

Holding Up the Mirror: CPED Rubric Self-Study as Deliberate Improvement Work

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ABSTRACT

Engaging in self-study enables organizations to evaluate their current performance, strengths, and weaknesses. This essay discusses how we, as faculty members in the Education Doctorate (EdD) program at Marymount University, collected and analyzed data for two iterations of the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework® Impact Self-Study Project as part of deliberate program improvement. Specifically, we examine how we used the CPED Guiding Principles Implementation Rubric and CPED Framework Impact Rubric to reflectively identify gaps in our instructional practices and processes, how we acted on those findings, and the evidence of cultural shift that resulted. Central to this culture is the intentional integration of feedback from multiple stakeholders, including faculty, students, alumni, dissertation mentors, and program leadership. This collaborative spirit of growth continues to inspire us as we push forward, always *looking inward* and striving to learn and evolve. We hope that our experience will resonate with others as a starting point for their own reflection and engagement in self-study.

KEYWORDS

reflection, self-study, program improvement, cultural shift

In 2022, the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) invited member institutions to participate in a pilot study designed to deepen the understanding of the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework® Impact rubrics. Marymount University's School of Education enthusiastically contributed to this initiative. When the call came in 2024 to join a collaborative self-study team for a multiple-case study, we knew we wanted to continue our participation in the project. What unfolded across these two studies was not simply an evaluation of program alignment, but a reflective journey revealing how CPED principles moved from implicit program design to explicit program culture. This essay traces that journey.

Marymount University is a comprehensive Catholic university guided by the traditions of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. It is a community that values diversity and focuses on a holistic

education. The Education Doctorate (EdD) in Leadership and Organizational Innovation remains true to this mission and is strategically designed to generate, transform, and apply professional knowledge and leadership practices. A proud member of the CPED community since 2021, Marymount's EdD program is an asynchronous online program that incorporates multiple supports to humanize the online doctoral experience and ensure the success of our online learners. We've had the privilege of sharing our insights on various topics through multiple CPED presentations (Azevedo et al., 2023; Crystle et al., 2025) as well as through recent publications (Crystle et al., 2024; Hauth et al., 2024). At the heart of this success is a culture of self-reflection and self-study, principles grounded in the work of Schon (1983) that drives our ongoing growth as educators.



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The First Study: Discovering the Gap Between Practice and Perception

Our initial 2022 self-study process was comprehensive and multifaceted. Following CPED Framework© Impact Rubric guidance, we used the tools as a self-assessment mechanism - a mirror for program learning - rather than a compliance checklist. We gathered data from a wide range of internal sources, including handbooks, syllabi, meeting agendas, and an audit of our Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) courses. Focus group interviews were conducted with current students, program alumni, and faculty members. Marymount University rated itself at the Emerging level in three of four CPED Framework© domains. The faculty demonstrated strong familiarity with CPED language and design concepts. Students, however, could not consistently identify CPED membership or articulate CPED principles. Course syllabi did not explicitly reference principle alignment. Dissertation structures reflected CPED in spirit but not in visible form. As faculty reviewed internal documents, mentoring structures, student work, and alumni experiences, a new realization surfaced. The process became less about asking, *Do we align with CPED?* and more about recognizing, *Where do the principles already live in our program and where have we failed to name them?* The rubrics were helping us articulate a culture we had intentionally built but had not fully made visible. This finding reframed the work ahead. The issue was not curricular change but communicative coherence. The faculty realized that students experienced CPED principles implicitly but could not discuss them explicitly. Without explicit naming, students could not transfer the CPED Framework© into their professional identities.

These realizations were incredibly valuable, fueling subsequent reflection and conversations among faculty, dissertation mentors, and program leaders. We began to consider how we could make CPED alignment more visible, more coherent, and more useful for students throughout their doctoral journeys. This led to the decision to embed principle alignment directly into the architecture of each course through the Canvas LMS. Weekly course overviews were revised to clearly display which principles were emphasized, and students were given opportunities to see how their learning across courses formed a coherent CPED-informed progression. At the same time, faculty engaged in sustained dialogue to reach consensus on how each course aligned with specific CPED principles.

This work was both intentional and inclusive, with our program director dedicating time for full-time and adjunct faculty to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaboration. This work was deeply beneficial. Shared agreement reduced the likelihood that students would encounter the principles unevenly depending on instructor style or course emphasis. It also ensured that integration would remain durable as courses evolved and faculty roles shifted. Mentoring practices also became part of this reflection. Conversations about the role of dissertation mentors highlighted how mentoring and advising were not peripheral supports but central ways students encountered CPED in practice. None of these changes were dramatic overhauls. They were thoughtful refinements that clarified what had long been philosophically present in the program.

The Second Study: Evidence of Cultural Shift

When we returned to this work as part of the 2024 CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project, we utilized the same data sources mentioned earlier, along with

additional data gleaned from Marymount-affiliated CPED Convening presentations, faculty publications, and alumni survey feedback. This evidence was compiled and submitted to CPED along with self-scored ratings. Internally, the lead researcher prepared a summative manuscript for program use. The difference in our results was immediately noticeable. We were able to objectively rate ourselves at Full Integration on the elements within the CPED Framework Impact© Rubric and one element - Faculty state and provide evidence that the CPED Framework© influences their pedagogical practice - achieved the Exemplar rating.

The explicit incorporation of CPED Principles and Framework© in syllabi, within Canvas modules and other university publications, and in our pedagogical practices was our standout strength. A striking difference was in the language participants used during focus groups. In conversations with students and alumni, phrases such as Scholarly Practitioner, Problem of Practice, and Inquiry as Practice emerged naturally. Participants described how these ideas shaped the way they approached leadership, addressed complex challenges, collaborated across differences, and made decisions within their organizations. They connected their Dissertations in Practice to the principles without needing to be prompted and spoke about their growth not only in terms of knowledge gained but in terms of identity developed. Submitting our findings to CPED and taking the extra step to synthesize them into an internal working document enabled us to gauge our progress thus far and outline next steps for continuous improvement. Participating in the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project also offered an invaluable opportunity to build meaningful connections with faculty from other institutions. We exchanged ideas, shared strategies for improvement, and discovered new ways to refine our practices. This collaborative spirit of growth continues to inspire us as we push forward, always *looking inward* and striving to learn and evolve.

As we reflected across both self-studies, one realization became increasingly clear: the structures we designed to support students were not simply thoughtful program features, but the primary ways in which CPED principles were already being lived throughout the program. In this spirit of collaborative growth, we offer encouragement to others who may be considering undertaking self-study but aren't sure where to begin. In the following sections, we offer a glimpse into some high-impact student experiences stemming from assignments and structures that we implemented over the years, all intentionally designed with CPED principles and learner support in mind. We hope that they might resonate with those needing a starting point for their own programmatic reflection. We begin by sharing a critical course assignment - a passion project proposal.

Looking Inward: Partnering Passion Project Proposal

We use the term *critical assignment* to describe substantial research papers and projects embedded throughout our doctoral courses. Each is intentionally aligned to at least one CPED principle. As we mapped these assignments to the principles, the resulting matrix evolved into a reflective tool within our self-study process. By looking closely at how assignments embodied the program's values, we were able to examine our practices with greater intentionality. In this way, the matrix served as a practical entry point for looking



inward and considering how well our curriculum reflected our stated commitments.

One assignment that consistently drew our attention during this reflective process was the *Partnering Passion Project Proposal*. It exemplifies Principle 4, which calls programs to “provide field-based opportunities to analyze problems of practice and use multiple frames to develop meaningful solutions” (CPED, 2009, para. 4). The assignment invites students to engage in contextualized learning experiences (Nygaard, 2023) through asset-based tasks. Students begin by reflecting on organizational or community needs that are personally meaningful to them. From there, they develop a comprehensive proposal designed to initiate, strengthen, evaluate, and sustain partnerships that address those needs.

The design of the assignment also reflects differentiated learning approaches (Tomlinson, 2017). Students choose the issues that matter most to them and determine how they will frame and present their proposals. In doing so, they draw upon their own professional knowledge, cultural backgrounds, and lived experiences. Through this assignment, we observed how employing multiple frames can create learning opportunities that are both relevant and equitable for doctoral practitioners.

Discovering the Gap

While we knew this critical assignment to be strongly aligned with Principle 4, our first self-study revealed a gap between our intentions and participants’ perceptions. Interviews with students and alumni did not clearly reflect the connection we believed was evident. Rather than assuming the alignment was obvious, we asked ourselves how effectively we were helping students recognize and articulate the field-based nature of the work they were doing. In the initial self-study, we rated our alignment with Principle 4 as Emerging. This prompted a closer examination of how the principle was communicated and reinforced within the course. In response, we made several adjustments: explicit references to CPED principles were incorporated into the Canvas LMS assignment page, synchronous teaching sessions and office hours included conversations about the purpose of the assignment, and instructor feedback on discussion boards and milestone submissions intentionally highlighted the connection between the work students were doing and the broader principle, analyzing problems of practice using multiple frames, guiding it.

As we continued to observe and reflect on student experiences, new insights surfaced organically. During Dissertation in Practice (DiP) presentations, candidates are asked to reflect on two or three assignments in the program that had the greatest impact on their learning. We track these selections internally. Over time, the *Partnering Passion Project Proposal* appeared repeatedly in students’ reflections as a meaningful and inspiring experience. Even more unexpectedly, graduates began sharing anecdotes about taking their proposals beyond the classroom. Because the assignment was designed as a proposal, we had not previously considered the possibility that students might continue the work beyond the planning stage.

Acting on Findings

These realizations prompted further reflection among the faculty. As we recognized that some students and alumni were extending their projects into real-world implementation, we began to consider how the program might acknowledge and learn from these

practitioner-driven efforts. One step has been to highlight several projects through the program’s social media platforms as a way of honoring student work and illustrating the kinds of community impact that can emerge from the assignment. In addition, a faculty member began collecting data from students who carried their proposals into practice. These reflections and outcomes continue to inform revisions to the course.

In the next iteration of the course, selected projects will be shared as exemplars to illustrate possible trajectories for the work. At the same time, we will communicate clearly that implementation beyond the proposal stage is not an expectation of the assignment. Rather, the purpose remains reflective inquiry into Problems of Practice and thoughtful design of potential solutions. This line of reflection has also extended into scholarship. A manuscript examining the role of passion projects in doctoral preparation is currently in development. Students and alumni whose work informed the study will have the opportunity to participate as coauthors should the manuscript be accepted for publication. In this way, the self-study process has not only informed program improvement but also opened space for collaborative inquiry with our graduates.

Evidence of Cultural Shift

The *Partnering Passion Project Proposal* is a structured journey from reflection, to research, to action. During the period between our two self-studies, we intentionally refined how Principle 4 was integrated and discussed within the course. In interviews conducted during the most recent self-study, participants spoke with a level of clarity not present before. As one student explained, “My passion project ... I’m in the thick of it now ... There are so many aspects of the design that I’m using at work.” As a result, we rated our alignment with Principle 4 at Full Integration in the latest self-study.

Many have self-reported extending their proposals into full implementation. While still in the doctoral program, one student developed a comprehensive set of accessible Artificial Intelligence (AI) resources and personalized training sessions for university faculty members to increase awareness and readiness for AI tools. An alumna created a professional development program to support authentic co-teaching and collaborative planning at the elementary school level. Another alumna created *Raise Your Hand*, a web-based tool that allows students to select an element within the web page of an online course and provide contextual feedback. The tool enables asynchronous, in-context discussion about specific course content. Students are, in essence, given the ability to *raise their hand* while working through online content. This tool was piloted in our program and is now in ongoing use in one of the doctoral courses. A final example is a student-led teen empowerment club at a vocational high school designed to raise awareness, promote open communication, and provide leadership and peer support among teens.

Reflecting on these examples during the self-study process allowed us to see the assignment differently. What began as a proposal-based learning experience has, for some students, become a catalyst for meaningful community engagement. Our students have become empowered to notice needs in the community and respond with thoughtful, evidence-informed action. Their passion, diligence, research, and comprehensive approach take their *Partnering Passion Project Proposals* from academic exercise into existence for community impact.

Looking Inward: Writing Support

Like other doctoral programs across the United States, we serve students who have dynamic professional and personal lives, making it difficult to “allot time to write” (Silvia, 2019, p. 12). Many return to school after decades of career-building and claim to be out of touch or to have lost their academic skills. To make matters more challenging, many adult learners have negative experiences with research and academic writing that, at times, hinder their ability to read and write consistently (Torrance et al., 1999). Students are indoctrinated early in school that one has the “gift” to write or not; yet we know that “writing is a skill, not a gift” (Silvia, 2019, p. 6). Even those who never faced challenges with their writing may suddenly find academic writing at the doctoral level difficult (Starke-Meyerring, 2011). Given the considerable challenges doctoral students face in writing and research, it is no surprise that about half of prospective doctoral candidates do not advance beyond the all-but-dissertation stage (Jairam & Kahl, 2012). Overall, doctoral students report feeling socially isolated and having little support systems to navigate the doctoral journey (Rigler et al., 2017). These facts compel more than programmatic concern; they demand reflection.

Discovering the Gap

The *Write Up! Institute* was developed from an intentional process of looking inward. After our initial self-study, Marymount University faculty began attending to the literature, to patterns in student writing, to alumni narratives, and to our own doctoral journeys. We heard the same stories, experiences, and fears from our own learners. We were adamant that our students would not be another statistic. Driven by our social justice education philosophy and mission, faculty further leaned into the discomfort the data analysis revealed. The result was the creation of a professional learning experience and community. *Write Up!* is a progressive doctoral writing and research learning ecosystem that seeks to address students’ challenges and fears through an equity- and asset-based lens.

Acting on Findings

We knew we could do better in addressing the inequities and systemic barriers by rejecting outdated practices. As a faculty, we were committed to mitigating these challenges by providing comprehensive support beyond a single course or faculty mentor and building a community of practice to support emerging scholar-practitioners’ writing and research. We offer these services not from a deficit model that traditional writing centers embody as places to remediate (Carino, 1995). Instead, *Write Up!* provides opportunities for all members of the learning community who are willing to learn, grow, and further deepen their scholarship.

Faculty volunteer their expertise and time to support the mission of *Write Up!* which is to co-construct a safe learning environment where experimentation and playfulness are encouraged, while also emphasizing the intentional facilitation of learning (Knowles, 1950). *Write Up!* offers many services, including Labs, Scholar Block Parties, Writing Sprints, and Summer Writing Challenges. In addition, the *Write Up!* retreat is an optional yet unique opportunity for students and faculty to be in-person during a two-day intensive writing experience (Azevedo et al., 2023). Each offering provides a unique learning space and an opportunity for learners to deeply engage in topics such as developing healthy writing habits, quantitative methodology, or telling stories with data.

Evidence of Cultural Shift

What made this a pivotal moment in our program development was that *Write Up!* adopted a learner-centered approach and emphasizes professional development. Students who use the services at various entry points consistently articulate that they feel seen and that their struggles are normalized through participating in community writing sessions. Additionally, they learn to protect writing time and gain accountability partners who support their scholarly journey. Alumni testimonials describe *Write Up!* as “transformational,” “exactly what I needed,” and a pivotal intervention that reduced isolation and reframed academic writing as a shared scholarly practice rather than a solitary task. These accounts affirmed that doctoral writing support must be designed not as remediation, but as a core component of practitioner preparation grounded in care, intentional design, and community.

Though *Write Up!* aligns with all CPED guiding principles, Principle 3 is salient and demonstrates our commitment to diverse, collaborative learning environments that develop common communication skills among scholar-practitioners. Through the flattening of higher education’s hierarchical model and sharing of knowledge, students have access to synchronous and asynchronous academic supports and resources that are uplifting, professional, and engage students as members of the academic community. No matter which *Write Up!* offering learners take advantage of, they leave having made progress in their studies, feeling encouraged by the support, and recognizing that they are not alone in their doctoral journey.

Write Up! did not manifest from the top. It emerged from grassroots efforts led by junior faculty and staff within an open and creative context. Administrators took calculated risks and created space for innovation. Hopefully, this example serves as an inspiration to faculty who too often believe that compliance in the name of tradition is the path to professional success. We learned that this path does not serve students and certainly does not improve our own instructional practices and scholarship. This can serve as a lesson to step into the unknown, take risks, build, and innovate.

Looking Inward: Dissertation Mentorship

Across both CPED self-studies, one structure consistently surfaced as an example of alignment between program values and student experience: dissertation mentorship. While mentorship has long been embedded in doctoral education, our reflective inquiry revealed that the way it is structured, named, and enacted plays a critical role in whether CPED design concepts are experienced implicitly or understood explicitly by students. Mentorship, as a concept, is not new. The word “mentor” dates to Homer’s *The Odyssey*, in which the character Mentor serves as an advisor and guide to Odysseus’s son, Telemachus (Garvey, 2023). The model of dissertation mentorship originated with the 19th century German research university which centered the hierarchical, master scholar-apprentice paradigm (Flora, 2017). While doctoral mentorship models have continued to evolve, particularly with the growth of online programs and e-mentorship (Black, 2017), our self-studies compelled us to examine how deeply hierarchical assumptions still shaped our own practices.

Discovering the Gap

Since launching our EdD program in 2020, our dissertation mentorship model has evolved alongside our willingness to critically



examine it. In our efforts to consistently look inward, we committed to centering student voice and engaging in ongoing program evaluation to humanize our online doctoral mentorship experience (Hauth, 2024). In the initial design of our mentorship model, we decided to move away from the term *Dissertation Chair*. Instead, we decided to intentionally use language to reframe the traditional hierarchy associated with dissertation mentorship. Program leadership branded our dissertation mentors as *Lead Doctoral Faculty Mentors* (LDFMs). This shift was more than semantic; it represented an early effort to deconstruct traditional power dynamics and align with CPED values of partnership, inquiry, and practitioner growth (Hauth et al., 2024).

Our inaugural cohort of doctoral students started with about 30 students, and the earliest iteration of our LDFM model was made up of full-time faculty, a handful of adjuncts, and other university colleagues. By Cohort 3, the number of enrolled students had nearly tripled, and we knew that our original ad hoc model for dissertation mentorship was no longer sustainable. Knowledge gained from our initial self-study prompted deeper reflection about how mentorship functioned not only as a logistical support, but as a primary site where students encountered CPED values in practice.

Acting on Findings

Beginning with the third cohort of students, we intentionally redesigned the LDFM program to be appropriate for and sustainable with our enrollment growth. We recruited a diverse pool of scholars from beyond Marymount University and trained them specifically to serve as dissertation mentors. We developed comprehensive onboarding processes so they would understand Marymount and our culture, including structured training and resources. Over time, we have refined the program to include a full Canvas support site of resources, semesterly training, and structured touch points or engagement opportunities throughout the semester.

Through both iterations of the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project, we recognized a pressing problem to be addressed within our program. Faculty focus group data indicated that students were not always equipped to engage in mentorship as a reciprocal partnership. Many approached the relationship through the lens of traditional hierarchy, and there was confusion about roles. We realized that while we had built resources and tools for LDFMs, we also needed to set and manage expectations for our students.

In response, we developed a new LDFM Roadmap resource - a comprehensive guide for students. The Roadmap articulates the expectations, roles, and relational norms within CPED-informed dissertation mentorship. We also revised our mentor-mentee match survey. Beyond research topics and methodology, we added questions to gauge their confidence with academic writing, their working style, and possible barriers to success. These questions emerged from listening carefully to student experiences and have strengthened our match process, allowing us to equip LDFMs with more knowledge of their mentees, fostering more intentional and equitable partnerships.

Evidence of Cultural Shift

By looking inward, our dissertation mentorship program has evolved over the past five years. Each iteration enabled us to make intentional improvements in the program. Mentorship has since

become one of the primary ways students encounter CPED in practice. We have learned a lot by holding up the mirror, and we realize we still have more room for learning and growth. As we look ahead, we aspire to continue serving as thought-leaders in dissertation mentorship, moving doctoral education from apprenticeship toward authentic partnership.

Looking Inward: Alumni Engagement

Through self-study reflection, we have come to see that students' relationships with our program do not have to end when they defend their dissertations. Instead, these relationships can evolve into sustained and reciprocal connections. The intentional relationship-building cultivated throughout the program continues to shape how alumni embody CPED principles as they engage with their communities and our university.

Discovering the Gap

Building upon the Emerging rating of the initial self-study, we reflected on ways to strengthen alumni's connection to, and ability to give back to, our program. Initial alumni focus group data revealed a weakness in their abilities to connect specific principles to their dissertation problem of practice and their continued professional post-graduation work. This gap encouraged us to bolster students' opportunities to reflect on the principles addressed in their DiPs while they were still candidates. We embedded a reflective question in the DiP rubric in the final course of the program. This was not an add-on; it was an intentional pause, an invitation for candidates to look inward before crossing the finish line. We determined that this was a crucial first step in helping students explicitly connect their research to the principles. Without doing so, we could not expect them to continue connecting their professional practice to the principles and to embrace their ability to give back to our program.

We asked students to share their perspective on CPED principles as they related to their DiPs. Their responses, some of which are summarized in Table 1, became mirrors for us as faculty, as we used deductive analysis to establish key indicators from program and DiP evidence. This practice continues with each graduating cohort, turning program completion into a site of shared reflection and institutional learning.

Acting on Findings

While strengthening students' connections within their DiP reflections is an important first step, we remain proactive in carrying this through to alumni's consciousness. As we continue to look inward, we recognize that graduates should remain active supporters of the program while advancing the ongoing generation, transformation, and application of professional knowledge (Oetjen et al., 2023). Embracing Principle 6, we now provide opportunities for alumni to mentor current students, articulate the institution's values, and foster a culture of enduring connectedness. Positioned as scholar-practitioners, they leverage their research to address the complex challenges related to equity and social justice. In doing so, they engage authentically in Principles 3 and 6 by collaborating and communicating across diverse groups, building sustainable partnerships that generate innovative solutions in alignment with the program's mission.

Evidence of Cultural Shift

During the 2024 CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project, we found that students' DiPs consistently address complex, persistent problems of practice related to Principle 1, such as systemic racism, gender inequity, disability inclusion, first-generation college student experiences, inequitable social-emotional learning implementation, nonprofit workplace trauma, and global access to education. Alumni focus groups echoed this sentiment, also reporting that a defining feature of our program is its explicit framing around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice. The effects of this scholarship carry over into their respective fields by advocating for new legislation, organizing equity-focused summits, and providing training to help organizations work more equitably with their people. Alumni focus groups and surveys report that the program's commitment to inclusivity within course design, readings, and assignments shaped not only their research topics but also their professional identities as leaders committed to equitable systems. As a result, equity is understood both as a moral commitment and as a way of doing the work, in ways that closely

mirror CPED's focus on ethical, justice-centered inquiry. Principle 2 calls for the preparation of leaders who use knowledge to create positive change. While doctoral students, alumni drew on their own expertise and engaged in rigorous research, generating actionable insights that helped them design dissertations that drove meaningful change. Now alumni continue to draw upon their professional roles as educators, counselors, nonprofit leaders, and administrators to conduct inquiries within real-world contexts.

Alumni consistently make the commitment to give back to the program in a variety of ways. Thirty-five graduates now serve as LDFMs, six serve as adjunct faculty, and one alumna serves as a full-time visiting professor. Graduates facilitate workshops through the Write Up! Institute, participate in writing sessions such as scholar block parties and structured writing sprints, and establish informal mentoring relationships with current students. An active alumni network on LinkedIn and quarterly newsletters sustain camaraderie within this community. Alumni are co-constructors of the program's evolution. Their presence shapes how future scholarly practitioners are prepared.

Table 1. CPED Alignment Matrix: Evidence of Principle Integration based on 10 DiP reflections

CPED principle	Key Indicators	Program & DiP Evidence	Doctoral Candidate Quotes
Equity, Ethics, and Social Justice	Justice-oriented inquiry; ethical research; addressing systemic inequities	Dissertations addressing systemic racism, gender equity, first-generation college students (FGCS), students with disabilities (SWDs), nonprofit trauma, inclusive curriculum design, and justice-centered leadership preparation	"Equity, ethics, and social justice in addressing persistent problems of practice."
Scholarly Practitioner Leadership	Practitioner inquiry; leadership grounded in practice	Alumni serving as leadership development faculty mentors (LDFMs), adjuncts, and visiting faculty; dissertations drawing on insider perspectives; leadership frameworks for organizational change	"As a Scholarly Practitioner, I approached this research with a commitment to improving systems."
Collaboration and Communication	Stakeholder engagement; partnerships; shared responsibility	Research engaging families, educators, and nonprofit staff; alumni workshops, writing retreats, mentoring activities, and active alumni networks	"Giving all stakeholders... an opportunity to contribute their perspectives."
Field-Based Inquiry and Problems of Practice	Real-world contexts; multiple frames of analysis	Dissertations conducted in classrooms, schools, and nonprofit organizations, graduation reflections emphasizing applied knowledge; alumni mentoring doctoral candidates	"Field-based opportunities to analyze problems of practice and use multiple frames."
Integration of Theory, Research, and Practice	Bridging theory and application; systematic inquiry	Use of socio-ecological theory, cultural theory, coaching models, and the development of practical tools and leadership frameworks	"Translating cultural theory into practical tools."
Generation and Use of Professional Knowledge	Actionable findings; continuous improvement	Dissertation recommendations for practice, alumni publications, and teaching, sustained alumni engagement supporting program improvement	"Providing actionable recommendations for future research and daily practice."

Note. CPED = Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate; DiP = Dissertation in Practice; FGCS = First-generation college students; SWDs = Students with disabilities

Conclusion

Marymount's journey with the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project illustrates how sustained self-study can move a program beyond alignment toward deeper integration into its everyday practice and culture. The rubrics have helped us clarify, communicate, and strengthen practices that were already present while also highlighting areas where continued growth is needed. Students, faculty, LDFMs, and alumni increasingly speak and act through the lens of CPED principles, yet we know that there is still important work to do in making those connections more visible and cohesive across the learning experience. The most meaningful outcome of self-study is not a rubric rating but the evidence that students and alumni describe their professional identities through a CPED lens and carry CPED principles into their professional lives.

The insights gained from these self-studies invite us to continue reflecting, refining, and digging deeper as we strengthen how CPED principles are woven throughout our program.

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