Question TI.4.5 - What evidence has the EPP continued to gather or does the EPP plan to gather that will inform a model of promising practices in the field?

The EEP has a number of research initiatives underway to support the implementation of the Pirate CODE innovations. Faculty researchers work closely with the Office of Assessment and Accreditation to assure that meaningful and actionable data are collected, organized and reported to support research. Examples of planned studies of practice are highlighted below.

- In a partnership between ECU COE and EPIC, Bastian, Henry, Yi and Lys (2014) investigated the relationship between locally-scored edTPA (known as TPA at the time of implementation) portfolios and candidates' subsequent performance as teacher-of-record. Results indicated that three factors partially-aligned with the three constructs of the edTPA and more closely aligned with the edTPA cross-cutting themes. Local score constructs significantly predicted teachers' evaluation ratings. These analyses provide a framework for continued edTPA research and highlight the potential utility of locally-scored portfolios for evidence-based reform. An additional investigation using this methodology is currently in progress.

- Another line of research is proceeding to determine the predictive validity of our embedded signature assessments (formative assessment) with candidate performance on the edTPA (summative assessment). Faculty researchers posit that candidate performance on ISLES 3 is a predictor of performance on Task 2 (Instruction and Engaging Students in Learning) of the edTPA. If the results of the research indicate such a relationship, ISLES 3 can be used as a benchmark assessment – one that must be successfully completed before moving forward in the teacher education program.

- Additionally, we are heavily involved in measuring and improving the level of fidelity of implementation (FOI) of the ISLES modules and the edTPA. The goal is to create a model of FOI that can be applied to educational innovations in the higher education setting. FOI is essential in order to determine the impact of evidence-based practices. By applying FOI strategies and collecting FOI measures, researchers will be able to speak more clearly to the short-term and long-term impact of the innovation. 

- Currently the R&D innovations focus on clinical support, experiences, and curriculum reform. Though these are significant elements of teacher education and data driven program improvement, we find that we are still lacking a valid, reliable preservice observation instrument. Specifically, we need a classroom observation instrument that focuses on one lesson and that is calibrated and normed at the preservice level. To this end, we are in the process of identifying such an instrument. In spring 2015, we will conduct a large validation study of the RATE observation instrument using approximately 220 candidate teaching videos. We selected RATE because: 1) it is very focused; 2) it maps to student achievement; and 3) it is easy to administer and quick to score. At the same time, researchers at the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC) will conduct CLASS and RATE observations in field with practicing teachers. EPIC will be looking for a correlation between the two measures as they continue to evaluate our candidates in the field.
Comprehensive changes in curricular and clinical experiences take time, commitment, and vision in order to systemically create a programmatic continuum of developing expertise in novice teacher candidates. We strive to create a culture of collaborative research and program development around the enterprise of educator preparation. In our model, teaching, research and service are inextricably linked and seamlessly integrated into the work of the faculty.