

# *Values in More Extensive Student Teaching*

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Should a full-time program of student teaching at the secondary level be substituted for the programs of lesser duration which are found in most teacher-education institutions? This question is discussed by G. M. Inlow, director of student teaching, School of Education, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

A MAJOR PROBLEM of teacher-training institutions today is the task of determining how much time should be devoted to student teaching. Proponents of an extensive program of student teaching believe that educational theory as taught in the classroom is by no means an end in itself. They conceive of theory as a means of providing future teachers with a body of knowledge and skill which can be applied in practical learning situations. They further believe that the greater opportunity the student has of applying his theoretical knowledge in student-teaching experiences the greater the future value of the theory will be.

Mindful of the inherent values of applied learning, the School of Education of Northwestern University several years ago embarked on a project of expanding its program of student teaching. The study reported here applies only to the program at the secondary level.

## PHASES OF THE PROGRAM

Until 1949, students were required to devote two hours per day, five days per week, for two quarters, to student-teaching activities in the various cooperating schools along the North Shore and in Chicago. The typical

schedule of a student included one forty-minute period for two quarters of observing and teaching in the major field, one forty-minute period of observing in other major or minor fields, and the equivalent of another period devoted to the services and miscellaneous activities of the school. This schedule was considered inadequate in that: (a) The student had only a limited opportunity to engage in actual teaching experiences; (b) he participated actively in only one subject; (c) he was unable to discover for himself the importance of the many extra-classroom activities of the typical teacher; and (d) he began his activities well after the semester was under way and therefore faced difficulty in winning acceptance by the group.

In 1949, a new program was adopted to supplement the traditional one. It required students to spend a half day, five days per week, for one school semester in the cooperating schools. The typical schedule for a student who was enrolled in the half-day program included two forty-minute periods for a semester of observing and teaching in two subjects in the major field, one period observing and teaching in a minor field, and the equivalent of one to two periods devoted to the services

and miscellaneous activities of the school and to community study. The improvements of this program over the traditional one were as follows: (a) Students had greater opportunity to engage in actual teaching experiences; (b) students were enabled to participate actively in at least one subject of the minor field as well as in two subjects of the major field; (c) they were enabled to participate in a greater number of extra-classroom experiences including a study of the community; and (d) they spent an entire semester in the schools and were accepted from the start as active members of the group.

Data which were compiled during the academic year of 1950-1951 on twenty-five student teachers in the two-hour-per-day program and on sixteen student teachers in the half-day program are presented in Table 1.

Analysis of the contents of Table 1 indicates that students in the half-day program, with the exception of "other" activities, spent considerably more time in the many phases of student teaching than did those in the limited program. Those in the longer program devoted approximately 55 more hours

more to such activities as PTA meetings, parent teas, home room activities, athletic contests, and related functions. Of particular significance is the fact that the students were enabled to engage in actual teaching in the major and minor fields approximately 27 hours more than were the students in the limited program. In all, they spent over 100 hours more in the program.

#### NEED FOR MORE ACTUAL TEACHING

During the academic year of 1950-1951 the members of the student-teaching staff decided to concentrate their efforts on determining what factors influence student-teaching outcomes. One of the problems which confronted the group was developing an instrument which would measure outcomes. The other was gathering data which could be correlated with selected outcomes.

In attacking the first problem, a committee of seven individuals was selected to develop a scale to measure outcomes. Committee membership included the director of student teaching, two critic teachers, two student teachers, and two university supervisors. The committee members agreed that the instrument should:

- Differentiate between the effective and not-so-effective student teachers.
- Be simple and concise.
- Be as neutral as possible in its implications on teaching methods, curriculum, and educational philosophy.

Eight questions were finally selected by the committee for inclusion in an instrument which would be used to measure outcomes. The questions are as follows:

Table 1  
A Comparison of Activities  
of the Two Program Groups

	Two-Hour Program	Half-Day Program
1. Major Field		
Total Time	192.3 hrs.	248.5 hrs.
Teaching Time	52.7 "	68.0 "
2. Minor Field(s)		
Total Time	27.2 "	55.9 "
Teaching Time	6.9 "	18.9 "
3. Services	25.0 "	15.8 "
4. Activities	18.0 "	26.7 "
5. Other	48.0 "	36.0 "
6. Total	310.5 "	412.9 "

to the major field, 29 more hours to the minor field, 21 more to the services, and

- How adequate do you think would be his (the student teacher's) knowledge of subject matter?
- How effective do you think he would be in:

Preparing and organizing lessons, units, projects, aids, etc.

Leading class or group discussions.

Establishing rapport with pupils.

Establishing and maintaining wholesome relationships with the administration and other members of the faculty.

Locating, interpreting and using personnel files to the end of understanding and counseling with students more effectively.

Organizing instruction in such a way that it would administer to the needs of the varying age, intelligence and interest levels of pupils.

Supervising a co-curricular activity related to the student teacher's interest and/or academic background.

The student teacher, the critic teacher, and the university supervisor were asked to rate the student teacher on each of the questions. They further were requested to adhere to a five-point continuum scale consisting of the following items: (1) very effective (or adequate); (2) rather effective; (3) moderately effective; (4) rather ineffective; (5) very ineffective. Arithmetical values of from 1 to 5 were subsequently assigned to the respective answers to facilitate quantifying the data.

In an effort to establish a common base for evaluation by the three groups making ratings, the investigator asked each to assume that at the end of the second quarter or complete semester of

student teaching, the student teacher would secure a full-time teaching position. Likewise each was asked to assume that the student teacher would be teaching in essentially the same subject matter field as that encountered during the period of student teaching and that the grade, ability, and interest levels of the pupils would be similar.

When the ratings were received from each of the three groups, the arithmetical values of the eight questions were averaged and the result was a composite outcome score. The investigators received three composite scores on each student teacher for the period of student teaching. The scores were from the student teachers (Gp. I), the critic teachers (Gp. II), and the university supervisors (Gp. III).

Subsequently, the scores of the members of the three groups were tabulated for each of the eight questions and for composites of the eight questions. In addition, the scores of the members of the three groups were correlated. The results for the composite scores are contained in Table 2.<sup>1</sup>

Table 2  
Composite Scores and  
Correlations by Groups

	Composite Scores		Coefficients of Correlation
Gp. I	1.69	Gp. I and Gp. II	.159
Gp. II	1.78	Gp. I and Gp. III	.380
Gp. III	1.94	Gp. II and Gp. III	-.452

The data in Table 2 indicate that the scores of the student teachers (Gp. I) correlated less significantly with those of the critic teachers (Gp. II) and university supervisors (Gp. III) than did the scores of Groups II and III with

<sup>1</sup> See Inlow, Gail, "Evaluating Student-Teaching Experiences," *Journal of Educational Research*, May, 1952.

each other. Therefore, the investigators decided not to include the self ratings (Gp. I). The term "outcome score" as used hereafter will refer to the average of the composite scores of the critic teachers and the university supervisors only. Although the coefficient .452 was not high enough to give the investigators great confidence in the validity of the instrument or the reliability of the raters, they considered the relationship of the scores of the two groups to be substantial enough to warrant further use of the instrument.

It is to be noted that the outcome scores of the critic teachers were secured only from the teachers who were responsible for the classrooms of the major subjects of the student teachers. The decision to confine the ratings to these individuals was reached in view of the fact that all student teachers, regardless of the program in which they were enrolled, were known to have spent approximately the same amount of time in the first major subject. Thus a common base was established, regardless of program.

To determine whether longer periods of student teaching and other factors resulted in better (lower) outcome scores, the investigators related the scores to the items of: (1) student-teaching hours in the major subject regardless of the type of activity, (2) hours spent in actual teaching in the major subject, (3) total student-teaching hours in all activities, (4) university credit hours in the major subject, and (5) grades in the major subject-matter field earned during the first three and one-half years of university enrollment.

For purposes of comparison, the investigator separated the 41 cases into

three groups on the basis of the size of the outcome scores which were computed at the end of the total period of student teaching. The upper group consisted of 14 cases with a mean score of 1.35; the middle group, of 13 cases with a mean score of 1.88; and the low group, of 14 cases with a mean score of 2.41.

In Table 3 are presented for the three groups data on the five items previously listed.

Table 3  
Selected Factors Related  
to Outcome Scores

Selected Factors	Mean Average		
	Upper Group	Middle Group	Lower Group
1. Student-teaching hrs. in major subject	200.1	215.4	206.0
2. Actual teaching hrs. in major subject	65.1	51.5	47.4
3. Total student-teaching hrs., all activities	358.2	357.0	344.1
4. Course-credit quarter hrs. in major subject	48.1	55.2	48.9
5. University grades 1 A; 2 B; 3 C; 4 D	1.92	2.08	2.10

Analysis of the data presented in Table 3 indicates that a curvilinear relationship existed among the three groups on items 1 and 4; a slight positive relationship on items 3 and 5; and a substantial positive relationship on item 2. When the upper and lower groups were compared statistically on item 2, the results were not statistically significant. However, chance in approximately only one instance out of 8 to 10 could have been responsible for the variation in the totals.

From the results presented in Table 3, it is apparent that such student-teaching experiences as those related to the minor field(s), services and activities had little or no effect on the out-

come scores which emanated from a concentration in the major subject. The amount of actual teaching in the major field, however, did relate positively in a substantial way to the outcome scores. In like manner, it was logical to assume that a greater number of hours of actual teaching in a minor subject would have led to successful outcome scores in the subject. From this evidence, it was hypothesized by the investigators that future changes in the student-teaching program should provide for greater opportunities for actual teaching experience in as many subjects as possible.

#### THE PLUNGE INTO A FULL-DAY PROGRAM

Although members of the student-teaching staff were better satisfied with the results of the half-day than with the more limited program, they believed that students were still being deprived of many student-teaching experiences that would have been an aid to them during their first years of teaching. Consequently, the decision was reached by the staff of the School of Education to offer a full-time program of student teaching. Five students were enrolled for such a program on an experimental basis during the spring quarter of 1951. The program was well received by both students and critic teachers.

In the fall quarter of 1951, twenty-three of the thirty-nine student teachers who were enrolled for student teaching at the secondary level elected the full-day program. Their first activities in the co-operating schools were as participants in the pre-school faculty conferences prior to or just after Labor Day. Their activities terminated on December 19, 1951.

The program of the typical student teacher in the full-time program for nine forty-minute periods was this:

Major subject-matter field	..2 periods
Minor fields	.....2 periods
Services (guidance, library, health, curriculum laboratory, visual aids department, etc.)	.....1 period
Home room or study hall	....1 period
Activities (student govt., school paper, annual, faculty committees, etc.)	.....1 period
Lunch	.....1 period
Free time	.....1 period

In addition to the activities within the limits of the academic day, the student teachers regularly assumed responsibility for a co-curricular activity; participated in parent teacher teas, PTA meetings, faculty meetings, athletic contests, and other after-school functions; spent an average of two hours per day in preparing teaching assignments; participated in selected phases of community life; and attended one late afternoon seminar per week. The advantages of the full-day program have been identified as follows:

- Students are enabled to secure an over-view of, not just atomistic insights into, the total job of the teacher.
- Students are required to serve only one master at a time. Their allegiance for one extended quarter is to the co-operating school and its functionaries. In the two part-time programs, students are required to enroll for academic courses at the university as well as for student teaching. In serving two masters, students are constantly faced with conflicting demands on their time and

efforts. These conflicts are eliminated by the full-time program.

- The full-time program provides for more extensive classroom experiences. Inasmuch as students who engage in the greatest number of hours of actual teaching in a subject seem to receive the highest ratings from critic teachers and university supervisors, the full-time program offers the greatest opportunity for success not merely in the major but in other subjects.

- The full-time program provides for more extensive extra-classroom experiences. These are believed to be as important as are formalized academic experiences.

- Students get better acquainted with the faculty and pupils of the school and profit from these closer relationships.

- In the occasional absence of the classroom teacher, the cooperating schools usually prefer to rely on the student teacher rather than on a substitute teacher to carry on the activities of the class. The student teacher is able to provide greater continuity in the class program than is a teacher who is called in from the outside.

- The student teacher can be evaluated more effectively inasmuch as his activities are observed from many vantage points by a number of persons.

- The job placement possibilities of a student are greater when he is able to convince an administrator that he has engaged in a wide variety of student-teaching experiences and has achieved success in them.

#### FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The prospects of establishing the full-time program as the only one offered by

the University at the secondary level are encouraging. Opposition is not expected from within the School of Education. There are indications, however, that other colleges and schools of the University may not support the program enthusiastically, at least not in the initial stages. The primary reason for the possible lack of support is the emphasis placed by certain other schools on specialized subject-matter preparation. It is believed that differences will be resolved in the not too distant future. If they are not resolved, a foreseeable outcome is that the full-time program will continue to supplement, even if it fails to supersede, the part-time programs.

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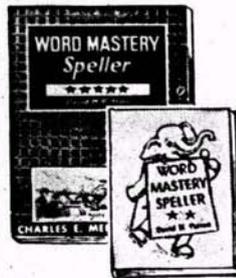
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