CAEP Annual Report

Advanced Measure 2

Satisfaction and Stakeholder Involvement

Satisfaction

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of what is going on in West Virginia State University’s MEIL Program. The primary focus was determining the effectiveness of the program based on the perceptions of current and previous students, MEIL faculty, and Supervisors of MEIL graduates in leadership roles. The program has been shown to be effective based on evidence collected through other measures.

There were 32 survey participants. The research question studied was “How effective is West Virginia State University’s Master of Education in Instructional Leadership program in preparing candidates for successful educational leadership jobs?” Survey responses from current and former students, as well as MEIL faculty were examined.

The conclusions of this study are that 1) West Virginia State University’s Master of Education in Instructional Leadership program is effective in preparing candidates for successful educational leadership jobs. 2) Former students felt prepared to enter the field of education in a leadership role. 3) There are minimal perceived changes, mostly centering around adding hands-on experiences and changing the internship hours to being throughout the program. 4) A conclusion cannot be drawn from the perceptions of supervisors, as none completed the survey.

The research question was how effective is West Virginia State University’s Master of Education in Instructional Leadership program in preparing candidates for successful educational leadership jobs? The sub-questions were 1) What are MEIL graduates’ perceptions of their preparedness to enter the field of education in a leadership role?  2) What changes do students and staff perceive are needed to improve the MEIL program in order to better prepare candidates? 3) What are the perceptions of supervisors on MEIL graduates’ preparedness to effectively perform administrative job duties?

 The results show that overall, the MEIL Program at WVSU is effective in preparing candidates for successful educational leadership jobs. In addition, former students felt prepared to enter the field of education in a leadership role and there were minimal suggestions for perceived changes. Again, there were no results to report for supervisors, as none completed the survey.

The demographic breakdown of the 32 participants is as follows: There were 9 males and 23 females. There were 15 former students, 12 current students, and 5 MEIL faculty members. There were no supervisors. All participants were adults.

*How effective is West Virginia State University’s Master of Education in Instructional Leadership program in preparing candidates for successful educational leadership jobs?*

Even though 78.6% of former students did not apply for a leadership position right away, it was not due to the program, but rather mostly due to a lack of available positions or positions of interest. See Figure 3 under the section about graduates’ perceived preparedness for further details. For the support level of the MEIL faculty, 92.6% of current and former students rated the support of faculty at a 4 or 5 out of 5 on a Likert scale, while 7.4% rated the support at a 3. In addition, 70.4% of students stated the faculty was always available to answer questions about assignments, with 22.2% stating they were available most of the time and 7.4% stating the faculty was sometimes available. Students were also asked about their satisfaction with the faculty and their teaching. Out of 27 current and former students, 74.1% were always satisfied, while 18.5% were satisfied most of the time, and 7.4% were sometimes satisfied. Lastly, out of 27 former and current students, only 15 offered suggestions for perceived improvement. Figure 2 illustrates the satisfaction of students with the faculty and their teaching.

*What are MEIL graduates’ perceptions of their preparedness to enter the field of education in a leadership role?*

Fifteen of our participants were former students of the WVSU MEIL program. In order to determine how prepared they felt upon graduating from the program, we asked them the following question: “How prepared did you feel to enter the field?” This was a scale from 1-5, with 5 feeling very prepared. Figure 3 illustrates that out of the 15 responses, 10 participants felt very prepared, and 5 felt prepared.

The results show that graduates of the MEIL program felt prepared to enter the field of education in a leadership role upon completing the coursework. Additionally, we asked graduates from the program if they applied for a job in the field after graduating. For those that stated that they have not, the responses were not related to not feeling prepared. Instead, the responses generally were concerned with waiting for more experience, lack of positions available, etc. Figure 4 below, listed in order of most popular response to least popular response, shows the data collected for why former students did not apply for a leadership role right away.

*What changes do students and staff perceive are needed to improve the MEIL program in order to better prepare candidates?*

Within our survey, we asked students and faculty what improvements they believe should be made to the MEIL program at WVSU. This was a short-response question for participants to complete. From the 27 responses we received from students, 15 responses did not have any suggestions. Two responses suggested the EDUC 645 and EDUC 655 become a hybrid class. Two responses included suggestions related to more Zoom meetings during the program in order to have more verbal communication. Two responses included topics that are related to administration that they would like to see more of: additional school finance information and handling staff issues. The remaining responses centered around the internship and having more hands-on experiences throughout the program. For instance, coordinating internship placements, having mock interviews during the internship, and obtaining internship hours throughout the program, not just in EDUC 650. These findings are based on suggestions provided by students, which are illustrated in Figure 5 below.

Faculty was asked what area of administration that they would like to see more time spent on in the courses. We had 5 faculty members complete the survey. Two faculty members did not have any suggestions at the time. The remaining three responses included district, communications, and field experience. Below in Figure 6, from most popular response to least popular response are the areas that the WVSU MEIL Faculty believed could be areas of improvement for the program.

What are the perceptions of supervisors on MEIL graduates’ preparedness to effectively perform administrative job duties?

We are unable to discuss the perceptions of supervisors due to not receiving any responses. About halfway through the data collection, we realized that there was a flaw in the survey. If a participant answered that they did not apply for a job in the field right away, it skipped over the question about whether they’d be willing to have their supervisor complete a survey. Instead, the participants should have been asked whether they were now in a leadership role. If they answered yes, then they should have been taken to the question about willingness to have their supervisor complete the survey. This may have contributed to our lack of responses. Adjustments will be made to data gathering for the next survey so that we can address this lack of data.

Stakeholder Involvement

The advanced program separated the external stakeholder group from the initial program in 2020-2021, the year of the CAEP visit, creating the MEIL Advisory Council. Members of the Advisory Council represent the program, schools and districts from across the state, representatives from administrator organizations, the state department of education, and program completers. The group includes former and current elementary school principals, current middle and high school administrators, central office administrators and superintendents, leadership from the WV Association of Secondary Schools Principals and their Elementary/Middle school counterpart group, and representatives from the WV Department of Education. In order to make the most of stakeholder involvement, a second group was crated, the MEIL Alumni Advisory Group. This group consists of program completers, some of whom remain in the classroom while others have moved into leadership positions in local school districts. These groups meet regularly with the Alumni Group meeting more frequently in order to serve as a working group that helps hone material for presentation at the Advisory Council.

The MEIL Alumni Advisory Group held meetings on September 21, 2021, November 30, 2021, January 19, 2022, and March 23, 2022. Agendas, and minutes for these meetings are available. Action items include developing a description of group responsibilities, work related to CAEP Standard 4, input on how to meet NELP standards for the internship, and a review of assessment reports. During the 2021-22 academic year, the group held meetings on September 14, 2022, February 8, 2023, and April 19, 2023. Agenda items included input on proposed changes to the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), a trial run of Content Validity, studies, and ideas for recruitment, particularly of students from diverse backgrounds. One change based on input from this group is evident in minutes from the September 2022 meeting in which the group voted to add something related to “attracts and retains quality staff” to the PLOs. The Advisory Council held meetings on August 24, 2021, September 28, 2021, November 1, 2021, February 23, 2022, and on April 20, 2022 during the previous academic year. During the current academic year, the Advisory Council met on April 20, 2023. Agenda items were similar to those with the alumni group. Since the departmental split of advisory groups, effective fall of 2021 and at the direction of the department chair, the program has developed two active and functioning advisory groups to participate in data driven decision making and provide input on continuous improvement.

The requirement to identify models of excellence is not found in the new advanced level standards. Still, as a requirement of our previous visit and resulting AFI, we seek out models of excellence in leadership programs. A member of the program has made application to volunteer as a reviewer for the National Educational Leadership Preparation Specialized Professional Association (SPA) program review process. If accepted as a reviewer, additional training through the National Policy Board for Educational Administration will benefit the program through review of other programs. Two professors who teach part-time in the advanced program, one who is the initial Assessment Coordinator, have completed CAEP training and began serving as CAEP reviewers during this academic year. All are members of the MEIL Assessment Committee where discussions are made about how to gather evidence for continuous improvement through program evaluation and identification of models of excellence.