Running head: PROGRAM DATA COLLECTION PLAN AND REPORTING RESULTS

Master of Arts in English Education, University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez:
Data Collection Plan and Reporting Results
Gayle W. Griggs
ARO 8613, Dr. Sharon Griffin
September 10, 2004
Data Collection Plan and Reporting Results

Program Implementation Assessment

The evaluator will collect qualitative and quantitative data for a mixed method evaluation of the program. Through the analysis of a combination of results in each phase of the evaluation, the evaluator will be able to build upon the information provided by the participants to determine the necessary criteria for each subsequent phase. This conforms with the iterative design suggested by Caracelli and Greene (1997) where the evaluator uses “different methodologies, from different paradigms, in sequence with the results of each informing the next stage of data collection and interpretation” (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004, p. 320). The mixed method iterative design will improve the validity of the findings, and assure the involvement of the participants (the stakeholders) during all stages of the evaluation.

Students will be interviewed during the first stage of the evaluation to collect quantitative and qualitative data compiled from the following questions:

1. Why did the student choose the MAEE program at UPRM?
2. What does the student perceive as the strengths of the program?
3. How satisfied is the student with the program?
4. Which option did the student choose- Plan I (Thesis), or Plan III (Non-Thesis)?
5. Why did the student choose that option?
6. What is the student’s perception of the option not chosen?
7. What does the student perceive as the major objectives of the program?
8. Does the student feel that these perceived objectives are being fulfilled by the program?
9. What are the student’s professional or academic goals upon completion of the program?
10. Does the student believe that Primary and/or Secondary Teacher education and certification should be offered within the MAEE Program?

After responding to the above-mentioned questions, the evaluators will ask the graduate
students to evaluate the program’s objectives stated in both the initial 1979 proposal, and its 1981 revision. Using the Likert-scale items of measurement (agree – strongly disagree), the students will assess their attitudes toward the program’s objectives and follow-up with a qualitative explanation to justify their reasons.

The objectives that will be addressed and measured quantitatively are listed in the Department of English, Master of Arts in Teaching Proposal (1979), and are the following:

A. To raise the level of English skills of the Puerto Rican [elementary and secondary] students (p. 4).

B. To increase the supply of exceptionally well-trained English teachers, creating a core of such teachers who will be able to direct other teachers and the system in general toward solutions to our specific problem (p. 7)

C. To provide a basis for cooperative effort between the University of Puerto Rico and the Department of Public Instruction (p. 11).

D. To further improve undergraduate education at RUM (Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez) by the presence of the graduate program (p. 12).

E. To increase the fund of theoretical and empirical knowledge of language analysis and language acquisition in the Puerto Rican context (p. 14).

The interviews with the current MAEE graduate students will help to establish a profile of the present MAEE graduate students, determine their general attitudes towards the program, and aid in identifying and defining the anticipated behaviors that validate the program’s objectives during the second phase of the evaluation.

In phase two, the site visit and observation, the researchers will visit each of the graduate classrooms in the following education and pedagogy courses: Foundations of English Education (EING 6005), Second Language Acquisition (INGL 6020), Models for Teaching Literature (INGL 6009), and Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Materials and Testing (INGL 6010). The evaluators will be “complete observer[s], making no effort to blend in with the group, but instead focusing on carefully observing the verbal and nonverbal cues of the participants”
(Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004, p. 338). During observation, the evaluators will record detailed notes of what they see is occurring in the classroom. They will note the context of instruction and its relationship to each course’s objectives; the behaviors, attitudes, and interaction between the students and the teacher; the dynamics of the group, and the general atmosphere of the class. This qualitative information will help the evaluator corroborate the program’s objectives to the observed behaviors, and uncover any common themes that are present within the courses.

The final phase of evaluation will consist of a quantitative survey distributed to all MAEE graduate students based on the responses, behaviors, and themes presented in the two previous phases. So as to assure the opportunity for students to reflect their personal viewpoints, suggestions, attitudes, and values impartially and anonymously, two graduate students (who have completed the course curriculum and are working on their theses) will administer the questionnaire to the students. The survey will ask students to rate the program, its specific objectives, the coursework, and the program’s overall applicability to students’ professional goals using the Likert 5-point scale, and multiple-choice items. This descriptive analysis will supply quantitative data to corroborate and validate the information provided in the first two phases of the evaluation.

**Reporting Procedures**

Once the data has been collected, compiled, and analyzed by the evaluators, the initial findings will be presented to the six members of the departmental Graduate Committee in an informal meeting. A description of the evaluation’s purpose, goals, plan, methodology, data collection, and findings will be narrated to the committee, and the committee members’ comments, recommendations, and feedback will be noted. In this way, the evaluators and the committee will have the opportunity to join forces, and establish a consensus for structuring, organizing, and presenting the final report to the department faculty.

After meeting with the Graduate Committee members, the evaluators will prepare their final report acknowledging the Graduate Committee members’ recommendations. The final
report will be prepared in two formats: one comprehensive color-coded report with a brief executive summary included in the report; and one executive abstract, a condensed version of the report “that contains major findings and recommendations” (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004, p. 384). This way, faculty members have the option of reading the evaluation in its entirety or reviewing the evaluation’s focus through the executive summary. Copies of both formats will be made available in the Department of English for review prior to the presentation date.

The final report will be presented by the evaluators to the entire Department of English faculty, and complemented with visual slides. The report will describe and narrate the evaluation process to the faculty, and convey the overall findings and recommendations. All positive findings will be reported prior to the negative ones, as recommended by Fitzpatrick, Worthen, & Sanders (2004). The presentation will be “communicated as carefully, sensitively, and professionally as possible” (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004, p. 395), with the opportunity for informal discussion during the presentation. The unconstrained style of presentation will allow members of the audience the opportunity to interact informally with questions and answers, and encourage increased awareness and reception to the recommended program modifications.

Implementation of Report Recommendations

The faculty of the Department of English will vote on the recommendations provided by the evaluators after the findings have been presented. The evaluators, as integral members of the faculty will vote with the faculty on accepting or rejecting amendments, modifications, or reformulations to the program. Majority vote will determine the administration of any program adjustments.

Assessment of the Evaluation

All phases of the evaluation will adhere to the AEA Guiding Principles for Evaluators, standards that uphold “systematic inquiry, professional development, honesty, respect, and concern for society” (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004, p. 449). This is intended to strengthen the evaluators’ and the evaluation’s authority and relevance. In addition, prior to the
report presentation, a summative metaevaluation will be conducted by an external source to review, monitor, and verify the evaluation design, instruments and procedures, and judge the final report. This will assure that the evaluation is constructed competently, documented accurately, and presented successfully.

The original purpose of the MAEE program of UPRM does not parallel its present condition. The formative evaluation of the MAEE Program at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez is intended to enlighten, inform, and increase the awareness of the faculty about the issues that directly affect its principal stakeholders, the graduate students, to produce a more current, coherent, consistent, and clearly defined policy.
References

Department of English, University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez. (1979, October). *Proposal: Master of arts in teaching.* (Available from the Office of Graduate Studies, University of Puerto Rico, PO Box 9020, Mayagüez, PR 00681-9020).