CAEP Annual Report

Advanced Measure 2

Satisfaction and Stakeholder Involvement

**Satisfaction and Program Effectiveness Review**

Each year, an action research study is conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of West Virginia State University’s Master of Education in Instructional Leadership (MEIL) program. The 2023–2024 study focused on three guiding questions:

1. How effective are the program’s courses and instructors?
2. What impact does the fully online structure have on overall program effectiveness?
3. How can the program be modified to enhance its effectiveness?

To support the inquiry, the study was organized around four thematic categories: communication, mentorship, effective instruction, and the impact of online learning. Survey data were collected from four stakeholder groups: current students, alumni, program faculty, and employers of program completers. A total of 40 participants contributed to the study.

**Key Findings**

1. The MEIL program effectively prepares graduates for leadership roles in educational administration.
2. Alumni affirmed that the program provided meaningful preparation for real-world leadership challenges.
3. Responses from current students indicated variability in perceptions of course objectives and support services.
4. No conclusive data were obtained from employers, as supervisors of alumni currently serving in administrative roles did not respond to the survey.

**Communication**  
Aligned with CAEP Measure 2 regarding candidate support, communication between faculty and students emerged as a key strength. Faculty responses indicated a high agreement score of 4.8/5 regarding communication effectiveness. Alumni and current students rated communication at 4.4/5 and 3.9/5, respectively, producing an average effectiveness score of 4.36/5 (87.2%).

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of timely and substantive feedback from instructors. Recognizing the heightened expectations of communication within an online learning environment, the department has implemented scheduled virtual office hours—both open and by appointment—to increase accessibility. Strengthening communication remains a programmatic priority for continuous improvement.

**Mentorship**  
Mentorship was assessed through items focusing on networking opportunities and meaningful engagement. Alumni rated networking at 4.3/5 and meaningful engagement at 4.0/5. In contrast, current students rated these areas slightly lower at 3.9/5 and 3.8/5, respectively. Open-ended feedback emphasized the value of early and consistent mentorship, with alumni suggesting improvements such as “establishing connections with mentors sooner” and “expanding opportunities to engage with colleagues and mentors.”

In response, the LS 650 internship structure was revised to allow for earlier and more intentional engagement with both building- and district-level mentors. Closer monitoring of mentorship assignments has also been implemented to strengthen candidate experience.

**Faculty Effectiveness**  
Instructor effectiveness continues to be a strength of the MEIL program. Alumni rated faculty responsiveness to questions and concerns at 4.5/5, while current students provided a score of 3.9/5. Overall faculty and program effectiveness were rated at 4.4/5 by alumni and 3.7/5 by current students. Faculty expertise was also highly rated, with alumni assigning a score of 4.6/5 and current students rating it at 4.4/5.

Open-ended responses further reinforced the positive impact of faculty, with one alumni noting:

“I feel encouraged and empowered to continue pursuing a position in administration. Dr. Blackwell is a key component to the program—so much that I always left meetings ready to conquer the world!”

**Stakeholder Involvement and Continuous Improvement**  
Stakeholder feedback remains central to MEIL program development. The MEIL Advisory Council and MEIL Alumni Advisory Group—recently merged into a single advisory body under the Department of Leadership Studies—continue to offer valuable insights. Notably, the Alumni Advisory Group held meetings on February 1, March 8, and May 15, 2024, with discussions focused on tuition/fees, university policies, and broader programmatic changes.

The MEIL Assessment Committee, led by the advanced-level Assessment Coordinator, maintains a priority list that guides program decisions. Regular committee meetings held during the 2023–2024 academic year (e.g., September 18, October 2, November 6, December 4, February 5, and March 4) serve as documentation of ongoing assessment efforts.

**Models of Excellence and Professional Engagement**  
Although the revised CAEP advanced-level standards no longer explicitly require the identification of models of excellence, this remains a focus of program improvement efforts due to a prior Area for Improvement (AFI). To support this goal:

* A faculty member has applied to serve as a reviewer for the National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) SPA process.
* Two faculty members (including the initial Assessment Coordinator) have completed CAEP reviewer training and are actively serving as reviewers.
* All participating faculty are members of the MEIL Assessment Committee, where continuous improvement through program evaluation remains a standing agenda item.

These professional engagements help ensure the MEIL program remains aligned with national benchmarks and informed by exemplary practices in educational leadership preparation.