Question TI4.6 - How are faculty in the EPP applying the R&D model beyond the Pirate CODE initial innovation?

One example of faculty applying the R&D model beyond the original Pirate CODE innovations is the exploration of principal candidates serving as instructional coaches for elementary undergraduate candidates during junior level practica. This partnership with the principal preparation program and elementary education program is exploring the benefits of using principal candidates to coach junior elementary teacher candidates during their practicum teaching experiences in two different delivery modes: face to face and online.

The addition of principal candidates increases the amount of time the practicum students are observed and the amount, quality of feedback and the coaching that they receive. This creates a process for developing continuous expertise of preservice teachers and principal candidates. The process that the principal candidates used was the same in both delivery modes. Principal candidates were trained by the university faculty using Knight’s Framework for Great Teaching. Additionally, the training included simulations to practice coaching and feedback sessions. The preservice teachers planned and implemented their own lessons in a practicum setting. Each teaching episode was video-recorded and submitted to Taskstream. The principal candidates evaluated the teaching episode based on a rubric aligned with the senior internship evaluation rubric. Then, principal candidates met with the practicum student and led a coaching session.

One section of the course was delivered in a face-to-face delivery mode. In this mode, the principal candidates came to the practicum placement and sat in the room to observe the junior practicum student as he or she taught the lesson. Afterward, the principal candidate would meet with the practicum student and give detailed feedback on the lesson using a rubric. The other section of the course was an online section. When possible, the principal candidates in this section were matched with junior practicum students in the county in which the principal candidate lived. Some of these principal candidates chose to observe their practicum students face to face. The rest of the principal candidates observed their practicum students online and then “met” with their practicum students for coaching sessions in a virtual environment. These coaching sessions occurred via phone, Skype, and Google Hangout. See the “JR2 PF article” to learn more about the model.

A principal candidate involved in the pilot wrote a blog post about the experience. Learn more from the student perspective in this blog post.

This project is in the formal pilot stage. A squishy pilot was conducted in 2013. See Principal Candidate One-Pager. Initial results were promising, thus an IRB proposal was developed and approved. A formal pilot occurred this fall semester. Data is currently under analysis and findings will be presented at AACTE in 2015.