ACE-DHH Poster session
February 17, 2011
A Review of the Literature regarding the evaluation of student teachers through a distance observation format:
What we've learned in a year.

Dr. Sam Slike
Dr. Deborah Stryker
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

Stryker, D. (2011). Baseline data on distance education offerings in deaf education teacher preparation programs in the United States. *American Annals of the Deaf, 155*(5), 550-561.

Stryker (2011) reported, "Little is empirically known about the use of distance education within deaf education teacher preparation programs" (p. 2).

Regarding the practice of observing student teachers via distance technology, Stryker (2011) found that "Practicum or internship supervision via distance technologies within DETP programs is a growing option for pre-service teachers and their supervisors" (p. 14).

Sewall, M. (2009). Transforming supervision: Using video elicitation to support preservice teacher-directed reflective conversations. *Issues in Teacher Education, 18*(2), 11-30.

Sewall (Fall 2009) stated, "Supervisors are frequently involved in other endeavors as part of their work in a credentialing program…and…their "free time" for supervision is often less open than one might assume" (p. 11).

Thought: **Distance observations of student teachers would aid supervisors in increasing their "office time."**

Johnson, H. (2004). U.S. Deaf education teacher preparation programs: A look at the present and a vision for the future. *American Annals of the Deaf, 149*(2), 75-91.

- **The very nature of distance education creates enhanced potential for reaching more individuals interested in becoming teachers of deaf and hard of hearing children and youth and subsequently better meeting the needs of these students. It becomes more clear that teacher preparation programs within the field of deaf education need to become more innovative in reaching and preparing future teachers because "virtual learning communities [can] enhance the preparation of new teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students" (Johnson, 2004, p.77).**

Holsapple, M. (2004, May 3). Technology helps student teachers make the grade. *Purdue News.* Retrieved from http://news.uns.purdue.edu/UNS/html4ever/2004/040503.Fox.student.

- **The notion of using distance observation technology to observe student interns is a relatively recent trend. In a pilot project, School of Education professors at Purdue University used …"digital video equipment to observe student teachers in the classroom via the Internet…" and found the approach to be …"more cost effective, efficient and yields better results than traditional methods" (p.1, Purdue News, 2004).**

Fry, S., & Bryant, C. (2006-2007). Using distance technology to sustain teacher education for student teachers in isolated areas: The Technology Supported Induction Network. *Journal of Computing in Teacher Education, 23*(2), 63-69.

- **Fry and Bryant (2006-2007) cited the use of distance technology to support the …"needs of isolated preservice teachers during student teaching," (p. 63) and indicated that the virtual connection to their peers and supervisor provided by the technology seemed to help reduce their feelings of isolation.**

Alger & Kopcha (Fall 2009) indicated that student teachers reported the use of an online discussion forum for exchange of challenges and ideas … "to discuss and give practical advice, and to receive encouragement" (p. 41). They found that creating a… "sense of community in informing the practice"… of the members of their study played an important role in helping the student teachers stayed connected and less isolated (p. 42). The results of their study indicated that their use of eSupervision technology… "enhanced both the cooperating teacher's and university supervisors' roles, built bridges between the university and the field experience, and expanded communication, community, and a sense of support for all members of the triad" (p. 43).

- **Dyke, Harding and Liddon (2008) studied the viability of using video conferencing technology for online observations. One limitation they found was that the webcam in the classroom was immovable and therefore did not afford the maneuverability around the classroom found by an observer in an onsite observation. They noted, however, that … "in the context in which the use of synchronous online observation was tested, the description of teaching and judgments of online observers were comparable to face-to-face observations" (p. 45). They found that using video conferencing … "can provide a relatively unobtrusive and cost effective means of providing valid and reliable moderation of observed teaching assessments"… "Furthermore it can also enable teacher trainers to meet the challenge of providing specialist observers in areas where there is a shortage of subject teachers or where the trainee is in a geographically remote teaching environment" (p. 45).**
- **Thought: Finding a way to meet the geographical challenges of observing student teachers of the deaf in rural areas is a necessity in our field.**

- **Hakes and Cochenour (1993) explored the use of compressed video to supervise distant teacher interns. They indicated that studies have shown that…"in the context of supervision, the ability to provide simultaneous reinforcement and feedback to the trainee was far superior to the provision of post hoc feedback" (p. 2).**
- **Thought: This supports the notion that**

- **Hakes and Cochenour found that immediate audio feedback results in student teachers who are:**
- **more adept at teacher decision making**
- **more highly skilled at diagnosing individual student dilemmas**
- **able to demonstrate enhanced communication skills**
- **better able to diagnose individual learning styles and**

- **As noted by Fry (2006), "Isolation is a concern for student teachers in rural areas… discussion boards between peers and distance communication between student teachers and supervisors…"gave student teachers the opportunity to maintain positive connections with their teacher preparation institution" (p. 6).**
- **Thought: The need for developing a model for a network of communication options for rural student teachers is a must.**

- **"Although (technology) could be used to enhance supervision and perhaps reduce the number of site visits faculty need to make, it cannot replace the one-on-one feedback that results from observations and follow-up discussions to help connect theory and practice" (Fry, 2006, p. 7).**

Conclusions

- **It is apparent from a review of the literature, and the data collected from the survey questionnaire, there are monetary benefits and time benefits or the supervising professor that can be realized from conducting student teacher observations and evaluations from a distance using technology. With the reported number of student teacher observations being conducted per semester, the average distance of student teachers from college campuses and the time and (rising) monetary costs, use of distance observation technology is fast**