

Is there a correlation between undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA) and basic skills exam scores, and student teaching outcomes?

Jennifer Halpert

Concordia University Portland



A Correlational Study

Concordia University Portland

2009

Abstract

There are many opinions regarding college admission requirements, specifically requirements of GPA and testing. Students sometimes feel basic skills tests cannot determine whether or not they will be strong teachers and therefore should not be used as a means by which their admission into a teacher preparation program is determined. However, the question may be asked, “If a person cannot pass a test of basic skills, what business does that person have in a classroom teaching students those *very* skills?” The purpose of this project was to find what kind of relationship, if any, exists between undergraduate GPA, basic skills exam scores, and student teaching final evaluation scores in a private, urban, graduate teacher preparation program. Little to no correlation was found on nearly every count.



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract2

Table of Contents.....3

Chapter 1 – Introduction4

Chapter 2 – The Issue8

 Literature Review10

Chapter 3 – Outcomes and Evaluation24

Chapter 4 – Results26

 Methodology28

 Results30

 Conclusion38

 Suggestions For Further Study42

References44

Appendix A47



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

Research Proposal

Chapter One – Introduction

In what major city can a person drive 15 miles from the downtown area and be in the country, or travel only 50 miles to find excellent skiing atop a scenic mountain, or travel a mere 90 minutes to the beautiful coast of the Pacific Ocean? Portland, Oregon. Portland is nestled near the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers and is a unique, innovative, and progressive city that is known for its politically active residents and environmentally friendly culture. Green with stately Douglas Fir trees and the perfect climate for roses, Portland has been known as "The City of Roses" for more than 100 years. Portland has many parks and is proud of its legacy of preserving open spaces. Forest Park covers more than 5,000 acres, making it one of the largest wilderness parks within city limits in the United States. The city itself is an assortment of historic and modern architectural structures, which are a reflection of its diverse population. The culture is rich with art and entertainment. Waterfront festivals are common and draw large crowds, and the Portland Art Museum has a substantial collection of art and several annual touring exhibitions. It is one of 25 of the largest museums in the United States. The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) coordinates hands-on exhibits for those interested in science, technology, and astronomy. With regard to industry, Portland is home to big businesses such as Nike, Intel, and Columbia Sportswear, and is known for its large number of microbreweries and its coffee houses. According to the last census, in 2000 there were 529,121 people residing in the city and today an estimated 568,380 live in Portland making it the third most populous city in the entire Pacific Northwest.

The setting for this research project is in a small private university located in the Portland Area. There are 11 private colleges and universities in Portland and this particular university serves over 1600 students. The average age of a graduate student at this university is 33.4, and the racial makeup is 72.7% White, 5.4% African American, 3.8 Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.1% Hispanic, and 1.0% American Indian. The majority of the students come from middle-class to upper-class backgrounds, which interestingly does not reflect the surrounding community. This may be due to the fact that many students commute to the campus from suburbs of the metropolitan area, which could be considered a testament to the school's reputation for excellence. The instructors have an average of 12 years of teaching experience at the university and more than 80% have earned a doctoral degree. The student to instructor ratio is roughly 1 to 15; small class size may be seen as part of the appeal of this university, but it is also the open, caring environment, the sense of community, the open-door policies, and the genuine interest in the students and desire for their success which is consistently demonstrated by the staff and faculty that make this school special.

It is specifically the Master of Arts in Teaching graduate College of Education program that will be examined in this research project. There is an average of 380 students in this program and the average age of the student is 31.8. Roughly 64% are female and 36% are male. There are 37 faculty members who teach courses in the program. One of the most unique attributes in this teacher preparation program is that all of the instructors have been classroom teachers, which allows them to share their personal experiences and expertise with their students. The college's philosophy is based

on hands-on, practical preparation and real application of theory. This particular graduate program is in its 13th year.

The researcher has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and is working toward a Master's of Education in Educational Leadership. The researcher also serves as the university's Certification Officer and is responsible for submitting the form(s) which verify state approved teacher preparation program completion. In addition, the researcher is responsible for entering all test scores including those of basic skills and content area. Due to the nature of the researcher's role at the university the researcher has developed an interest in the undergraduate GPA with which the students enter the graduate teacher preparation program, and also the composite score of the basic skills exam that is required prior to admission into the program and also for Oregon state certification. Because passing test scores and a minimum GPA are a requirement for admission, it may be presumed that such factors affect the outcome of the students' experience in the program. The researcher is particularly interested in the outcome of the students' student teaching experience, which is the main clinical experience in the program, and whether or not there is any connection between their undergraduate GPA and their basic skills scores. Student teaching is a 12 to 15 week experience where the students are assigned to a classroom, cooperating teacher, and supervisor who observes their teaching. Students are required to put together a work sample, which is a compilation of lesson plans for an entire unit, and teach the class based on the work sample. The supervisor and cooperating teacher provide feedback for the students throughout the 12 to 15 weeks and at the end of the experience a final evaluation is produced. The scoring guide rates 56 different areas which are scored on a scale of zero to six. A zero indicates that the

characteristic or skill addressed is not evident, and a six indicates that the characteristic or skill addressed is exemplary. This is a major part of that evaluation and if scores do not meet state standards, the student does not pass their student teaching experience. These final evaluation scores are averaged and recorded.

The researcher's role in the research project is to gather two years of the most recent data from the graduate teacher preparation program and to collect the students' undergraduate GPAs, basic skills exam scores, and student teaching final evaluation scores to answer the research question: is there a correlation between undergraduate GPA, basic skills exam scores, and student teaching final evaluation scores? This research will be valuable to the Admissions Department in determining prerequisites for admission to the graduate teacher preparation program.



COLBY COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY

Research Proposal

Chapter Two – The Issue

There are many opinions and perspectives regarding college admission requirements-- specifically requirements of GPA and testing. Some feel that there is a minimum standard to which students must be held in order to enter a graduate program. A high GPA may indicate that the student has such attributes as dedication, perseverance, and motivation, all pertinent and important qualities when approaching a rigorous academic program. High test scores may indicate high cognitive functioning, comprehension skills, and good written communication skills. Students, conversely, may feel that it is unfair to base their potential success, and therefore their admission status, on tests and on their GPA because neither of those assessments can measure potential for becoming a successful teacher candidate.

Some students who enter graduate level programs later in life may have had very low GPAs in their undergraduate programs, but have since become more organized, responsible, and mature individuals who have the capacity to succeed or even excel in a graduate program. Conversely, just because a person has the ability to maintain a high GPA does not necessarily mean that he or she would be a good teacher candidate or is suited for the classroom.

With regard to testing, students may have the content knowledge or the basic skills that tests are designed to measure. Test anxiety, however, may interfere with the results and the students' true understanding is not conveyed. Testing of that nature may also be seen as a tool of oppression (Bennett, McWhorter, and Kuykendall, 2006, p. 531).

In addition, students sometimes feel that these tests cannot determine whether or not they will be strong teacher candidates or effective classroom teachers, and therefore should not be used as a means by which their admission into a teacher preparation program is determined. However, the question may be asked, “If a person cannot pass a test of basic skills, what business does that person have in a classroom teaching students who will be expected to learn, understand, remember, and apply those *very* skills?”

From university records it is clear that there have been students in the graduate teacher preparation program who did not meet the designated admission requirements, but were admitted anyway, and excelled in the program and went on to become incredibly successful and effective educators. There have also been students who’s GPA and testing scores were very high, but that did not find success in the program.

The purpose of this research project is not to determine whether or not high test scores of basic skills or GPA are predictors of success in teacher preparation programs, or predictors of good teacher candidates. Nor is it to determine whether or not requirements of minimum GPA’s and test scores are invalid or unfair means by which colleges and universities determine candidacy for admission. This project is simply to attempt to find what kind of relationship, if any, exists between undergraduate GPA, basic skills exam scores, and student teaching final evaluation scores in a private, urban, graduate teacher preparation program.

Literature Review

Through history, we can see the issue and the attitudes around the issue evolving. By 1994 there were already several educational reports that indicated a need to require a higher standard of criteria for teacher certification and admission into teacher education programs. At that time it was presumed that there was a relationship between teaching proficiency and scholastic aptitude as established by GPA and standardized testing. However, at that time and at present, there is little research that suggests there is a strong link between teacher success and standardized tests. In addition, according to Bunte (1994), a high GPA is no better than standardized tests in predicting teaching success.

In 1998 widely reported test results revealed that 59% of aspiring teachers in Massachusetts failed a basic skills exam described as a test of eighth-to-ninth grade skills (Fowler, 2001). At the same time in New York, hundreds of teachers with Master's degrees could not pass a standard test in English, math, and reasoning skills. And, in Pennsylvania teacher education programs were accepting students with GPA's of 1.9 or lower and extremely low test scores on licensure exams (Hickok, 1998). This caused a huge uproar and forced the public and policymakers to question the preparedness and competency of teachers. This marked the beginning of many policy changes and helped shape the Higher Education Act of 1998.

It was clear that standards must be raised for teacher certification and teacher education program requirements; achieving this, however would prove to be complicated. One such obstacle is illustrated in the example of an Arkansas decision in 2001 to waive

the state's 2.75 GPA and Praxis I and II exam requirements for new teachers in order to produce enough teachers that the state needed at the time (Hoff, 2001). A shortage of teachers may have been seen as more of a crisis than a shortage of qualified teachers.

Federal requirements under Title II of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1999 initiated even more debate and interest in certification exams, as did required public reporting of the results of these exams as a way of demonstrating accountability among teachers. More and more states were requiring a basic skills and content area exams Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST) for licensure. The exams were supposed to reassure the public that those who hold a teaching license are competent in the classroom setting and therefore it was assumed that the higher the score, the better the teacher or teacher candidate for entry into a teacher education program. It was essentially seen as a predictive measure of teaching performance (Selke, Mehigan, and Fiene, 2004). Then came the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110). This litigious Act of Congress reauthorized several federal programs whose goal it was to improve the performance of U.S. schools by increasing the standards of accountability.

Now these testing requirements and higher standards in general are clearly being called into question. The quality of classroom instruction certainly remains a collective concern; however, simply raising the testing and GPA requirements may or may not be the answer to ensuring quality instruction by licensed teachers.

Basic Skills Exams in Oregon

There are two main basic skills exams that are required by the state of Oregon for those to qualify for initial licensure: The California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) and the *Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Tests* (PPST).

The California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) was developed to meet requirements of laws relating to credentialing and employment and is designed to test basic reading, mathematics, and writing skills found to be important for the job of an educator. The test is not designed to measure the ability to teach those skills. The California legislation that established the CBEST directed the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in conjunction with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), and an Advisory Board consisting of a majority of educators from California classrooms, to develop the CBEST. The CBEST was selected by the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) in July 1984 to assess educators' basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills in the English language (Pearson Education, Evaluation Systems, 2009). In 1995, Evaluation Systems was contracted by the CTC to assist in the development, administration, and scoring of the CBEST. The Reading section consists of 50 multiple-choice questions which assess the ability to comprehend information presented in written passages, tables, and graphs. The questions are from two major skill areas: critical analysis and evaluation, and comprehension and research skills (Pearson Education, Evaluation Systems, 2009).

The Mathematics section consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. Most of the questions are presented as word problems and are from three major skill areas: estimation, measurement, and statistical principles; computation and problem solving; and numerical and graphic relationships. The Writing section consists of two essay topics which assess the ability to write effectively. One topic asks the test-taker to analyze a given situation or statement; the other asks the test-taker to write about a specified personal experience. Test-takers are not expected to demonstrate any specialized knowledge in their responses. The entire exam is 4 ½ hours (Pearson Education, Evaluation Systems, 2009).

The Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST) are designed to measure basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The reading, writing, and mathematics assessments are available in two formats: paper-based or computer-based. Colleges and universities may use Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Tests to evaluate individuals for entry into teacher education programs. The Praxis Series tests are currently required for teacher licensure in 44 states and U.S. jurisdictions. These tests are also used by several professional licensing agencies and by several hundred colleges and universities. Since *The Praxis Series* tests are used to license teachers in many states, teacher candidates can test in one state and submit their scores for licensure in any other *Praxis*-user state. The tests are developed by educators for educators. Advisory committees of distinguished teachers, teacher educators, key administrators and professional organizations help determine test content and review, revise, and approve all questions and exercises. *The Praxis Series* is grounded in current research, including a comprehensive analysis of the

most important tasks and skills required of beginning teachers and extensive surveys to confirm test validity. For each test, a job analysis survey is conducted to determine what a representative group of teachers and teacher educators believe that a newly licensed or certified teacher of a particular subject or grade level should know to perform his or her job competently (Educational Testing Service, 2009).

Based on the results of the job analysis as well as any national disciplinary standards that may apply, an Advisory Committee of teachers and teacher educators defines the content areas that should be covered on the Praxis Series tests. Then they create specifications to guide the development effort. Test development specialists and practicing teachers use this information to develop test questions. Once developed, the questions undergo a series of reviews conducted by the Advisory Committee, content experts, and Educational Testing Service (ETS) staff to confirm that they cover the content defined in the test specifications (Educational Testing Service, 2009). At every step in the test development process, ETS follows well-established industry procedures and standards that are designed to measure assure that the test measures what it is intended to measure. This iterative process creates clear links between the skills and knowledge being measured and the content of the test. ETS uses a validation process that is consistent with the technical guidelines in the *Standards for Educational and Psychology Testing* (AERA, 1999). Central to the process is the connection between the content of a test and the knowledge and/or skills judged important for entry-level practice. Committees of educators work with ETS's subject experts to conduct reviews for the appropriateness and fairness of test content. The process ends with passing-score

or standard-setting studies conducted by each state or licensing agency, during which the job relatedness of the test content for that state's entry-level teachers is evaluated. PPST in Reading and Mathematics consist of 40 multiple-choice questions with 60 minutes of testing time. The Writing test consists of 38 multiple-choice questions and one essay question with two 30-minute sections of testing time (Educational Testing Service, 2009).

Basic Skills Exams and Their Purpose

The purpose of basic skills exams is to ensure that the teacher or teacher candidate can demonstrate, at the very least, proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, and math. These exams do not measure, nor claim to measure, the ability or potential abilities of the teacher or teacher candidate to teach students effectively. Yet, based on the literature, it would *appear* that the purpose of the basic skills exam is indeed to measure just that; the potential effectiveness of a teacher or teacher candidate.

Researchers many times study the evidence of tests' predictive validity to determine the appropriateness as an admission criterion. (Mikitovics and Crehan, 2002). According to Hicken (cited in Selke, Mehigan, and Fiene, 2004) in his study, whose sample included 100 students in Arizona, there was no statistically significant correlation between PPST scores and overall GPAs, or student teaching assessment ratings. In another study, 503 teacher candidates from five Midwest schools were examined and again, no significant correlation was found between achievement scores and student teacher performance (Bunte, 1986). In a study with a sample of 1,062 graduates of a southwestern urban teacher education program there was yet again no predictive relationship found between PPST scores and student teaching ratings. There was

however, a statistically significant moderately high to high positive correlation found between the PPST reading, writing, and math sections and the American College Test (ACT), which is similar to the SAT (Mikitovics and Crehan, 2002).

According to Pool, Dittrich, and Longwell (2004), their study's data supported the notion of rethinking the tactic of using Praxis I as an admission requirement into teacher education programs and for teacher certification. No teacher candidate should be evaluated using a single criterion, especially those who do not perform well on tests. Their correlation study essentially indicated a moderately strong, positive relationship between college entrance exams (SAT) and Praxis I tests at three different types of teacher preparation institutions.

One of the reasons these findings are so important is because, "Measures that correlate well with SAT scores are problematic for historically poor-performing populations" (Wakefield, 2007, p. 55). Bennett, McWhorter, and Kuykendall (2006) stated that "there is oppression and privilege associated with Praxis I" (p. 531). They "define oppression in terms of established policies and practices that systematically produce inequalities in American society whether or not these policies and practices are intentional on the part of the individuals who maintain them" (Bennett, McWhorter, and Kuykendall, 2006, p. 351). Direct oppression leads to indirect oppression which is the case when poorly prepared, disadvantaged students cannot pass the Praxis I exam, which is perhaps the reason it has been accused as being culturally biased. There is apparently a need to recruit more diverse teachers as the student population is becoming increasingly diverse, however, it would appear that obstacles such as basic skills testing requirements

are keeping them from admission into teacher preparation programs. Bennett, McWhorter, and Kuykendall (2006) concluded that “Praxis I is an inequitable teacher education program admissions tool because it establishes a single standard to assess the capabilities of talented students who have had unequal educational opportunities and unequal access to the knowledge needed to attain passing scores on the test” (p. 371).

Even teachers who have achieved high GPAs and high scores on exams of basic skills and content area may not necessarily be effective, passionate, and responsible educators, so the reverse might also be true. Wakefield (2007) paints a portrait of a student who participated in the “National Honor Society, the Community Leadership Club, student council, volunteer teaching, Junior Beta Club, varsity cheerleading, track, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, chorus, and graduated at the top third of her class, with an overall GPA of 3.8 and a 92.3% on her assignments” (p. 51). She was described as being passionate and having an aptitude for teaching, yet, she could not pass the Praxis I (PPST) despite her many attempts. She was eventually identified by a psychologist as “learning disabled” and was later diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and dyslexia, which explained the difficulty she had had passing the basic skills exam. Wakefield (2007) argues, “How can a complex variety of academic, social, and ethical teacher qualities be accurately quantified to yield a foolproof statistic” (p. 53)?

Another real hardship from the student’s perspective is the cost of testing. During the 2004-2005 school year an estimated 103,000 teacher candidates attempted the Praxis I exam, which cost nearly \$18.1 million. For those who cannot pass teacher-screening tests, the many attempts to pass the exam itself, testing preparation, and travel expenses

can approach the cost of a semester's tuition at a state school (p. 54). Another adverse effect of testing is that it may be devaluing the importance of culturally responsive teaching. Margolis, (2006) says that, "Rather than furthering teachers' learning to attend to diverse student needs, this study shows that these globalistic educational policies [testing] often decreases the amount of time spent focusing on diversity" (p.41).

Although across the literature the teacher certification exams are scrutinized and criticized for their fundamental flaws, they truly are important as they give us evidence about the skills and knowledge of teacher candidates. However, according to Blair, (2001) "they should never be used as the sole measure of an aspiring teacher's abilities" (p. 1). Supporters of basic skills exams as part of an admissions requirement into a teacher education program argue that they provide important information about the qualification of the student or teacher. Blair's (2001) study found that certification exams are "technically sound and do provide important information; however, their panel found that they don't reveal all that educators understand or adequately predict classroom success" (p. 2). It is also believed that another way in which certification exams are useful is that they help identify which teacher education programs are in need of improvement or change.

Basic skills exams *do* have an important place. According to Dybdahl, Shaw, and Edwards (cited in Selke, Mehigan, and Fiene, 2004), their study of 375 students found that indeed there was a predictive factor between the sub-area tests for Grammar of the basic skills exam subsequent classroom competency. Based on this research, there may be at least one connection between basic skills and teaching student teaching success.

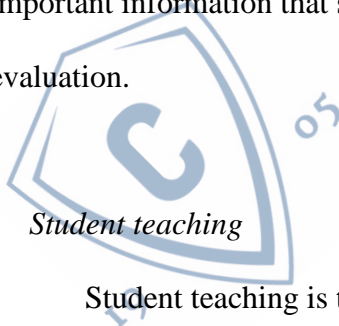
Grade Point Average and its Purpose

Grade Point Average (GPA) is another criterion used to admit students into teacher education programs. This has caused nearly as much heated debate as testing has. In Texas, a study showed no significant correlation between GPA and the Examination for Certification of Educators (ExCET) (Poelzer, Zeng, and Simonsson, 2007). In another study with a sample of 1,062 graduates of a southwestern urban teacher education program, no predictive relationship was found between PPST scores and student teaching ratings and a weak predictive relationship between PPST scores and undergraduate GPA was found (Mikitovics, and Crehan, 2002). One study that did show a connection between GPA and student teaching ratings examined 503 teacher candidates from five Midwest schools. It was found that those students with very high GPA's were more likely to receive high ratings on student teacher performance evaluations. There was however no correlation found between GPA and student teacher performance in those who had a low to moderate GPAs (Bunte, 1986).

It can be argued that one of the reasons GPA may not be a strong predictor of student teaching outcomes is grade inflation. Grade inflation can be traced back to the 1960's which was a time when our values, norms, and standards were challenged. "Increasing entrance scores, academic expectations and better secondary institutions are contributing to increased CGPAs as well as more general factors such as social elements, economic, legal and accountability and merit" claims Mulvenon, and Ferritor, (2006 p. 55-56). According to Gordon (2006), an average increase of 0.404 points in GPA at 134

colleges from 1965 to 1973 was reported in one study. Another study using surveys revealed that in the 90's "college students devoted less time to attending class, preparing written assignments, and studying than their predecessors, but received the same or higher grades" (Gordon, 2006, p. B10). This may be because faculty members feel uncomfortable confronting the struggling students, or possible because they do not want to risk their careers by getting low ratings from upset students on instructor evaluations. Gordon states, "The American preoccupation with both equity and conformity promotes uniformly high grades" (p. B110). One interesting 20-year study showed a yearly increase in GPAs at a rate of 0.0075 for all faculty classifications, but GPAs for students of adjuncts faculty were 0.1136 points higher than of tenured faculty (Kezim, Pariseau, and Quinn, 2005).

Regardless of how GPA actually correlates with student teaching outcomes, and whether grades themselves may not be a completely accurate means by which students' knowledge and proficiencies may be determined, the researcher believes that it is still important information that should be taken into account as part of a full and broad evaluation.



Student teaching is the eleven to fifteen week, full-time clinical experience a student teacher undergoes as part of his or her teacher education program; it is the fusion of theory and practice. The student teacher is assigned to a classroom and a cooperating teacher, as well as a supervisor who observes his or her lessons. The student teacher is required to teach a minimum number of lessons (between ten and twelve) from a work

sample created by the student teacher that is a compilation of lesson plans for an entire unit of instruction and is written according to the state's standards. Each lesson is planned, taught, and assessed by the student teacher. Although the student teacher is continually evaluated and provided with feedback from both of his or her supervisor and cooperating teacher throughout the student teaching experience, the final evaluation and grade is based on eight different criteria, which are broken down into 56 total subcategories. The eight criteria by which the student teachers are scored include the following:

- Personal characteristics,
- Professional conduct and ethics,
- Planning,
- Instruction,
- Management,
- Assessment,
- Communication and
- Interpersonal skills, and participation in the school community.

Each of the 56 subcategories is assigned a number based on a zero-to-six scale. A zero indicates that the student teacher has shown no evidence of the criterion in the particular subcategory, and a six indicates that the student teacher has shown an exemplary performance based on the criterion in the particular subcategory. Clearly, based on the broad range of criteria on which the student teachers are scored, variables such as GPA and exam scores of basic skills could not possibly predict the outcomes in each of these areas because GPA and test scores do not measure the same characteristic of a teacher candidate that are measured during student teaching.

One study suggested that pre-service teachers who have an organized approach to life in general and who apply that approach in the classroom perform very well in their clinical experiences. Specifically, characteristics such as timeliness in completing tasks, goal driven, and focused are examples of a highly organized individual. This has proven to be a good predictor of success in the classroom (Long and Gaynor, 1993). Another more recent study indicated that success in student teaching depends greatly on the expectations laid out for the student teacher. When student teachers receive only subtle indicators as to what is expected of them, they often founder and do not meet all of the criteria in order to be considered successful in their student teaching experience (Woods and Weasmer, 2003).

Summary

There are many events that take place between admission into a teacher education program and student teaching. It is assumed that the coursework within the program itself will prepare the student teacher for his or her clinical experience. The question, however remains, "Is there a correlation between GPA, basic skills exam scores, and student teaching final evaluation scores?" The only quantifiable means by which students' qualifications can be measured is testing and GPA. Although the variables of GPA and testing could not possibly reveal all that educators are required to know and understand in order to be successful and effective teachers or student teachers, and cannot adequately and consistently predict student teaching outcomes, they are important factors

and are a part of an overall evaluation of student teachers and, according to the literature, still have some predictive qualities.



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

Research Proposal

Chapter Three – Outcomes and Evaluation

The purpose of this research project is not to determine whether or not high test scores of basic skills or GPA are predictors of success in teacher preparation programs, or predictors of good teacher candidates. Nor is it to determine whether or not requirements of minimum GPA's and test scores are invalid or unfair means by which colleges and universities determine candidacy for admission. This project is simply to attempt to find if a relationship exists between undergraduate GPA, basic skills exam scores, and student teaching final evaluation scores in a private, urban, graduate teacher preparation program.

In order to make this determination, the researcher will collect basic skills exam scores from the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) (Appendix A) and the Pre-professional Skills Test (PPST) (Appendix B), as well as undergraduate grade point averages (GPA) from each member of the sample. The sample includes 300 of the most recent graduates from the Master's of Arts and Teaching program at a private, urban, university in Portland Oregon. The researcher will also look at the final evaluations (Appendix C) from each student's student teaching experience and add up the scores, which are based on a zero-to-six scale, from each of the 56 different subcategories to obtain the mean. This is the value with which the GPA and test scores will be compared.

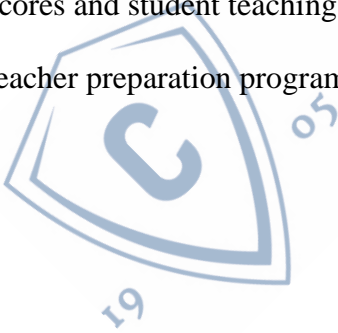
The data will be entered into a program that will allow the researcher to obtain a correlation coefficient, which is a decimal number ranging from -1.00 to +1.00 and will indicate the degree of relation between the variables of GPA and student teaching

evaluation scores, and also the variables of basic skills test scores and teaching evaluation scores.

Because the goal of the project is simply to determine the degree to which the variables are related, or if they are related at all, every possible outcome will be of value to the researcher. The outcome will be compared to the existing research and also may be taken into account for admission purposes. For example, if there is a weak correlation between testing and GPA, and student teaching evaluations, perhaps it would be appropriate to lower the standards for GPA or testing as admission requirements. If there is a moderate to strong correlation found, perhaps the admissions standards are not high enough. Either outcome would serve as foundation for further research.

Data Analysis

An analysis will be used that is appropriate for comparing the undergraduate grade point averages and student teaching scores, as well as comparing basic skills exams scores and student teaching scores of 300 recent graduates from a private, urban, graduate teacher preparation program.



Research Proposal

Chapter Four – Results

The goal of this project is to find what kind of relationship, if any, exists between undergraduate grade point average (GPA), basic skills exam scores, and student teaching final evaluation scores in a private, urban, graduate teacher preparation program. It is clear, through reviewing current literature, that raising required test scores and adding to testing requirements is a commonly used strategy by states in order to raise the standards in attempt to insure quality licensed teachers. According to Selke, Mehigan, and Fiene, state exams were supposed to reassure the public that those who hold a teaching license were competent in the classroom setting, and that they were essentially seen as a predictive measure of teaching performance (2004). The literature, however suggests that there is little to no connection between basic skills exam scores and student teaching outcomes. For example, one study which used a very large sample of 1,062 graduates of a southwestern urban teacher education program, found that no predictive relationships existed between Pre-professional Skills Test (PPST) scores and student teaching ratings (Bunte, 1986).

According to Blair (2001), in another study, it was found that although certification exams are “technically sound and do provide important information; their panel found that they don’t reveal all that educators understand or adequately predict classroom success” (p. 2). Although throughout the literature the teacher certification exams are scrutinized and criticized for their fundamental flaws, it is clear that they are important as they provide evidence about the skills and knowledge of teacher candidates.

However, according to Blair (2001), “they should never be used as the sole measure of an aspiring teacher’s abilities” (p. 1).

In addition, according to Bunte (1994), a high GPA is no better than standardized tests in prediction teaching success. Most of the literature also suggested that there is little to no connection between GPA and student teaching outcomes. Only one study was found that could show a connection between GPA and student teaching ratings using a sample of 503 teacher candidates from five Midwest schools. It was found that those students with very high GPA’s were more likely to receive high ratings on student teacher performance evaluations. There was however, no correlation found between GPA and student teacher performance in those who had a low to moderate GPAs (Bunte, 1986).

Regardless of how GPA actually correlates with student teaching outcomes, and whether grades themselves may not be a completely accurate means by which students’ knowledge and proficiencies may be determined, the only quantifiable means by which students’ qualifications can be measured is testing and GPA. Although the variables of GPA and testing could not possibly reveal all that educators are required to know and understand in order to be successful and effective teachers or student teachers, and cannot adequately and consistently predict student teaching outcomes, they have still shown to be important factors as part of an overall evaluation of student teachers and, according to the literature, still have some predictive qualities.

Methodology

Student teaching is a 12 to 15 week experience where the student is assigned to a classroom, cooperating teacher, and supervisor who observes his or her teaching.

Students are required to put together a work sample, which is a compilation of lesson plans for an entire unit, and teach the class based on the work sample. The supervisor and cooperating teacher provide feedback for the students throughout the 12 to 15 weeks and at the end of the experience a final evaluation is produced.

California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) and Praxis I (PPST) are two basic skills exams which are state certification requirements and often admission requirements into teacher preparation programs. GPA is also often used in determining admission into a teacher preparation program. Because of this it may be presumed that such factors affect the outcome of the students' experience in the program.

In order to make this determination, basic skills exam scores from the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) (Appendix A) and the Pre-professional Skills Test (PPST) (Appendix B), as well as undergraduate grade point averages (GPA) from each member of a sample was collected. The sample included 300 of the most recent graduates from the Master's of Arts and Teaching program at a private, urban, university in Portland, Oregon. Also collected were the final evaluations (Appendix C) from each student's student teaching experience and the scores those students received, which are based on a zero-to-six scale, from each of the 56 different subcategories. The individual scores as well as the mean were compared to undergraduate GPA's as well as to total

basic skills exam scores and individual basic skills exam scores of math, reading, and writing.

The data were entered into a program that calculated the correlation coefficient, which is a decimal number ranging from -1.00 to +1.00. This number indicates the degree of relation between the variables of GPA and student teaching evaluation scores, and also the variables of basic skills test scores and teaching evaluation scores.

With regard to threshold criteria, although not sufficient for prediction, [see next paragraph] the researcher determined that a correlation coefficient of .25 or greater would be statistically significant, and that results below the .25 would indicate little to no statistical significance when looking at how GPA and basic skills exam scores compare to student teaching outcomes.

Crude group predictions can be made with correlations as low as .40 to .60, whereas correlations about .75 are usually needed to make predictions for individuals. In exploratory studies low correlations (.25 to .40) may indicate a need for further study. 0 to .1 indicate that there is no correlation between the variables.

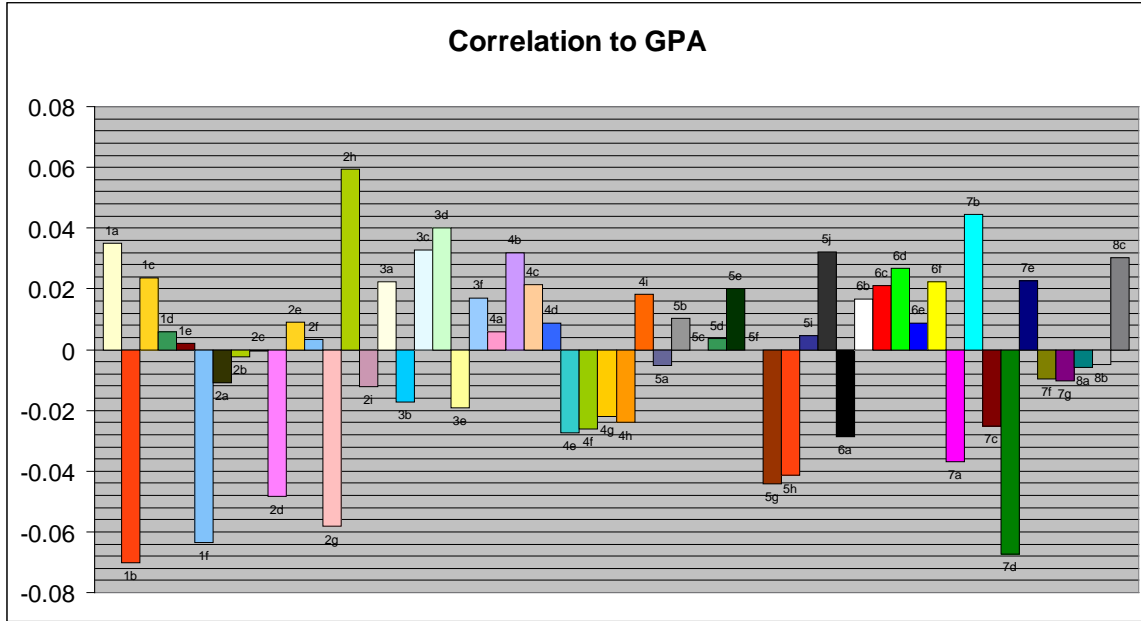
It is important to note that the correlation coefficient is not an indication of the percentage of “sameness” between two variables. The extent to which the variables share common properties or characteristics is actually indicated by the square of the correlation coefficient, which is called the coefficient of determination. For example, a correlation coefficient of .70, which is regarded as a high correlation, indicates that the variables being compared have about 50% in common.

There has been no change to the design on of the methodology prior to or during the course of the data collection, analysis and interpretation.

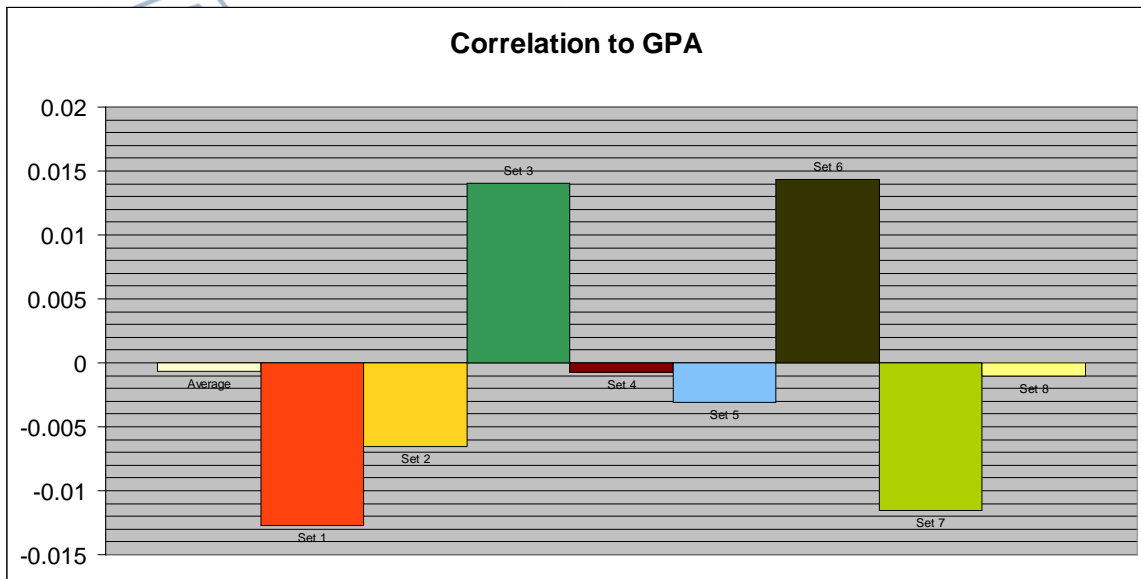
Results

The following graphs illustrate the correlation coefficients between the variables of GPA, basic skill exam scores, and student teaching assessment scores. Each bar either represents each of the 56 different specific subcategories of the students teaching assessment, which is numbered 1a through 8c (the key that shows which subcategory denotes each number is found in Appendix A), or each of the eight general categories under which each of the subcategories fall of the student teaching assessment, which is numbered set 1 through set 8 (the key that shows which general category denotes each number is found in Appendix A).

First, the reader will notice how GPA correlated with student teaching outcomes as is indicated by the bar graph of correlation coefficients comparing GPA and each of the 56 different subcategories from the student teaching assessment. Not one subcategory had a correlation coefficient higher than .08, and most were very close to zero, which means none of the student teaching assessment subcategories correlated with GPA.

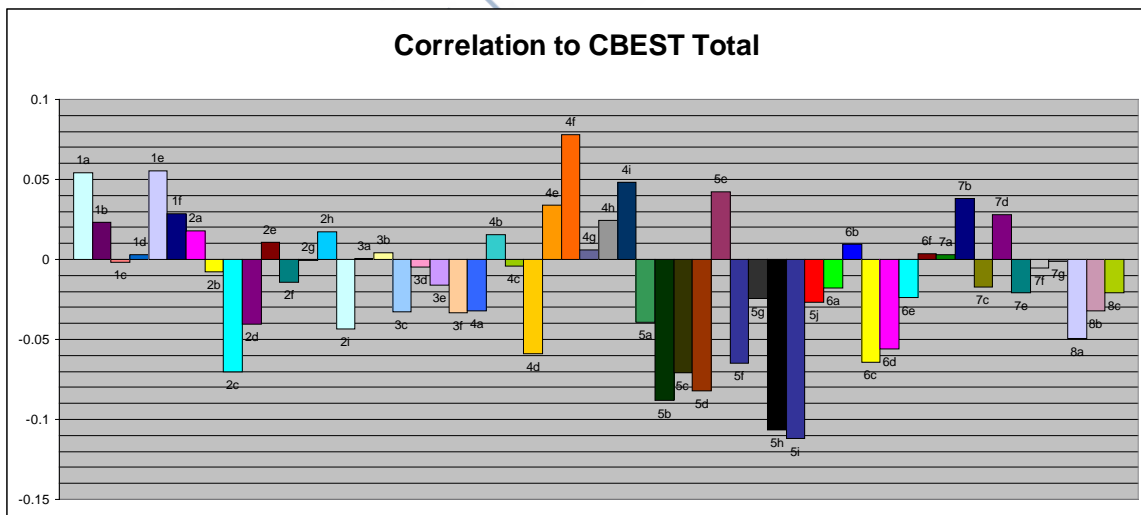


The following graph compares GPA to each of the 8 general categories from the student teaching assessment as well as to the mean average of the subcategories from the student teaching assessment (the first bar in the graph is the average). This further shows that looking at the big picture with regard to student teaching assessment there is even a smaller correlation.

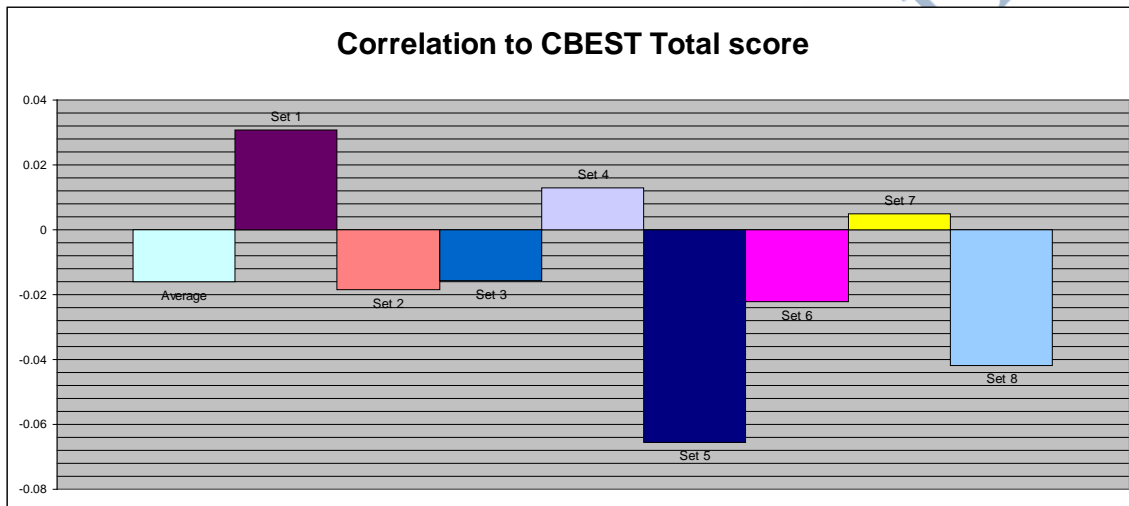


Notice that there are a few specific subcategories and also more that half of the general categories which actually have a negative correlation coefficient which means that either the lower the GPA, the better the performance was in the classroom by student teachers, or the higher the GPA the worse the performance was in the classroom by students teachers. While this is interesting, because the coefficients are so close to zero, there is very little significance. Again, a correlation coefficient below .25 has no significance, meaning there is no correlation.

Here it can be seen how CBEST scores correlated with student teaching outcomes, indicated by the bar graph of correlation coefficients comparing CBEST total scores and each of 56 different subcategories from the student teaching assessment. No subcategory had a correlation coefficient higher than .1, and most were very close to zero, which means none of the student teaching assessment subcategories correlated with CBEST scores.



The following graph compares total CBEST scores to each of the eight general categories from the student teaching assessment as well as to the mean average of the subcategories from the student teaching assessment (the first bar in the graph is the average). This further shows that looking at the big picture with regard to student teaching assessment there is even less of a correlation.

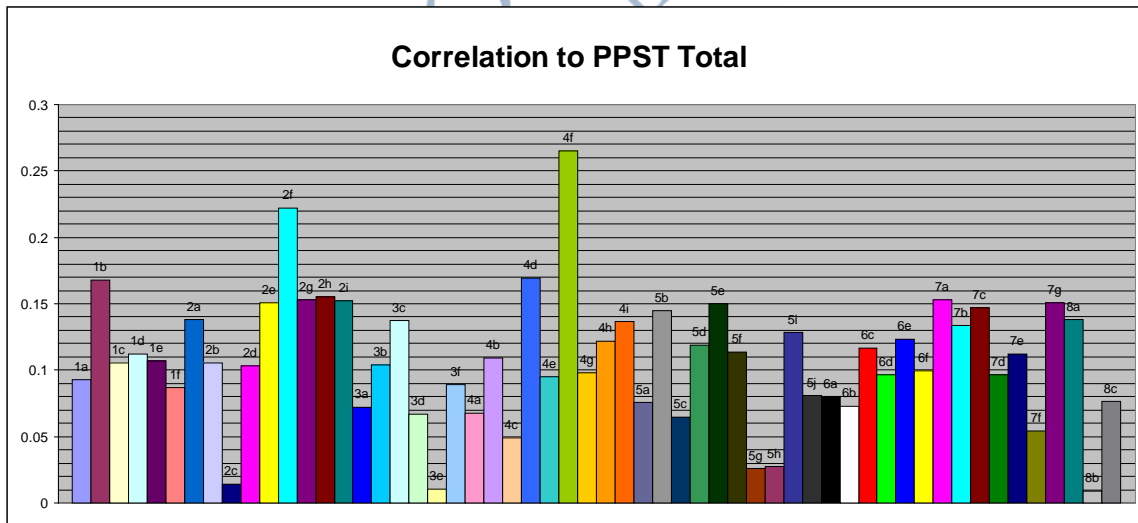


Notice that there are a few specific subcategories and, again, also more than half of the general categories which actually have a negative correlation coefficient which means that either the lower the CBEST score, the better the performance was in the classroom by student teachers, or the higher the CBEST score the worse the performance was in the classroom by student teachers. While this is interesting, because the coefficients are so close to zero, there is very little significance. Again, a correlation coefficient below .25 has no significance, meaning there is no correlation.

Finally, the reader can see how PPST scores correlated with student teaching outcomes as is indicated by the bar graph of correlation coefficients comparing PPST

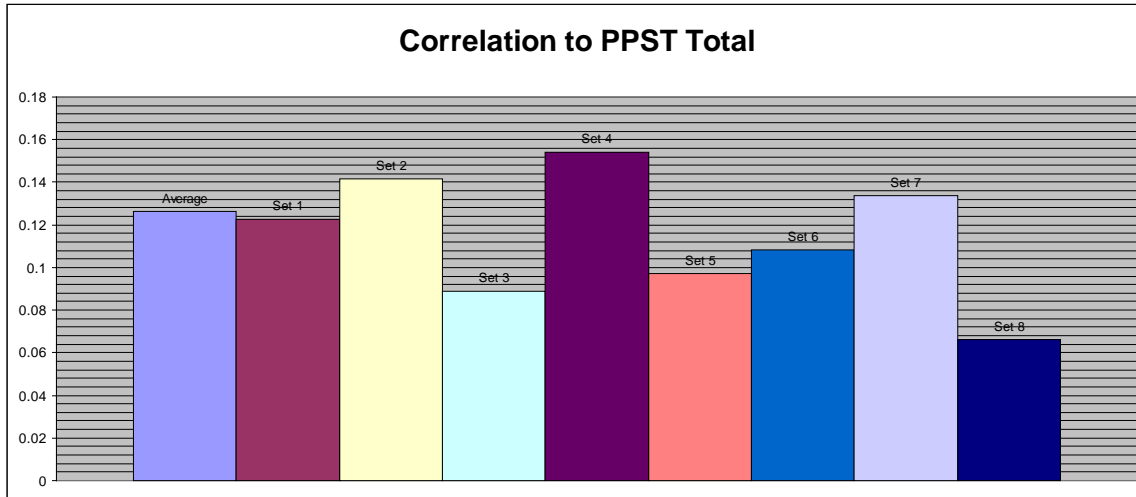
total scores and each of 56 different subcategories from the student teaching assessment. Although most of the assessment subcategories had a correlation coefficient close to zero, there was one subcategory which actually had a coefficient of .26. This is statistically significant. The subcategory which met the threshold criteria was *Demonstration of Mastery of the Subject Matter*. This means that there was a correlation, albeit a small one, between PPST total scores and subject master exhibited by student teachers in their student teaching clinical experience.

To put this in perspective, the coefficient of determination between these two variables is 6.7 percent. This means that there is 6.7 percent of sameness, or shared common properties or characteristics between PPST total scores and demonstrated mastery of subject matter by students.



The following graph compares total PPST scores to each of the eight general categories from the student teaching assessment as well as to the mean average of the subcategories from the student teaching assessment (the first bar in the graph is the

average). When looking at the general categories alone, we can see there is again no correlation found with regard to the total PPST scores.

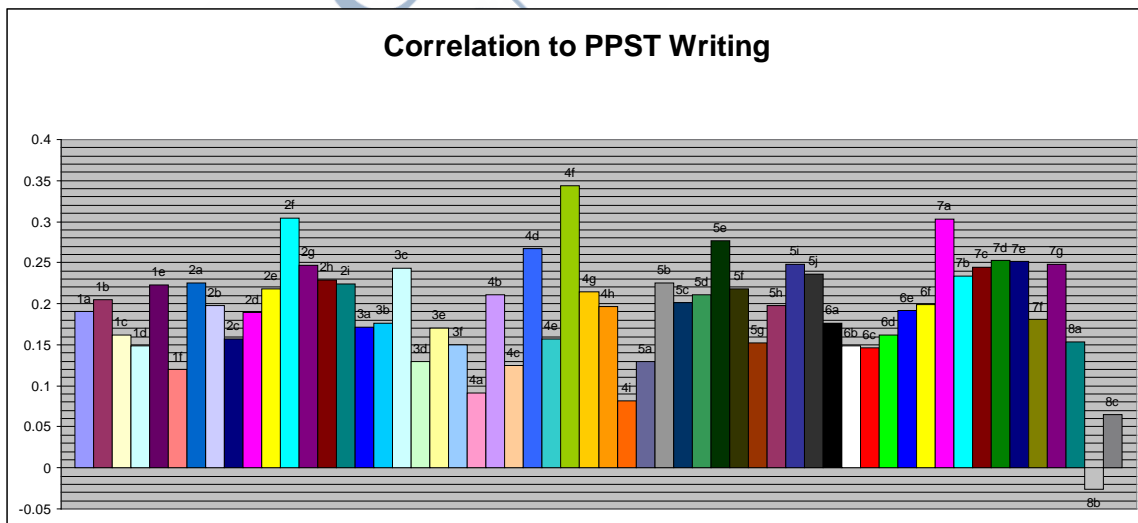


The subcategory of *Mastery Over Subject Matter* fell under the general category of *Instruction*. The *Instruction* general category was one which had the highest correlation with PPST total scores. However, none of the eight general teaching assessment categories had a correlation coefficient of even .16, which means that when looking at the general categories, there was no correlation with PPST total scores.

Perhaps the most interesting and most statistically significant data involve specifically the PPST writing section. Illustrated below are how PPST *writing* scores in particular correlated with student teaching outcomes as is indicated by the bar graph of correlation coefficients comparing PPST writing scores and each of 56 different subcategories from the student teaching assessment. Although most of the assessment subcategories had a correlation coefficient close to zero, there were five subcategories which had a coefficient of .25 or higher.

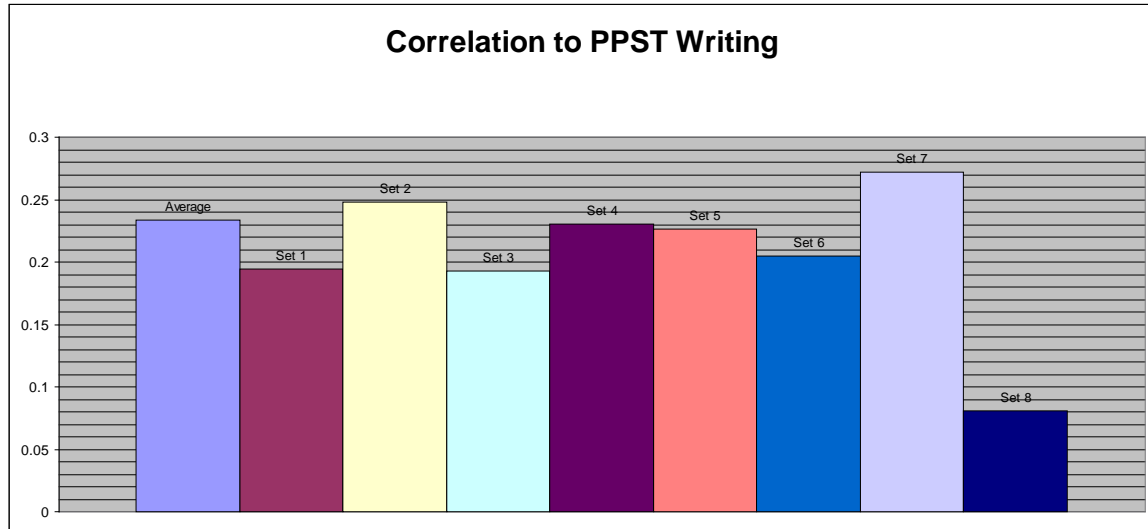
- The subcategory of *Actively Engages Students in Classroom Activities* had a coefficient of .27 or 7.3 percent shared common properties,
- *Models Appropriate Social Behavior* had a coefficient of .28 or 7.8 percent shared common properties,
- *Affirms the Dignity and Worth of All Students* and *Communicates Effectively Verbally* had coefficients of .31 or 9.6 shared common properties, and
- *Demonstrates Mastery Over the Subject Matter* had a coefficient of .34 or 11.5 percent of shared common properties with PPST writing scores.

These are all statistically significant. The higher the PPST writing score, the better the students performed in these areas of their student teaching clinical experience and vice versa.



The following graph compares PPST writing scores to each of the eight general categories from the student teaching assessment as well as to the mean average of the

subcategories from the student teaching assessment (the first bar in the graph is the average).



When looking at the general categories alone, we can see there is a mild correlation found between PPST writing scores and the general categories of *Professional Conduct and Ethics*, which had a correlation coefficient of .25, and *Communication and Interpersonal Skills*, which had a coefficient of .27, exceeding the criteria threshold. This means that there is a correlation between PPST writing scores and exhibited professional conduct and ethics, as well as interpersonal skills by student teachers in their student teaching clinical experience.

In summary, no correlation was found between any of the general categories of the student teaching assessment, nor was there a correlation among any of the specific subcategories of the student teaching assessment and undergraduate GPA. Likewise, there was no correlation found among any of the general categories or specific

subcategories of the student teaching assessment and total CBEST scores. There were, however, correlations found between the specific subcategory of *Demonstration of Mastery of the Subject Matter* and the general category of *Instruction*, under which *Mastery Over Subject Matter* fell, and PPST total scores. These were very mild correlations, scarcely meeting the criteria threshold. PPST writing scores, however, had an even higher correlation with the specific subcategories of *Actively Engages Students in Classroom Activities*, *Models Appropriate Social Behavior*, *Affirms the Dignity and Worth of All Students*, *Communicates Effectively Verbally*, and *Demonstrates Mastery Over the Subject Matter*, which had the highest coefficient of .34 or 11.5 percent of shared common properties with PPST writing scores.

Conclusion

The results can certainly be seen as disappointing from the perspective of a college or university, particularly one with a teacher preparation program. One might even wonder why minimum grade point averages and test scores are even requirements for admission if they have little to no predictive qualities with regard to student success. Concerning the basic skills exam, the researcher would like to explicate that the purpose of a basic skills exam is to ensure that the teacher or teacher candidate can demonstrate, at the very least, proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, and math. The basic skills exams do not measure, nor do they claim to measure, the ability or potential abilities of the teacher or teacher candidate to teach students effectively. However, it does insure that the teacher candidate has a minimum, basic understanding of the foundational subject areas of reading, writing, and math, which should indeed, in the researcher's

opinion, be a requirement of a teacher or teacher candidate. To put this concept into perspective, consider that one who desires to pursue a career as a fighter pilot must pass a test which ensures that that person has adequate vision. If one passes that test and has perfect vision, it indicates that that person possesses a very basic quality which is critical in order to be a fighter pilot. It does not, however, indicate that that person will perform well as a fighter pilot. Also consider that if that person does not pass a test of vision, it does indeed exclude him or her from the possibility of becoming a fighter pilot because it is such a critical, albeit basic, quality that is required.

Nevertheless, the results certainly supported the literature, and although most of the findings were not statistically significant, they were practically significant. There are a few factors which may have skewed the data. For example the sample size of this project was very small, and the larger the sample, the more accurate the data. But, beyond that there are some other factors which may have contributed to less than accurate results.

For example, the students' cooperating teachers complete the final student teaching assessments. The data could have been distorted due to the bias on behalf of the cooperating teachers. There are often personal conflicts which occur between student teachers and their cooperating teachers. Teachers must give up much of the control over their classrooms in order for the student teacher to take over and try their skills in the areas of lesson delivery, classroom management, and the like. This can cause conflicts, which may also be inadvertently or intentionally reflected in the student teaching report.

Conversely, cooperating teachers who take a particular liking to a student may be more generous with their assessments. Cooperating teachers are those who have been teaching in a classroom for at least three years and who only receive a meager stipend for their efforts and the inconvenience of mentoring a student teacher and giving up their classroom for a significant period of time. This may lead to a flippant or nonchalant approach to the assessment process while discretion lies completely within their power, despite the potential ignorance of the gravity of their responsibility. In addition, there is no training provided for the teachers with regard to the assessment process, which leaves a propensity for misinterpretation of the assessment questions. Also without training or some form of a rubric, there is room for discrepancies between answers, from teacher to teacher. For example, one teacher's idea of dressing professionally may not be another's.

It can also be argued that GPA is not a strong predictor or even a correlating factor when it comes to student teaching outcomes because of grade inflation. The literature shows that students are receiving higher grades for lower quality work. This can make GPA an unstable predictor as to whether or not pre-service teachers will perform well in a student teaching clinical experience.

Because both the CBEST and the PPST are supposed to measure the same skill sets of reading, writing, and math, and because they are basic skills exams which are both accepted in the state of Oregon for teacher certification purposes, it may be presumed that the exams are similar in content and assessment. However, it is a known frustration among colleges and universities, as well as examinees in Oregon, that when the writing

portion of the CBEST exam is graded, the panel of graders often scores the written work until a score of 41 is reached, and then discontinue scoring for further points. This also affects the total score the examinee receives. There is little doubt that this has skewed the data, especially since 80 is the highest score that can be achieved, leaving a substantial potential discrepancy. Perhaps the writing portion of CBEST would have had a stronger correlation with student teaching outcomes if examinees' written work were scored differently; arguably, more fairly. This would have produced more accurate data as it applied to this research.

Although it was found that PPST scores, particularly the writing portion, mildly correlated with some of the student teaching outcomes, it was disappointing to see such low correlation coefficients and that were so few variables that show any kind of correlation at all. Overall, this research shows for the most part, there is little to no correlation between how well students perform in their student teaching clinical experiences and their GPA and basic skills scores. This truly supports the literature.

Essentially, the outcome of this research supports the established literature with just a few relatively significant findings. It is quite disappointing to see that these quantitative measures of GPA and testing are poor predictors of success. If there is little to no correlation between GPA and basic skills exam scores, and student teaching outcomes, why are they so emphasized with regard to certification and admission requirements? Common sense would indicate that just because someone is a good student and test taker, does not mean that they will be a good teacher. However, it can

also be argued that teachers should, at the very least, show that they are capable of demonstrating basic skills of reading, math, and writing through classroom performance and or testing. They should be able to demonstrate that they possess the very skills that they are required to teach as an educator. It has been stated before that the purpose of basic skills exams is to ensure that the teacher or teacher candidate can demonstrate, at the very least, proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, and math. The basic skills exams do not measure, nor claim to measure, the ability or potential abilities of the teacher or teacher candidate to teach students effectively. However, this is where the confusion begins, because, based on the literature, it would *appear* that the purpose of the basic skills exam is indeed to measure just that; the potential effectiveness of a teacher or teacher candidate.

It also cannot be ignored that in this study there were variables which did have a correlation coefficients of .25 to .40. Correlation coefficients within the range of .25 to .40 may indicate a need for further study.

Suggestions For Further Study

Using a larger sample from which to collect data is definitely a suggestion for further study because data are more accurate with a larger sample. Also, valuable information could be gathered by using a different data set. For example, by using a sample from a different private university or a public as opposed to private university, or universities or colleges in other states may produce different results. Perhaps studies in

different states would indicate stronger cultural biases, a factor that was supported by the literature. It might also be interesting to see how gender plays into this research and to see if there are any differences between men and women with regard to how their basic skills exam scores and GPAs relate to how well their student teaching experiences were. Looking at actual teachers and their performance in an authentic setting may be a greater indicator of how effective they are at educating students as opposed to looking at pre-service teachers and their student teaching clinical experiences. This would also reduce the bias on the part of the cooperating teachers who grade the student teachers. Another way to approach the research would be to look at student teaching assessments, but in a school where the cooperating teachers receive substantial training in order to more fairly and accurately assess student teachers. Every teacher may have their own ideas about what quality instruction looks like.

The researcher really enjoyed the project and learned a lot from the experiences of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. Although the researcher was hoping to find more or stronger correlations, it was certainly significant that most of the variable showed a correlation coefficient which was very close to 0. This alone is very significant, especially because it does support the established literature regarding the topic of GPA, basic skill scores, and student teaching outcomes. It is still the opinion of the researcher that regardless of the low correlations between these variables, the standards regarding GPA and basic skills scores should not be compromised in order to produce more teachers.

References

- Bennett, C.I., McWhorter, L.M., & Kuykendall, J.A. (2006). Will I ever teach? Latino and African American students' perspectives on Praxis I. *American Educational Research Journal*, 43 (3), 531-575.
- Blair, J. (2001). Teacher tests criticized by single gauge. *Education Week*, 20 (29), 1-2.
- Bunte, A. (1986). Affective and academic variables as predictors of success in student teaching. *The Teacher Educator: Official Organ of the Indiana Association of Teacher Educators*, 30, 22-27.
- Educational Testing Service (2009). Retrieved from <http://www.ets.org/portal/site/ets/menuitem.fab2360b1645a1de9b3a0779f1751509/?vgnnextoid=48c05ee3d74f4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD&WT.ac=Praxis+Brochure+and+Front+Door>
- Fowler, R.C. (2001). What did Massachusetts teacher tests say about American education? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82 (10), 773-778.
- Gordon, M.E. (2006). When B's are better. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 52 (49), B10-B10.
- Hickok, E. (1998). High standards for teacher training. *Policy Review*, 91, 6-8.
- Hoff, D.J. (2001). Ark. Lowers hurdles for 'exceptional' aspiring teachers. *Education Week*, 20 (32), 20-21.
- Kezim, B., Pariseau, S.E., & Quinn, F. (2005). Is grade inflation related to faculty status? *Journal of Education for Business*, 80 (6), 358-363.

- Long, J.D. & Gaynor, P. (1993). Organizational life style as a predictor of student teaching performance. *Education*, 113 (3), 511-519.
- Margolis, J. (2006). New teachers, high-stakes diversity, and performance-based conundrum. *The Urban Review*, 38 (1), 27-44.
- Mikitovics, A. & Crehan K. D. (2002). Pre-professional skills test scores as college of education admission criteria. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 95 (4), 215-223.
- Mulvenon S. & Ferritor, D. (2006). Grade inflation in higher education: Isolated or systematic. *International Journal of Learning*, 12 (6), 55-62.
- Pearson Education, Evaluation Systems (2009). Retrieved from <http://www.cbest.nesinc.com/>
- Poelzer, G. H., Zeng, L., & Simonsson, M. (2007). Teacher certification tests: Using linear and logistical regression models to predict success of secondary pre-service teachers. *College Student Journal*, 41 (2), 305-309.
- Pool, J., Dittrich, C., & Longwell, E. (2004). An analysis of SAT and PRAXIS I Performance of teacher education candidates at three different types of institutions. *Action in Teacher Education*, 26 (2), 60-68.
- Selke, M., Mehigan, S., & Fiene, J. (2004). Validity of standardized teacher test scores for predicting beginning teacher performance. *Action in Teacher Education*, 25 (4), 20-29.
- Wakefield, D. (2007). NCLB keeps some great teaching candidates our forever. *The Education Digest*, 72 (5), 51-57.

Woods, A.M. & Weasmer, J. (2003). Great expectations for student teachers: Explicit and implied. *Education*, 123 (4), 681.



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

Appendix A:

Scoring Guide for Student Teacher Evaluation

0 - Not Evident	1 – Beginning	2 – Emerging	3 – Developing	4 – Proficient	5 – Strong	6 – Exemplary
<p>Work at this level is <u>non-existent</u>. <u>No initial development</u>, even at the beginning stages, of content and skills. <u>Student will need specific instruction</u> and direction before practicing or implementing content and skills.</p>	<p>Work at this level is <u>minimal</u>. It typically portrays a <u>lack of understanding</u> and use of appropriate skills and strategies. Work at this level may contain major errors.</p>	<p>Work at this level is <u>often superficial, fragmented, or incomplete</u>. It may show a partial mastery of content and skills, but it <u>needs considerable development</u> before reflecting the proficient level of performance.</p>	<p>Work at this level <u>shows basic, but inconsistent mastery and application</u> of content and skills. It shows some strengths, but <u>tends to have more weakness overall</u>.</p>	<p>Work at this level <u>meets the standard</u>. It is <u>strong, solid work</u> that has many <u>more strengths than weaknesses</u>. Work at this level demonstrates mastery of content, skills, and problem-solving strategies. Work at this level reflects considerable care and commitment.</p>	<p>Work at this level <u>exceeds the standard</u>, is thorough, and complex. Work at this level consistently portrays <u>exceptional control of content, skills, and problem-solving strategies</u>.</p>	<p>Work at this level is both <u>exceptional and memorable</u>. It is often characterized by <u>distinctive and unusually sophisticated</u> problem-solving approaches and solutions.</p>

Not Applicable (N/A) – This option indicates that the candidate had no opportunity in your classroom to apply or demonstrate mastery of the objective.

****Please Note: Concordia’s standard for demonstrating proficiency is a 4 or higher**

*** Please use this guide when completing CSTAPE ***

**Oregon Department of Education
Office of Assessment and Evaluation**

CRITERIA	N/A	Not Evident	Beginning
1. Personal Characteristics		0	1
a. Initiative and dependability		0	1
b. Tactful and caring attitude in relation towards students and staff.		0	1
c. Meets the professional expectations of dependability, conscientiousness, and punctuality		0	1
d. Meets all work schedule demands.		0	1
e. Dresses appropriately.		0	1
f. Exhibits energy and enthusiasm to make the classroom the best environment for teaching and learning.		0	1
2. Professional Conduct and Ethics			
a. Applies and promotes ethical standards in relationships with all learners.		0	1
b. Promotes the application of democratic principles, collegiality, and participation in the classroom.		0	1
c. Works effectively with faculty, staff, students, and parents.		0	1
d. Encourages a sense of community among students.		0	1
e. Exhibits fairness and consistency in dealing with all learners.		0	1
f. Affirms the dignity and worth of all students.		0	1
g. Exhibits sensitivity to individual differences and diverse cultures.		0	1
h. Acts in accordance with school policies and practices.		0	1
i. Meets expectations of program and participates in professional development opportunities (attends CU orientations and student teaching seminars).		0	1
3. Planning			
a. Writes learning goals that are consistent with the school's long-term curriculum goals, State content standards, and district standards.		0	1
b. Preassesses students to determine current performance levels, understands the level at which learners are functioning, and adjusts instruction to meet the needs of all learners.		0	1
c. Plans instructional activities appropriate for this level.		0	1
d. Can identify the content, skills and processes that will assist students in accomplishing lesson and unit outcomes.		0	1
e. Provides for individual learner needs when planning for instruction.		0	1
f. Demonstrates familiarity with this developmental level through planning and choice of instructional activities.		0	1
4. Instruction			
a. Communicates goals and focuses student interest on tasks to be achieved.		0	1
b. Utilizes a variety of instructional strategies.		0	1
c. Selects and organizes materials, equipment, and technologies needed for instruction.		0	1
d. Actively engages students in classroom activities.		0	1

CRITERIA	N/A	Not Evident	Beginning
e. Uses student feedback to pace and modify lesson activities.		0	1
f. Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter.		0	1
g. Accounts for differences among learners and adapts lesson plans for students with diverse needs, for students with varying cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds.		0	1
h. Promotes critical thinking, inquiry, and problem solving.		0	1
i. Demonstrates familiarity with educational technology to enhance the teaching / learning process.		0	1
5. Management			
a. Establishes an overall classroom climate that is conducive to learning.		0	1
b. Discusses and communicates classroom rules and behaviors with students and applies to all students principles of gender equity and racial justice.		0	1
c. Provides a safe and orderly environment for learning.		0	1
d. Applies the principles of least restrictive environment for students with disabilities.		0	1
e. Models appropriate social behavior.		0	1
f. Maintains effective routine procedures.		0	1
g. Promotes student self-discipline.		0	1
h. Responds immediately and appropriately to unacceptable student behavior.		0	1
i. Mediates and resolves classroom conflicts in a professional and helpful manner.		0	1
j. Uses classroom time effectively to provide maximum time for learning		0	1
6. Assessment			
a. Effectively monitors students in learning activities to determine if the pace or content of instruction needs modification.		0	1
b. Utilizes a variety of assessment tools to measure student learning gain and determine student progress.		0	1
c. Documents student progress in accomplishing state content standards and district standards.		0	1
d. Reports student progress to appropriate audiences.		0	1
e. Collaborates with school personnel to provide assistance to students when needed.		0	1
f. Uses personal reflection to promote teaching effectiveness.		0	1
7. Communication and Interpersonal Skills			
a. Communicates effectively verbally.		0	1
b. Communicates effectively in written form.		0	1
c. Demonstrates a genuine interest in students.		0	1
d. Uses humor appropriately.		0	1
e. Functions effectively as a facilitator of learning.		0	1
f. Accepts and uses constructive criticism.		0	1

CRITERIA	N/A	Not Evident	Beginning
g. Interacts thoughtfully and courteously with students and parents.		0	1
8. Participation in the School Community			
a. Attends and participates in faculty, staff, and site council activities.		0	1
b. Supports the school with attendance at various co-curricular activities.		0	1
c. Exhibits an awareness of the role of professional educational organizations.		0	1

COMMENTS: Please write a summary statement concerning the Concordia Candidate's overall performance in your classroom and school.

PROGRESS: At this time in the semester, my student's overall teaching performance is (check one):

- PASSING (strong)**
- PASSING (with reservations)** (please list reservations): _____
- FAILING (will not pass)**

Comments: _____

X _____

X _____

Signature of Cooperating Teacher
Concordia Supervisor

Signature of _____

X _____

Signature of University Candidate (Student)

Date _____

