

Institutional Constraints and Methodological Ideals: Lessons Learned from the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework©

Impact Self-Study Project Implementation Process

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ABSTRACT

Rowan University participated in the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project from September 2024 until May 2025, led by the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). We joined CPED in 2017 and implemented a new CPED-informed EdD curriculum. We conducted a self-study to assess the alignment between our program and the CPED Framework©, using the CPED Guiding Principles Implementation Rubric, to inform program improvement. In this essay, we share our experiences implementing the self-study through the lens of LaBoskey's (2004) framework for self-study methodology. We describe challenges we faced during the self-study and provide recommendations for CPED member institutions and CPED.

KEYWORDS

self-study, CPED Framework©, faculty engagement, organizational learning

The market for Education Doctorate (EdD) programs has been rapidly growing, particularly for fully online EdD programs (e.g., Becker & Saurez, 2022). For example, the number of such programs has increased from 139 in 2020 to 162 in 2024 nationwide (Mitani, 2025). This rapid market growth may be a welcoming trend for EdD program faculty because it creates opportunities to expand their programs and prepare more educational leaders to make an impact in the field.

At the same time, rapid expansion raises concerns about program quality. Economic theory suggests that when many new providers enter a growing market, prospective students may have difficulty distinguishing between high- and low-quality programs because they often lack complete information about program rigor, faculty support, faculty research, or the dissertation process. This market condition is called asymmetric information (e.g., Varian, 2014). This condition allows lower-quality programs to attract many students alongside higher-quality ones, potentially weakening trust in the market as a whole. In a market with asymmetric information, prospective students may become hesitant to pay a premium because they cannot know which programs are high quality, thereby lowering the price they are willing to pay. This makes high-quality programs more expensive to sustain, as they need more resources to maintain quality and may push them out of the market. This is

called adverse selection (e.g., Akerlof, 1970), and the market could be filled with low-quality programs in the long run.

The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) serves as a safeguard and a market signal in this regard. The work of CPED began in 2007, with support from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, to redefine the education doctorate, and it offers a Framework© to help its member institutions redesign their EdD curricula (CPED, n.d.-a). CPED membership has grown to over 160 schools and colleges of education, including those outside the country (CPED, n.d.-b). The CPED Framework© provides structural boundaries that prevent programs from becoming overly theoretical (in other words, less practical) and low-rigor, weak programs. Its membership network, on the other hand, provides peer accountability and professional development opportunities that enable active engagement in continuous program improvement. Through these functions, CPED can send a positive signal about program quality to the EdD market and prospective students, helping to mitigate adverse selection, provided that the market and prospective students respond to that signal.

CPED recently invited its member institutions to participate in the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project launched in May 2024. Rowan University joined CPED in 2017 and implemented a new CPED-informed EdD curriculum in Fall 2021. The EdD program, where we, the authors of this article,



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This journal is published by Pitt Open Library Publishing.



impactinged.pitt.edu
Vol.11 No.4 (2026)

This journal is supported by the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate: A Knowledge Forum on the EdD (CPED) cpedinitiative.org

ISSN 2472-5889 (online)
DOI 10.5195/ie.2026.634

are program faculty members, voluntarily participated in the project after receiving approval from the Dean of the College of Education. Dr. Mitani was the chair of the Department of Educational Leadership, Administration, and Research during the project and has been an EdD faculty member since 2016. He is a quantitative researcher and conducts research in PreK-12 educational leadership and policy. Dr. Coaxum was the faculty coordinator of the EdD program during the project and is one of its founding faculty members in 1997. He is a qualitative researcher and conducts projects spanning PreK-20 educational leadership. Dr. Manning is an assistant professor of educational leadership and has also been a longtime EdD faculty member. She is a former district superintendent with extensive leadership experience.

We participated in the self-study project for two reasons. First, our curriculum revision work began in 2019 under the leadership of our former CPED delegate. Although we designed our new courses based on the CPED Framework®, we were not as familiar with it as we are now. In fact, faculty, including the authors of this essay, realized a gap in our understanding of the Problem of Practice after the 2023 CPED Convening. Moreover, while developing new courses, we retained content and concentration-specific courses without major changes. For these reasons, we approached the self-study with the expectation of some gaps. As our faculty members became more knowledgeable and discussed the CPED Framework® components (e.g., six guiding principles and design concepts) more regularly during the program meetings over time, we considered the self-study project a good opportunity to assess how closely the curriculum we developed years ago aligns with the Framework®. Second, since the implementation of the new curriculum in 2021, we have not had a chance to engage our students in a conversation about their learning experiences. We took this opportunity to gather students' feedback to improve the program.

As we conducted the self-study, we faced multiple challenges. Some were due to competing professional priorities, which constrained our ability to meaningfully engage EdD faculty members; others were due to our limited knowledge about the conceptual foundation of self-study. Still others were related more broadly to our program culture. In this essay, we reflect on our self-study implementation process and provide recommendations for CPED member institutions, whose program characteristics are similar to ours, and are considering conducting self-study in the future. We also provide recommendations for CPED to improve the self-study process.

DESCRIPTION OF ROWAN UNIVERSITY'S EDD PROGRAM

Our EdD in Educational Leadership program is designed to develop leaders who will make meaningful change in educational settings. The program emphasizes that the function of education is to foster academic achievement, social responsibility, personal responsibility, and social justice. It seeks to challenge EdD students' conceptions regarding the roles of leaders and change agents in educational institutions. Thus, the mission of the program is to inspire the conscious, deliberative practice of our students in eradicating inequity and fostering inclusive educational environments where teaching, learning, and achievement all thrive. This focus enables doctoral students to crystallize the connections between research, theory, and their professional leadership, so that they may be able to engage and transform the economic, social, and cultural

issues that are embedded in educational policies and practice. It is this mission, in tandem with the established goals of the program, that fosters a learning environment focused on the preparation of educational leadership.

Program Goals

Our program's goals are to:

1. provide doctoral candidates with opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills in leadership, organizations, change, and research necessary to be effective educational leaders in educational settings,
2. provide doctoral candidates with opportunities to demonstrate their ability as educational leaders to evaluate data and determine the needs of educational organizations, formulate solutions, implement plans to bring about needed changes, and evaluate resulting processes and solutions leading to a cycle of continuous improvement, and
3. establish a network of doctoral graduates who exercise a meaningful force on the improvement of education throughout a variety of communities in the region, including but not limited to, public and private school systems, higher education institutions, community colleges, government agencies, private sector educational organizations, and education within business and industry.

Curriculum

Our program is a fully online, 60-credit-hour program that uses a cohort model to enhance completion rates. There are 48 credit hours of required courses (14 courses) and 12 credit hours dedicated to the dissertation. The program utilizes an open cohort model that fosters a spirit of community, provides a peer support network, and helps maintain focus on program completion. Cohort members work closely with faculty throughout their coursework and dissertations to achieve the program goals listed above. Students choose from five specialization concentrations that include: PK-12, higher education, community college leadership, nurse educator, and technology in education.

The curriculum is anchored in four pillars: social justice leadership, inquiry as practice, organizational change and sustainability, and policy analysis. Courses are designed as eight-week modules, with students completing one course at a time. After completing the first four core courses in the program, students are eligible to take a Benchmark I exam, which is a formative and summative review of their progress. The curriculum also includes dissertation-embedded courses that help students transition into their dissertation projects by completing the first chapter during the coursework experience.

We implemented a new curriculum Fall 2021, informed by the CPED Framework®. The key program features include four inquiry courses (i.e., introduction to inquiry approaches, program evaluation, policy analysis, and improvement science), paired with theory courses, three leader-scholar community courses, which prepare students for dissertation research, and four dissertation models (i.e., improvement science, program evaluation, public scholarship, and traditional). As these features indicate, our new curriculum maintains the flavor of a traditional EdD program by keeping the traditional dissertation model, content-focused theory, and concentration-specific content courses. This aspect of the program reflects the



varying expertise and interests of our program faculty members regarding the CPED Framework© and, more broadly, the work of educational leadership preparation.

EdD Program Faculty Members

Our program faculty consists of 12 full-time faculty members and one ¾-time faculty member. Some of them teach courses across programs within the Department of Educational Leadership, Administration, and Research, including the Higher Education (master's level), School Administration (master's level), Leadership and Social Innovation (undergraduate level), and PhD in Education programs. Most faculty members have been engaged in curriculum development between 2019 and 2021, either developing new courses or updating existing ones, in line with the CPED Framework©. In this sense, most of our faculty members were (and are) familiar with the CPED Framework©, with varying degrees of understanding and buy-in. For example, core faculty members deeply engaged in the curriculum development process are more knowledgeable about the CPED Framework© and more likely to advocate for it. Some faculty members are more trained in traditional approaches and may need time to learn the inquiry approaches we teach.

Competing Programmatic Priority at the Time of Self-Study

During the self-study period, we anticipated upcoming curriculum proposals, driven by the faculty's interest in revising our curriculum to align with CPED principles. This shifting landscape led our EdD program faculty to prioritize curriculum alignment, placing the self-study in a secondary position. This situation influenced the kind of feedback and comments we received from the faculty after presenting the findings.

SELF-STUDY PROCESS AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Before describing our experience, we provide the conceptual foundation of self-study and reflective practice that informs our framework for this essay. Self-study offers practitioners a structured methodology to examine the alignment between their actions and their professional values and expectations. Rooted in reflective practice, action research, and practitioner inquiry, it has evolved into a methodology that supports systematic, evidence-based improvement (e.g., LaBoskey, 2004). Beyond merely identifying what Whitehead (1989) calls living contradictions and interrogating assumptions, the primary aim of self-study research is the tangible enhancement of practice; indeed, its success is judged by its contribution to the improvement of practice (Zeichner, 2007).

LaBoskey (2004) outlines four integral aspects of self-study methodology. First, it is aimed at improvement. The primary impetus is to understand practice to improve it, often by identifying and resolving living contradictions in which one's actions do not align with one's educational values. Second, it requires interaction at one or more points in the process to challenge personal biases and reframe thinking. Third, it employs mixed methods with qualitative methods as the primary. The practitioner collects data through such methods as journaling, interviews, focus groups, observations, and surveys to capture the complexity and particularity of their practice. Finally, it

requires formalizing the work to make it public for the professional community, allowing scrutiny and contributions to the broader knowledge base.

Research on reflective practice has expanded from an individual cognitive process to one shaped by relational, contextual, and critical factors. Scholars highlight how identity, authority, and institutional structures influence what practitioners notice and how they interpret their work. Kane et al. (2004), for example, describe multiple forms of reflection—technical, descriptive, dialogic, and critical—each deepening practitioners' understanding of their decisions and their impact.

Self-study in teacher education, for example, builds directly on this reflective tradition. While reflective practice emphasizes personal learning, self-study formalizes that learning through intentional design, multiple data sources, and collaborative critique (e.g., Kitchen et al., 2008; O'Dwyer et al., 2019; Richards & Ressler, 2016). It encourages practitioners to interrogate assumptions, surface tensions, and situate their experiences within broader sociocultural contexts, thereby strengthening the connection between individual reflection and collective professional knowledge.

Together, reflective practice and self-study form a coherent continuum. Reflective practice cultivates an inquiry-driven stance, and self-study transforms that stance into rigorous, public scholarship. Their integration supports scholarly practitioners committed to improving practice, advancing equity, and bridging the gap between lived experience and educational theory (Whitehead, 1989).

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CPED PRINCIPLES IMPLEMENTATION & FRAMEWORK© IMPACT SELF-STUDY PROJECT

Representatives from seven participating CPED member institutions attended the orientation meeting on June 17th, 2024, to review the self-study process and received the CPED Guiding Principles Implementation Rubric and CPED Framework Impact Rubric afterward. They regularly met and communicated with a professor emeritus at Johns Hopkins University from September 2024 until May 2025 to discuss the rubric, the self-study process, and the challenges and questions that they had. The professor guided and organized the multi-site self-study meetings and conducted the cross-case analysis after all participating institutions provided data.

Following the organizer's instructions, we began collecting data in October 2024 from multiple sources, including course syllabi, the EdD program handbook, EdD faculty members' publications, one focus-group interview with EdD faculty members, and three focus-group interviews with EdD students. We completed the self-study in early January 2025 and shared the results with the EdD faculty members at the January and February program meetings.

OUR REFLECTION ON PRACTICE

Through regular meetings with the project organizer and representatives from the other six member institutions, we conceptualized the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project as a collaborative self-study (e.g., Kitchen et al., 2008; O'Dwyer et al., 2019; Richards & Ressler, 2016), with the aim of engaging EdD faculty members in assessing the

alignment between our program and the CPED Framework®. However, competing professional priorities (e.g., research, teaching, and service), limited initial faculty engagement, and a tight self-study timeline prevented us from forming a collaborative self-study team. Furthermore, we could not include what is called external critical friends (e.g., O'Dwyer et al., 2019; Schuck & Russell, 2005) with similar reasons. Consequently, the first author primarily led the self-study with moderate engagement of a few faculty members.

By documenting this shift from a collaborative to a narrower group-self, we aim to critically reflect on the challenges of fostering interaction, sharing, and learning from the findings through the lens of LaBoskey's (2004) four characteristics of self-study methodology. To this end, we collected data from our EdD faculty members through a short survey in January and February 2026 (approved by the Institutional Review Board) to assess their views on the CPED Framework® and understand their experience with the self-study. For example, we asked them how aligned our current curriculum is with the CPED Framework®, whether the self-study results were informative, and what would motivate EdD faculty members to engage in the self-study in the future. Half of the faculty members responded to the survey (i.e., response rate = 50%). We connected our reflection with the survey data where appropriate.

Improvement-Aimed

As we described earlier, we took the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework® Impact Self-Study Project as an opportunity to identify a possible gap between the CPED Framework® and our curriculum and to improve our practice. Additionally, we expected a gap because our faculty members exhibited varying degrees of understanding of the CPED Framework® and because we retained content- and concentration-specific courses from the old curriculum without major changes. The CPED Guiding Principles Implementation Rubric and CPED Framework Impact Rubric enabled us to achieve the first part of the goal. Through program alignment assessment using the rubrics, we identified moderate discrepancies between the CPED Framework® and our curriculum. In the self-study research literature, these discrepancies are often referred to as a living contradiction (Whitehead, 1989). While we recognized these discrepancies as understandable given that our curriculum still maintains the flavor of the traditional EdD program, this self-study process served its primary function by making these tensions visible to the EdD faculty members (Whitehead, 1989).

However, our critical reflection on this aspect of the study reveals areas for further development in our identity as self-study researchers. First, LaBoskey (2004) argues that practitioners conducting a self-study should interrogate their own assumptions and biases and that the results of this interrogation guide their action plan for improvement. In our case, we did not formally investigate the underlying visions of the EdD program held by our faculty, which we believe limited our ability to reframe our understanding of the ideal program design that aligns with our mission. The survey respondents shared that they envision an ideal EdD program as one that offers field- and project-based learning opportunities, with a focus on social justice and equity, to connect theory with practice and develop as future educational leaders. They also underscored the importance of mastering collaborative techniques and addressing resistance to change. Their visions are well aligned with the CPED Principles 1, 3, and 4, and somewhat aligned with 5 and 6. This close alignment may

simply reflect a survey response bias. To the extent that non-respondents' visions differ from the CPED Framework®, we need to interrogate their underlying assumptions, as they should be part of our "self."

Second, although the hallmark of self-study is the implementation of responsive, immediate action, we were unable to successfully transition from the analysis phase to the implementation phase. One reason was the timing of the self-study, as we briefly described earlier. During the study period, we anticipated upcoming curriculum proposals to expand our program size. In fact, we submitted a curriculum proposal in January 2026 to change our credit requirements, develop new courses, and update existing courses. With this context, we were unsure whether we should make changes based solely on the self-study's results. Another reason was that some faculty members have different interpretations of the CPED Framework®. When we shared the findings with the EdD faculty members during the program meetings in January and February of 2025, we could not have substantive discussions and received only general feedback and comments. Lastly, we recall that implementing actions was not necessarily part of the primary purpose of the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework® Impact Self-Study Project. The focus was rather on assessing the rubrics usefulness.

To fully achieve the two goals (i.e., identifying the gap and improving our program), our next step must be to bridge the gap between our findings and actual programmatic change, ensuring that our self-study does not remain a static report but becomes a catalyst for active curriculum renewal (Richards & Ressler, 2016).

Interactive

In evaluating the interactive aspect of this project, we must acknowledge that this core characteristic was largely absent from the self-study process. LaBoskey (2004) emphasizes that a self-study should be interactive at one or more points in the process to challenge a practitioner's biases and move beyond private reflection. Because of the faculty's time constraints and their initial level of interest, we primarily led all aspects of the inquiry in an isolated environment. While we engaged faculty and students through focus groups to collect data, as guided by the project organizer's instructions, these interactions were extractive rather than collaborative. That is, they served as data points rather than members of a collaborative self-study team to learn from and with each other. In fact, three of the survey respondents indicated that their level of engagement was either a little or not at all because of a lack of time and the timing of the study. Consequently, we missed the opportunity to engage in dialogue and deliberation with our colleagues (LaBoskey, 2004; O'Dwyer et al., 2019) that is necessary to reframe our collective thinking and visions about the EdD program.

Furthermore, we could not include external critical friends who could provide a detached, outsider perspective to the interpretation that might have helped us identify and overcome our biases (LaBoskey, 2004; O'Dwyer et al., 2019). Additionally, we did not engage with the existing literature on the EdD and CPED, which could have validated our analysis. These were due primarily to our lack of knowledge about (or unfamiliarity with) self-study processes and time. Looking back, it would have helped us conduct the study if the CPED meetings had provided an overview of the conceptual foundation of self-study. We believe that these omissions kept our



inquiry localized, lacking what Taylor (1989, as cited in Bodone et al., 2004) calls “webs of interlocution” (p. 36), or a process in which our understanding of our practice is formed through continuous engagement with these significant others. Moving forward, we recognize that to transition this self-study from a small-group assessment to a more formal collaborative self-study, we need to build intentional space for collaborative critique and scholarly dialogue.

Multiple, Primary Qualitative Methods

The CPED Guiding Principles Implementation Rubric and CPED Framework Impact Rubric, along with instructions on data collection provided by the project organizer, guided our data collection. We gathered diverse qualitative evidence, including transcripts from faculty and current student focus groups, course syllabi, student handbooks, scholarly work, and program policies. These varied sources provided us with the “particulars of time, place, content, and persons” (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 826) that are essential for capturing and interrogating our assumptions and deepening our understanding of the program alignment. However, we realized that this approach functioned more as a structured program assessment (or evaluation) than a collaborative self-study, as we utilized the multiple methods to satisfy the rubric rather than to facilitate deep, group-level investigation, which is typical in self-study.

While writing this essay, we briefly reviewed the literature on self-study and soon realized that several functional self-study approaches, such as action research, narrative inquiry, and dialogue, were notably absent. As LaBoskey (2004) and Zeichner (2007) note, these methods are prevalent because they allow practitioners to interrogate their own living contradictions and hauntings (LaBoskey, 2004; Whitehead, 1989). However, because the CPED project meetings primarily focused on rubric-based data collection and analysis and we were not knowledgeable self-study researchers, we were unable to engage in the iterative processes of action and reflection that characterize the field. We view the absence of these aspects of self-study not as our failure, but rather as a reflection of the institutional and project-based constraints that pushed us to focus on completing data collection and reporting within the limited timeline.

To transition from a program assessment or evaluation to a collaborative self-study, we believe that our future practice should move beyond following the CPED Guiding Principles Implementation Rubric and CPED Framework Impact Rubric to employing these qualitative tools to contribute to improving our program alignment and design and to reframing ourselves (Zeichner, 2007).

Formalization and Sharing

In the final stage of the self-study process, we sought to share our findings with the entire EdD program faculty. LaBoskey (2004) asserts that practitioners need to formalize their work and share the results with their professional communities for “deliberation, further testing, and judgment” (p. 860). We initiated this process by presenting our ratings of program alignment based on the rubric during the January and February 2025 EdD program meetings and providing a link to the full results. However, our efforts were constrained by competing, dense program meeting agendas that often characterize our environments. Consequently, we were unable to engage in a substantive, in-depth discussion, receiving instead only general feedback that did not allow for a collective reframe of

our program design. Despite these challenges, interestingly, all survey respondents indicated that the results were either moderately or very informative.

Our formalization process was further constrained by a lack of integration with broader scholarship in educational leadership. LaBoskey (2004) and Zeichner (2007) emphasize that self-study should engage with professional literature to situate local findings within a wider context. Due to time constraints, limited knowledge of self-study methodology, and a primary focus on data collection and analysis, we did not engage with the existing literature on EdD programs. Additionally, the project did not include iterative testing and retesting of new design ideas; sharing was limited to a static report of current misalignments rather than a dynamic record of transformed program design. To fully realize this characteristic in the future, we believe the sharing process needs to evolve from a brief presentation into a sustained scholarly dialogue that informs both local programmatic change and the wider field of EdD programs.

Additional Thoughts

The challenges we faced in engaging our faculty collectively relate to organizational readiness (Weiner, 2009). When we began this work, we implicitly assumed that our faculty members would value and engage in this work and that we had collective change efficacy. However, these challenges suggest that we need to enhance our program faculty’s readiness by developing the necessary change valence and shared change efficacy for future self-study.

Our self-study research faced additional challenges rooted in the rubric’s criteria for rating our program. Our coding criteria were primarily based on the presence of CPED terminology, such as Problem of Practice and Dissertation in Practice, within course syllabi, focus groups, student handbooks, and other sources. This binary approach failed to capture the degree of conceptual integration or distinguish between a superficial mention and a robust pedagogical focus. For instance, one of the survey respondents noted that:

it’s the coherence around what items mean- just hav[ing] the words social justice or Problem of Practice, for example, in syllabi or assignments doesn’t tell us how well that work is done- and I’m not thinking [whether] we, as a faculty, have conceptual coherence around what constitutes social justice, or what robust approaches are to Problems of Practice.

Merely having these terms in these documents, therefore, would not necessarily reflect the degree of conceptual integration.

Furthermore, we encountered significant challenges regarding the trustworthiness and reliability of our subjective judgments. We lacked a mechanism to ensure consistent ratings, and we suspect results would vary significantly based on an individual rater’s subjectivity and knowledge of the CPED Framework®. This uncertainty was compounded by the fact that the rubric instruction did not include such data sources as lecture videos, office hours, student assignments, and mentoring sessions, the core of teaching and learning exchanges between the EdD faculty members and students. Without these artifacts, we could not fully gauge the magnitude of alignment between our curriculum and the CPED Framework®.

We reflected that these methodological limitations directly impacted the formalization and sharing of our findings. While we presented our ratings to the faculty, the results lacked “verisimilitude”

(LaBoskey, 2004, p. 853) or depth required to spark substantive discussion. As we described, our faculty's feedback remained general, perhaps reflecting the sentiment shared by another survey respondent that there was "too little data to actually use." While the survey results indicated that the faculty members still found the findings moderately useful or very useful, the lack of deep engagement suggests that without more rigorous, multi-faceted data collection, the self-study remains a static report rather than a catalyst for genuine programmatic change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our reflection on the self-study implementation gave us an opportunity to deliberate on recommendations to improve the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project implementation process. We conclude this essay by offering recommendations to CPED member institutions with programmatic features similar to ours that consider conducting a self-study in the future, and to CPED itself.

Recommendations for CPED Member Institutions

We have several recommendations for CPED member institutions. We first recommend that institutions considering future self-studies integrate the self-study into the routine practices of doctoral program administration. This could include an agenda item during program planning meetings or retreats. When the work is coordinated within monthly program meetings that faculty members routinely attend, it will provide the time and space for faculty members to become more engaged and provide more input into the self-study. This will allow doctoral faculty members to buy into the process, collaborate, and potentially increase participation. Another recommendation we make is to ensure that faculty members have conceptual coherence around the core components of the CPED Framework©. For instance, if faculty members have different interpretations of social justice, it is pivotal to engage in discussions so that they move from individual understandings of social justice to a more programmatic stance that incorporates multiple paradigms. This ensures that student learning is consistent and provides a broader but more inclusive approach to social justice work.

We also recommend that participating institutions consider establishing a continuous improvement committee to foster a culture of program assessment and feedback. This committee collects and analyzes program data systematically to ensure that program goals and outcomes are achieved. High-quality self-study implementation can provide an effective springboard for curriculum innovation. Finally, we would consider how to incentivize faculty participation. In our case, we believe the incentives should be geared towards intrinsic motivation. These motivational strategies should revolve around faculty interest in teaching, research, and service. For example, faculty might agree to serve on a continuous improvement committee because it also fulfills university service requirements. Faculty members motivated by research could use their skills to develop the self-study research process and perhaps tie the work to conference presentations and research articles that inform practice.

Recommendations to CPED

To enhance the efficacy and impact of future the CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project, we offer the following two recommendations based on our

experience as self-study implementers. First, we recommend that CPED provide a robust overview of the conceptual foundations of self-study for all participating member institutions. As not all EdD faculty members are familiar with self-study methodology, it is vital to establish a shared understanding of self-study as a group-focused, improvement-oriented approach to analyze professional and program practice. While the primary goal of the current project was to pilot the CPED Guiding Principles Implementation Rubric and CPED Framework Impact Rubric, the provided materials focused heavily on data collection and analysis, inadvertently omitting the implementation phase. Since the fundamental purpose of self-study is to contribute to the improvement of practice (Zeichner, 2007), CPED should provide concrete instructions for the implementation phase following data collection and analysis. Moving beyond the analysis phase to the implementation phase is essential to help EdD faculty members resolve the living contradictions and align their program more closely with the CPED Framework©.

Second, the current rubrics' reliance on the mere presence or mention of CPED components in program documents is limited and fails to capture the true degree of conceptual integration within an EdD program. We recommend that CPED develop a more holistic list of rating criteria that moves beyond binary coding to assess the quality and depth of implementation. Such criteria are necessary to spark the deliberate discussions and collective reframing required for meaningful programmatic change. We acknowledge that developing these nuanced criteria is a complex process; therefore, we suggest that CPED launch a targeted research project to establish rigorous, qualitative indicators that can better differentiate between superficial alignment and robust integration. This would provide the verisimilitude and depth required for EdD faculty members to utilize the results as a catalyst for genuine programmatic change.

CONCLUSIONS

CPED plays a pivotal role in ensuring the quality of EdD programs nationwide and internationally. The CPED Framework© serves as an essential standard-bearer in this regard. It is, therefore, critical for CPED member institutions to regularly assess the alignment between their curricula and the Framework©. Self-study provides them with an excellent opportunity to do so.

The CPED Principles Implementation & Framework© Impact Self-Study Project was the first step in supporting such important work. In this essay, we shared our experience implementing the self-study and highlighted the challenges we faced. We hope that CPED member institutions with programmatic characteristics similar to ours might find our experience useful to prepare for their future self-studies and make meaningful contributions to improving their programs.

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