrument was distributed to 16 institutional representatives at the South Carolina NNER partnership conference. Additional data were collected through site visits to six NNER institutions. Data were collected to determine use of authentic assessment procedures with teacher education students and fauclty reactions to portfolios, and the status of the 19 Goodlad Postulates in relation to renewal of teacher education. Preliminary analysis of the data indicated positive acceptance of portfolios as a vehicle to develop reflectivity skills in teacher education candidates. Educators cite ownership, identification of teaching skills, development of reflectivity, and assistance with the job search process as positive advantages. Serious concerns that suggest uneven acceptance by teacher education faculty were time demands on faculty workload, lack of clarity as to what is being assessed, student motivation to complete a portfolio, and guidelines for portfolio construction and assessment determination.

Performance results explain more about what students have learned than standardized tests. Tests do have a valid place in education, but not as the sole assessment instrument, nor as the final word in evaluating students' learning or teacher performance. Authentic assessment has gained appeal among 1990's educators who desire to document learning rather than merely show the warehousing of knowledge.

The 1980's accountability movement and the national call for reform (prompted by reports that declared our schools in America decadent) ushered in a major paradigm shift. This paradigm shift requires the reform movement to "define bold, new standards of teaching excellence and a process by which a teacher would demonstrate that he or she has met these standards" (Smolen & Newman, 1992, p. 1). Educational researchers (Bird, 1990; Scriven, 1988) argue that conventional methods of assessing teaching, like multiple-choice tests, are not adequate to get a complete picture of an individual's ability to teach because they fail to portray accurate interrelations of teachers' content knowledge and their pedagogical expertise in addressing student diversity in the classroom.

Portraying more accurately the rich and multidimensional aspects of teaching and learning calls for a combination of methods, such as portfolios, direct observations, assessment centers (all examples of authentic assessment) and revised tests (traditional measures) which would better capture these complexities (Shulman, 1988). Since educators suffered criticism, not all together warranted, for innovative methods attempted during the 1960's and 70's, the current renewal efforts must demonstrate educational advancement. Biddle (1992) explains that student or teacher competence must be documented even though it may not be clearly defined; the form of progress must be demonstrated despite elusive substance. Bridging the gap between the practice and the presentation of competence is vital for accountability.

Public schools and their populations continually change, as should curriculum and methods. But student evaluation methods in the Pre-K-12 or teacher education environments have changed little. The portfolio is an excellent example of a creative bridge that documents the multidimensionality of learning. Representing authentic assessment, the portfolio can contain standardized test re-

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sults with students' reflections about them as well as actual classroom work and performance documentation. In this way, students and teachers can exhibit knowledge, performances, and dispositions in both traditional and authentic ways.

Data Sources and Methods

This study focused on how universities affiliated with the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER) have employed authentic assessment in their teacher education renewal efforts. A prerequisite for admission into NNER is a commitment to educational change and reform. The NNER member institutions are committed to John Goodlad's "daunting agenda" for educational renewal. Not only a leading educator but also a pioneer in the renewal efforts to build a competent and committed corp of teachers, Dr. Goodlad has articulated nineteen postulates needed to implement effective change in the education of educators (see Table 1) .

Three purposes have directed this research:

· To determine authentic assessment use in the selected universities' teacher education programs. (If so, what types?)
· To determine the advantages and disadvantages, perceived by faculty, of portfolios in the selected universities' teacher education programs?
· To determine what assessment methods are being used to verify the establishment of the 19 Goodlad Postulates in the selected universities' teacher education programs?

Information for this paper was secured by two procedures. First, a survey instrument was distributed at the March 1994 NNER Partnership meeting in South Carolina. The survey instrument was constructed to address the three study purposes. The sample for this project focused on the 16 NNER Universities who participated in the March 1994 Conference. A self-addressed envelope accompanied the survey. A total of 13 of 16 sites responded for a response rate of 81%. Secondly, site visits were conducted March through June 1994 to collect further information from six selected universities (of the 13 responding institutions). Thus, the information for this study was collected via both survey and interview/observation procedures. This study serves as a vehicle to disseminate data about field-based practices in renewing teacher education. In sum, a case study process was employed to assess the impact on pre-service teacher education, developing authentic assessment procedures and renewing partnerships with public schools.

Results and Discussion

The survey yielded information on authentic assess-

ment usage at 13 NNER universities that responded. Authentic assessment for this project is defined as a multi-trait, multi-method evaluation focusing on performance and competency. The specific authentic assessment areas addressed by the survey were: *Authentic Assessments Being Employed, Advantages and Disadvantages of Portfolios,* and *Assessment Methods Used to Verify Goodlad's Postulates.*

Twelve of the thirteen institutions responding stated that their programs incorporated authentic assessment. The most frequently used form of authentic assessment was the portfolio, as identified by all but one of the responding settings. Six of the twelve schools listed journals and logs as the second most popular authentic assessment. Ranking third were case studies and videos. The universities' names and their responses appear in Table 2. Since portfolios surfaced as the dominant authentic assessment tool employed in the NNER universities, the following section discusses the universities' views of this method.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Portfolios

Survey respondents listed portfolio advantages and disadvantages related to both pre-service students and teacher education instruction. The most frequently stated portfolio advantages for students centered on the ownership gleaned from the process and the value students placed on the process and the finished product (see Table 3). Student ownership empowers students by fostering self-assessment and concretely demonstrating their growth toward teaching proficiency. Respondents explained that portfolios permit the display of students' talents and teaching expertise. This advantage closely correlates with Goodlad's postulate seven stating, "Programs for the education of educators, whether elementary or secondary, must carry the responsibility to ensure that all candidates progressing through them possess or acquire the literacy and critical thinking abilities associated with the concept of an educated person" (Goodlad, 1994, p. 82).

The portfolio can assist in the job interviewing process by documenting teaching competency. In order for portfolios to represent the total pre-service teacher, which is a person prepared to instruct in various settings, attention must be given to postulate fifteen "assure each candidate the availability of a wide array of laboratory settings for simulation, observation, hands-on experiences, and exemplary schools" (Goodlad, 1994, p. 89). Portfolios can address this postulate and serve students while interviewing by providing the competency base to document skills.

A prime portfolio advantage for students relates to the development of reflectivity. Numerous articles in current teacher education journals suggest that reflectivity is an accepted "best pedagogy practice." Respondents stated that portfolios significantly assisted students in reflective activity. Postulates eight, nine, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and sixteen all expect pre-service teachers to demonstrate reflectivity (see Table 1).

Other advantages pointed out in the survey results included: (a) Portfolios caused students less anxiety than tra-

Table 1

Nineteen Postulates Necessary for the Simultaneous Renewal of Schools and the Education of Educators

Postulate One. Programs for the education of the nation's educators must be viewed by institutions offering them as a major responsibility to society and be adequately supported and promoted and vigorously advanced by the institution's top leadership.

Postulate Two. Programs for the education of educators must enjoy parity with other professional education programs, full legitimacy and institutional commitment, and rewards for faculty geared to the nature of the field. (Note: Wording is changed from the original.)

Postulate Three. Programs for the education of educators must be autonomous and secure in their borders, with clear organizational identity, constancy of budget and personnel, and decision-making authority similar to that enjoyed by the major professional schools.

Postulate Four. There must exist a clearly identifiable group of academic and clinical faculty members for whom teacher education is the top priority; the group must be responsible and accountable for selecting diverse groups of students and monitoring their progress, planning and maintaining the full scope and sequence of the curriculum, continuously evaluating and improving programs, and facilitating the entry of graduates into teaching careers. (Note: There is a slight addition to original wording.)

Postulate Five. The responsible group of academic and clinical faculty members described above must have a comprehensive understanding of the aims of education and the role of schools in our society and be fully committed to selecting and preparing teachers to assume the full range of educational responsibilities required.

Postulate Six. The responsible group of academic and clinical faculty members must seek out and select for a predetermined number of student places in the program those candidates who reveal an initial commitment to the moral, ethical, and enculturating responsibilities to be assumed, and make clear to them that preparing for these responsibilities is central to this program. (Note: This statement includes an addition to the original.)

Postulate Seven. Programs for the education of educators, whether elementary or secondary, must carry the responsibility to ensure that all candidates progressing through them possess or acquire the literacy and critical-thinking abilities associated with the concept of an educated person.

Postulate Eight. Programs for the education of educators must provide extensive opportunities for future teachers to move beyond being students of organized knowledge to become teachers who inquire into both knowledge and its teaching.

Postulate Nine. Programs for the education of educators must be characterized by a socialization process through which candidates transcend their self-oriented student preoccupations to become more other-oriented in identifying with a culture of teaching.

Postulate Ten. Programs for the education of educators must be characterized in all respects by the conditions for learning that future teachers are to establish in their own schools and classrooms.

Table 1 (Continued)

Postulate Eleven. Programs for the education of educators must be conducted in such a way that future teachers inquire into the nature of teaching and schooling and assume that they will do so as a natural aspect of their careers.

Postulate Twelve. Programs for the education of educators must involve future teachers in the issues and dilemmas that emerge out of the never-ending tension between the rights and interests of individual parents and special-interest groups and the role of schools in transcending parochialism and advancing community in a democratic society. (Note: This postulate has been slightly revised and expanded.)

Postulate Thirteen. Programs for the education of educators must be infused with understanding of and commitment to the moral obligation of teachers to ensure equitable access to and engagement in the best possible K-12 education for all children and youths.

Postulate Fourteen. Programs for the education of educators must involve future teachers not only in understanding schools as they are but in alternatives, the assumptions underlying alternatives, and how to effect needed changes in school organization, pupil grouping, curriculum, and more.

Postulate Fifteen. Programs for the education of educators must assure for each candidate the availability of a wide array of laboratory settings for simulation, observation, hands-on experiences, and exemplary schools for internships and residencies; they must admit no more students to their programs than can be assured these quality experiences. (Note: The word "simulation" has been added to the original so as to include an important characteristic of forward-looking programs.)

Postulate Sixteen. Programs for the education of educators must engage future teachers in the problems and dilemmas arising out of the inevitable conflicts and incongruities between what works or is accepted in practice and the research and theory supporting other options.

Postulate Seventeen. Programs for the education of educators must establish linkages with graduates for purposes of both evaluating and revising these programs and easing the critical early years of transition into teaching.

Postulate Eighteen. Programs for the education of educators, in order to be vital and renewing, require a regulatory context with respect to licensing, certifying, and accrediting that ensures at all times the presence of the necessary conditions embraced by the seventeen preceding postulates. (Note: This postulate has been substantially revised.)

Postulate Nineteen. Programs for the education of educators must compete in an arena that rewards efforts to continuously improve on the conditions embedded in all of the postulates and tolerates no short cuts justified in the name of ensuring a supply of teachers. (Note: This postulate has been revised to be as constructive as possible in its implications.)

Note: For a full discussion of the postulates see Goodlad, 1994 (Chapter 3).

Table 2

Responding NNER Universities Authentic Assessment Survey Results

State	Institution	Authentic Assessment	
1. Colorado	University of Colorado/Denver	Portfolios Video-Interations on Tapes with pre-12 students	Student Colleagues Parents
2. Connecticut	University of Connecticut	Portfolios (beginning) Case Studies	Journals
3. Hawaii	University of Hawaii	Portfolios 10 Collective Teacher Competencies Dialogue Journals Performance/Exhibitions Self-Evaluation	Mentor Assessment College of Education Assessment Projects Vidoes
4. New Jersey	Montclair State University	Portfolios Self-Assessment Weekly Assessment Videotaping of Teachers	Micro-teaching Lesson Plans Journals
5. Ohio (2 sites)	Miami University	Portfolios Case Studies Reaction Papers Practicum Logs Reports Presentations	Peer Teaching Experiments Field Assignments Activity Files Integrated Unit Plan Application/Analysis and Synthesis Exam Items
	Wright State University	Portfolios Case Studies Journals Student Projects	Videotaping Self-Assessment Student Portraits/Child Study
6. South Carolina (3 sites)	University of Sourth Carolina	Portfolios Children Assessment Observation	Real Products (?) Simulated Products
	Winthrop University		Portfolios IEP's Lesson Plans
	Furman University		No Response
7. Texas	Texas A & M University	Portfolios Performance Assessment	Journals Ethnographies
8. Utah	Birgham Young University		Portfolios
9. Washington	University of Washington	Portfolios Work Samples Performance Assessment	Collaborative Assessment Reflective Seminars Narrative Formats

10. Wyoming	University of Wyoming	Portfolios
		Time in Schools
		Outcome tied to School
		  Experience
		Interviews
			Projects
			Observations
			Peer &
			  Self-Evaluation

ditional evaluation measures; (b) Portfolios assisted students in developing responsibility for knowledge acquisition and mastery; (c) Portfolios permitted students to make evidence choices to show proficiency; (d) Portfolios increased communication of learning and teaching; and (e) Portfolios could be used as reference in the future.

Respondents indicated that portfolios have advantages for both program development and instruction. The most strongly identified program advantage was that instructors should to practice what they profess. Since authentic assessment has gained popularity and support, respondents viewed the use of portfolios as a legitimate way to model authentic assessment in action. Similarly, respondents stressed that portfolios documented "best practice" by students (documenting within the portfolios the employment of the best practice in given situations). This requires teacher educators to give better assignments representing the "the best practices" of the day. If faculty fail to provide dynamic assignments the likelihood of students having profitable entries will be reduced. This advantage ties to postulate ten "Programs for the education of educators must be characterized in all respects by conditions for learning that future teachers are to establish in their own schools and classrooms" (see Table 1). Portfolios also fosters curriculum and instruction planning to guarantee a program with substance being practiced. Thus, program courses should become better connected, and a continuing program assessment should be available by infusing the development of portfolios. Table 3 displays the portfolio advantages identified by responding universities' faculty.

The portfolio disadvantages listed by respondents similarly fell into instructional and student categories (see Table 4). The dominant disadvantage to students appeared to be lack of clarity of the portfolio assignment. Students experienced frustration and vagueness with the initial portfolio responsibility. Since most schooling activities are teacher directed and controlled, the portfolio designed to be student driven, causes disequilibrium. Lack of student motivation was a second disadvantage. Due to the lack of teacher directness, respondents stated that procrastination and waiting until the last minute to complete this activity was a common behavior.

The leading instructional disadvantage cited by faculty was time. Significant instructor and student time allotment appears essential for portfolios to serve their full potential. If instructors attempt to carry on as usual, they will not have the time needed to incorporate portfolios adequately into the learning process. Instruction and evaluation should be changed. To make portfolios effective for both student and instructor time, from the beginning of the program to program completion, must be available for them to confer on the process and products of portfolio construction. The second most frequently stated disadvantages were the failure to clarify the portfolio purpose and the assessment procedures. Respondents also cited other disadvantages. Because portfolios are a relatively new strategy in education, respondents felt that limited information exists to assist instructors in portfolio implementation. Likewise, bulk, or storage, was sited as a hindrance to portfolio use. Most universities developed portfolios with the paper evidence method (where students accumulate paper artifacts as exams, lesson plans, letters of recommendation, student teaching evaluations, etc.), a comfortable medium for teachers.

On the cutting edge of portfolio development are CD-ROM disks capable of incorporating all evidence, without taking much space. Respondents feared that the plastic, glittery presentations of portfolios might hinder uncovering the true substantive learning that occurred. Careful attention to scholarly aptitude and achievement must prevail. Respondents warned potential users to be cautious of showcase portfolios without hard evidence. (Avoid the scrapbook image!) Concern was voiced about consistency when portfolios are a program requirement and faculty are not on the same page.

Respondents supported the view that portfolios serve the highest function when they are infused throughout the program. As portfolio infusion occurs, systematic implementation becomes problematic. Respondents report difficulty in getting the portfolio idea across to all faculty. Some academicians seem to have trouble breaking old habits or adapting to new ways. Respondents also explained that portfolios should not be the sole evaluation instrument.

As NNER sites chart their renewal paths, with the Goodlad postulates as their foundation, they must take care to document their progress. It is imperative for institutional self-assessment, but also essential for educational researchers in other settings desiring data about the endeavors. Therefore, a question on the survey instrument asked NNER sites how they were verifying Goodlad Postulate infusion? Table 5 presents the respondents' answers to this question. Six of the thirteen universities explained that they were attempting to identify how this will be done. The respondents stated that assessment was in the planning stage. One university respondent was unsure and one gave no response. However, five respondents listed authentic assessment methods. One university respondent indicated that traditional program evaluation as well as external evaluation methods proved postulates accountability.

Conclusions and Summary

A number of conclusions can be drawn from this study. After reviewing the NNER faculty responses a number of recommendations were generated for teacher education faculty considering initiation of a renewal effort.

For teacher education renewal:
- When planning renewal projects, all participants should identify and agree upon assessment strategies. The strategies must document the renewal movement.

Table 3
Responding NNER Universities' Identification of Portfolio Advantages

Advantages	University of Colorado	University of Connecticut	University of Hawaii	Montclair State University	Adams University	Wright State University	Furman University	University of S. Carolina	Winthrop College	Texas A & M	B.Y.U.	University of Washington	University of Wyoming	N
PROGRAM														
Program Assessment	X		X			X								3
Connects Program Courses		X												1
Reference for both Student & Teacher				X										1
Models Assessment Tools				X	X	X		X			X	X	X	7
Connects Learning and Pedagogue					X	X		X		X	X		X	6
Validates Competency & Outcome Assessment							X						X	2
Faculty Enthusiasm													X	1
Best Practice Assists in Curriculum & Instruction Planning (Instructor gives better assignments)											X	X	X	3
STUDENT														
Develops Reflectivity	X			X		X		X	X	X	X			7
Reduces Assessment Anxiety				X										1
Student Ownership & Values Assessment				X	X	X		X	X	X	X			7
Shows Students' Growth & Achievement Over Time				X		X			X	X		X		5
Job Interview					X	X		X			X	X		5
Displays Talent & Expertise					X	X		X			X	X	X	6
Future Reference								X						1
Develops Responsibility										X				1
Increases Student Communication										X				1
Student Choices										X				1
Student Enthusiasm													X	1

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Table 4
Responding NNER Universities' Identification of Portfolio Disadvantages

Universities / Disadvantages	University of Colorado	University of Connecticut	University of Hawaii	Montclair State University	Miami University	Wright State University	Furman University	University of S. Carolina	Winthrop College	Texas A & M	B.Y.U.	University of Washington	University of Wyoming	N
Lack of Portfolio Information	X								X	X			X	4
Lack of Clarity of What is Being Assessed	X				X			X	X	X	X		X	6
Time	X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X			8
Submission	X					X							X	3
Bulk	X					X			X		X			4
Material Presentation Affects Evaluation	X					X		X						2
Questions if the Portfolio Demonstrates Scholarly Aptitude	X													1
Scrapbook Image	X													1
Systematic Implication		X				X					X		X	3
Purpose Clarity		X											X	2
Difficult to Get Accross to Faculty (Break old habits)			X			X					X		X	4
Should Review with Student				X										1
Student Authenticity									X					1
Should not be Sole Evaluation Tool					X									1
Student Motivation						X				X		X		3
Difficult to Get Accross to Students			X						X				X	2
Students Wait Until Last Minute									X					1

PROGRAM (rows: Lack of Portfolio Information through Should not be Sole Evaluation Tool)

STUDENT (rows: Student Motivation through Students Wait Until Last Minute)

Table 5
Responding NNER Universities Verifying Goodlad Postulates Survey Results

State	Institution	Response
1. Colorado	University of Colorado/Denver	Planning Stage
2. Connecticut	University of Connecticut	Planning Stage
3. Hawaii	University of Hawaii	No Response
4. New Jersey	Montclair State University	* Journal Reflection * Self-Assessment * Observation * Discussion * Writings * Educational Drama Techniques
5. Ohio (2 sites)	Miami University	Planning Stage
	Wright State University	Planning Stage for New Program (will have portfolios with postulates infused) * Portfolios in Old Program * Organization Chart=?
6. South Carolina (3 sites)	University of South Carolina	Assessment Methods in Student Teaching Seminar for Postulates * Projects * Discussion
	Winthrop University	? Class Instruction * Opinionnaires * Surveys * Observations * Journals
	Furman University	* Planning Stage
7. Texas	Texas A & M University	Interview Analysis by Paul Theobald Further Planning
8. Utah	Brigham Young University	Masters Certification Program * Portfolios have Postulates Infused
9. Washington	University of Washington	Program Evaluation External Evaluation
10. Wyoming	University of Wyoming	Unsure

? unclear
* means authentic

- University reward systems must change to foster renewal efforts.
- Faculty and students must view authentic assessment as a viable tool to document renewal progress.
- A seminar series with renewal partners would assist in uniform understanding of best assessment practices.

For authentic assessment:
- The authentic assessment methods selected should demonstrate knowledge, performance, and disposition proficiency.
- Faculty must develop an assessment document that outlines traditional and authentic assessment procedures and policies, i.e., *Handbook for Student and Faculty Assessment.*
- All participants must read the knowledge base on authentic assessment to have clarity and consistency in application.

For portfolios:
- The following conditions should direct portfolio implementation:
  1. Clarity of Purpose: Key participants must understand why portfolios are required.
  2. Procedural Guidelines: Procedural guidelines must be established and agreed upon by faculty.
  3. Allotted time: There should be enough time for student construction, faculty assessment and student/faculty conference review.
  4. Clear student directions: Faculty should provide sequential direction to students along with examples.
  5. Determine storage: Faculty must locate storage areas and should consider CD disks as alternatives.

Clearly the NNER sites responding to the survey have researched the use of authentic assessment. All have identified authentic assessment as an appropriate evaluation method. This study revealed several advantages of authentic assessment, especially concerning portfolios; i.e. developing student reflectivity skills, displaying students' professionalism over time, and linking pedagogy to learning.

This inquiry project has raised a number of critical and vexing issues relative to renewal and authentic assessment at NNER sites. Faculty were concerned about assessment purposes, guidelines for implementation, and the time commitment needed to take full advantage of authentic assessment. Much remains to be done before systematic institutionalization of authentic assessment occurs in documenting renewal efforts.

In addition, a sense of urgency must accompany our efforts if we are to see visible and sustained renewal progress by the turn of the century. American schools must become, as Glasser (1993) suggests, "a place where quality teachers demand quality work by students." A mandate to verify quality must include assessments that attend to the complexities of teaching and learning. If we teach with quality, and students learn qualitatively, we will educate a new generation that is more sensitive and reflective of their learning and clear in setting goals as they move into adulthood.

In summary, educators will be able to verify that the actual student learning can be documented. Not only knowledge learned, but skills (performances) and dispositions (values and attitudes) can be identified. Through the Goodlad postulates and the NNER renewal movement, children will be morally ready to participate in a future that requires intercultural and global understanding. They will be sensitive to ethics, politics, spirituality and the peaks and valleys of a heterogeneous world society.

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