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## DIALOGUE OVER DATA: AN INTERVIEW STUDY OF EVALUATORS AT INSTITUTIONS ACCREDITED BY AAQEP

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DIALOGUE OVER DATA: AN INTERVIEW STUDY OF EVALUATORS AT  
INSTITUTIONS ACCREDITED BY AAQEP

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DISSERTATION

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the  
College of Education  
at the University of Kentucky

By  
Laura Ruth Mirochna  
Dallas, Texas

Director: Dr. Eric Thomas Weber  
Director of Graduate Studies &  
Associate Professor of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation  
Lexington, Kentucky  
2024

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## ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

### DIALOGUE OVER DATA: AN INTERVIEW STUDY OF EVALUATORS AT INSTITUTIONS ACCREDITED BY AAQEP

The university supervisor's role is to evaluate student teachers during the field experience process. The processes for onboarding and evaluation of university supervisors vary widely at universities in the United States but are determined, in part, by the data collection requirements of the programmatic accreditation process.

An interview study was done to show how different schools are onboarding and evaluating their university supervisors and collecting evaluation data for AAQEP as the programmatic accreditor.

The overarching research question is:

RQ1: *What is the process for onboarding and evaluating university supervisors, if any is used?*

The study's results indicate that AAQEP does not require institutions to submit evaluation data for university supervisors but instead relies on qualifications and in-person interviews during site visits. Given the potential impact of the university supervisor role, recommendations are given for both onboarding and evaluation processes. Critical friend groups are discussed as an alternative to traditional evaluation.

KEYWORDS: university supervisor, preservice teacher, evaluation, faculty, onboarding

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Laura Ruth Mirochna

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07/19/2024

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Date

DIALOGUE OVER DATA: AN INTERVIEW STUDY OF EVALUATORS AT  
INSTITUTIONS ACCREDITED BY AAQEP

By  
Laura Ruth Mirochna

Dr. Eric Thomas Weber  

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Director of Dissertation

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07/19/2024  

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Date

To my husband, Eric, and my children (Rachel, Renee, Alex, and Joshua)  
for believing in me and cheering me on.

In memory of Karen Jean Johnson  
May 16, 1949 - November 21, 2023

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I acknowledge that my home and school reside on lands impacted by the forced removal and colonization of Indigenous people. As a Cherokee descendant, I honor and respect my ancestors who occupied these lands before me. The University of Kentucky sits on lands first inhabited by the Adena, Hopewell, Cherokee, Yuchi, Chickasaw, Shawnee, Osage, Wyndott, and Miami peoples. Dallas, Texas occupies land initially inhabited by the Wichita, Caddo, Comanche, Cherokee, Kickapoo, and Tawakoni. I also acknowledge the original Freedman's towns of Dallas built by those enslaved by European colonization and forced out through eminent domain.

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

*“The goal of teacher education is preparing teachers who know how to create democratic learning environments that enhance students’ academic, social, and emotional learning and also prepare them to participate in a complex, diverse, and divided democratic society.”*

*(Cochran-Smith et al., 2018, p. 163)*

### 1.1 Introduction

Before becoming certified classroom teachers, teacher candidates traditionally complete 13-16 weeks of supervised classroom instruction (i.e., student teaching or clinical field experience). During that time, they are mentored and evaluated by a cooperating teacher (the teacher of record for the school district) and a university supervisor (often a faculty or staff member at the university where the teacher candidate hopes to graduate). The university supervisor’s role is to mentor and evaluate the student-teacher at pre-determined intervals throughout the field experience process, while the cooperating teacher’s role is more about modeling effective teaching practices and daily monitoring. The teacher candidate’s evaluation process varies by state but often involves a rubric, a work sample/portfolio, or a combination of these items. Still, the evaluation of the university supervisor varies widely. It is determined, in part, by the programmatic accreditation of the teacher or educator preparation program (usually a school, department, or college within the university). The accountability standards for both the student-teacher and the university supervisor are couched in terms of teacher effectiveness and program impact (Association of Teacher Educators, 2022; Heafner et al., 2014). Teacher effectiveness is often measured through structured classroom observations, teacher contributions to student achievement

growth (value-added models [VAMs]), and student perceptions of teacher effectiveness or classroom climate (Braun & Sanders, 2005; Briggs & Domingue, 2011; Steinberg & Garrett, 2016). The evaluation of university supervisors varies widely across institutions but can include annual or biennial reviews, 360-degree evaluations, or self-study (Burns & Badiali, 2015; Cashin, 1996; DiPaola, 2000; Goldsberry, 1988; Jacko & Karmos, 1977; Kulik & McKeachie, 1975; Laflin, 1978; Murphy, 2020; Rice University, 2019).

## **1.2 Background of the Problem**

There is an aura of mystery surrounding the evaluation of university supervisors. There needs to be more scholarly interest in the field, more transparency regarding the assessment process, and more consistency in how university supervisors are evaluated across colleges, states, and programmatic accreditation types. Recent efforts to study university supervisor evaluation include the creation of a University Supervisor Quality [USQ] evaluation tool using Rasch analysis in Holbrook's dissertation (2022), as well as emerging models and innovative approaches as described by Lombardi (2001). Faculty members take on many roles, including teaching, service, and research. Therefore, the role of a university supervisor could be overlooked or diminished in importance during the evaluation process (Capello, 2022). In cases where faculty are serving as university supervisors, they might work with students every semester but only get evaluated every two to three years. The intent of this study was to consider to what extent faculty members are evaluated in their roles as university supervisors when the evaluators of university supervisors do not evaluate faculty, and most evaluators of faculty do not consider this role an important part of their teaching, research, or service.

The last decade has seen multiple changes in programmatic accreditation structures and requirements. Programmatic accreditation previously included NCATE and TEAC but now includes CAEP and AAQEP (for a description of each acronym, see Section 1.7). These voluntary accountability systems allow a university to show they are worthy of being called a teacher or educator preparation program [TEP/EPP] (Sawchuk, 2016). In the past decade, these systems have switched back and forth between compulsory and voluntary requirements as the Department of Education changed hands between administrations. The data collection required to achieve and maintain programmatic accreditation is enormous. The theory is that teacher education programs can use the data to show what they are doing well, write goals for areas of future improvement, and then track their progress toward those goals over time. In praxis, the data are collected and submitted for programmatic accreditation purposes but need to be read and shared to make real change.

In Texas, the largest organization that certifies teachers, Texas Teachers of Tomorrow, recently failed its programmatic accreditation review. The Vice Provost of the School of Education at Dallas College responded in an opinion piece in the Dallas Morning News,

Sending well-prepared, diverse educators into classrooms should be a priority for Texas. Research demonstrates that when educators enter the classroom with the hands-on experience that comes from high-quality training, their students perform better (Bastian, 2018). These teachers are also more likely to stay in the profession (Ingersoll et al., 2014). We do not need to sacrifice quality for quantity; in fact, that's a false choice. By investing in quality today, we are ensuring quantity for the future (DeHaas, 2023).

As DeHaas states, we should do whatever possible to ensure that we send quality teachers out into the workforce who are prepared to succeed and thrive over a long career. The university supervisor plays a crucial role in monitoring and encouraging such success. According to Cuenca, “university supervisors are uniquely situated in spaces where they can help develop understandings of the intertwined nature of theory and practice in education” (2012, vii). The university supervisor straddles the line between the theoretical teachings of the college classroom and the practical application of the K-12 classroom, also known as the third space (Cuenca et al., 2011; Daza et al., 2021; Ikpeze et al., 2012).

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Over the last decade, national reports have advocated for increased school-university collaboration and improved teachers' clinical preparation (Hollins, 2015; NCATE, 2010). Unfortunately, clinical education has historically been held as a lower priority to research or publication (Beck & Kosnik, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; The Holmes Group, 1986) even though research shows that high-quality supervision promotes teacher-candidate learning (Bates et al., 2011; Burns et al., 2016a; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Gimbert & Nolan, 2003). In addition, university supervisors face obstacles to performing their roles successfully, such as differentiating mentorship and evaluation (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Burns & Badiali, 2015; Nolan & Hoover, 2010). There is considerable variation in the literature regarding the position and whether the role of university supervisor should be eliminated, altered, or kept the same. Whatever happens to the role of university supervisors in the future, it is important to consider the implications for student-teacher success long term.

## 1.4 Purpose of the Study

Because university supervisors are onboarded and evaluated in multiple ways, an interview study will be conducted with the evaluators of university supervisors, comparing the experiences between universities. This in-depth interviewing process will enable me to draw out best practices in university supervisor onboarding and make recommendations for future evaluation procedures.

University supervisors are most often adjunct or contingent faculty, graduate assistants, retired teachers, or retired principals, even though Fields argued over 44 years ago that university supervisors should be full-time faculty members, eligible for tenure and promotion, to elevate the role and importance of supervising student teachers within the department (Fields, 1979). The rationale for studying the onboarding and evaluation of university supervisors is that there is a gap in the literature (Holbrook, 2022). Capello's dissertation research (2019) looks at contingent faculty, Steadman & Brown (2011) look at a range of roles, and several studies have looked at graduate assistants as university supervisors (Bates & Burbank, 2008; Elfer, 2012; Slick, 1998a). Regardless of rank or position, most studies stop short of discussing the onboarding or evaluation process (Beck & Kosnik, 2002).

When a university supervisor is a full-time faculty member, they are evaluated every one to five years as part of the tenure and promotion review process (DiPaolo, 2000; Miller & Seldin, 2014). The evaluator of faculty is usually a department chair or dean (Miller & Seldin, 2014). In contrast, a non-faculty university supervisor might be evaluated by a director or coordinator of field experiences. The evaluators of university supervisors (department chairs, deans, clinical supervisors, etc.) will be the participants selected for interviews in this study.

## 1.5 Research Question

The following research question is presented to help me determine the participant's perception of the university supervisor and how such persons are onboarded and evaluated at various colleges and universities. My own experience with university supervisors and a failed attempt at alternative licensure led me to ask what happens if a university supervisor does not measure up to the evaluator's standards. I questioned if the university supervisors were onboarded in such a way that they understood their own evaluation process. After speaking with several faculty and administrators I also wondered if the evaluation of university supervisors would get lumped into the service category of their biennial review, minimizing its importance within their other teaching, research, publication, and service requirements.

These questions led me to the programmatic accreditation literature on AAQEP. AAQEP does not have specific guidance on how a university supervisor should be evaluated, but rather asks questions such as, "Standard 3e: Does the evidence show that the program engages in continuous improvement of programs and program components, and investigates opportunities for innovation, through an effective quality assurance system?" (AAQEP, 2023). To answer the questions posed by AAQEP's Standards, I want to know what a department chair, dean, or clinical supervisor would perceive as evidence of meeting these standards. To that end, I propose the research question below.

RQ1: *What is the process for onboarding and evaluating university supervisors, if any is used?*

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

An increased focus on teacher quality and retention has motivated increased accountability for teacher preparation programs across the United States (Cochran-Smith et

al., 2018). This accountability has been targeted at teacher evaluation and the roles of the cooperating teacher and university supervisor within the student teaching experience. However, it stops short of the evaluation of the university supervisor. In 2010 a congressionally mandated study culminated in the publication of the report *Preparing Teachers: Building Evidence of Sound Policy* (National Research Council, 2010). The report sought to explain what research has told us thus far about teacher preparation. According to the report, more information is needed about the supervisors of student-teachers, both in their requirements and their impacts on student teaching. They also discuss the shift from input-based to outcomes-based evaluation measures at the university level. Cochran-Smith and Reagan take this a step further to discuss the need for equity-based evaluation of student learning outcomes in education (Cochran-Smith & Reagan, 2021). In other words, to show how well our teachers are performing in the classroom, we should look at how well they perform in the classroom rather than collecting data on their GPA and test scores when they were admitted to the program (the previous standard for programmatic accreditation). This process should consider the efforts taken to overcome disparities in opportunity and attainment. The university supervisors' evaluation could include how well they perform their duties, how well their students perform, the long-term retention of those teachers, and equity efforts rather than simply lumping this role into the service category. Changing the evaluation methods could inspire changes in practice.

### **1.7 Definition of Terms**

Academia is well known for its use of acronyms, jargon, and insider language. Therefore, these definitions of terms have been added for words or acronyms that may not be clear to someone outside of K-12 education, higher education, or the United States. For

consistency, throughout this paper, I will use the term university supervisor to mean the person whom the college or university hires to evaluate and mentor student-teachers during their preservice semester, but this same person could also mentor newly hired teachers throughout the in-service year (Gimbert & Nolan, 2003; Burns, 2012; Burns et al., 2016). For a detailed synopsis of the lexicon used in this field, see Parker (2019).

*AAQEP* The Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (2017-current) is a membership association and quality assurance agency providing accreditation services and formative support to educator preparation providers (AAQEP, 2023; Meadows, 2023)

*Carnegie classifications for doctoral universities* Institutions that awarded at least 20 doctoral degrees during the year are classified by level of research activity (ACE, 2023) See Table 1.1.

*CAEP* The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (2010-current) is the source for accreditation and pre-accreditation of educator preparation providers (EPPs) that offer bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees, post-baccalaureate or other programs leading to certification, licensure, or endorsement in the United States and internationally (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2020b; Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2023a; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2010; Sawchuk. 2016)

*Classroom observations (pre-, post-)* When university supervisors visit the student-teacher and cooperating teacher in the classroom space, this is known as an observation. This triad will typically meet for a pre-conference to identify what the university supervisor should look for in the classroom and a post-conference meeting to discuss how it went (Texas Administrative Code, Rule §228.35). This is commonly called the POP cycle: pre, observation, post.

*Clinical Education* “Programs that provide developing professionals with practical skills-oriented instruction under the supervision of a skilled practitioner” (Florida Department of Education, 2023, para. 1).

*Cooperating teacher* The cooperating teacher, or mentor teacher, serves as the certified teacher of record in the public school classroom where the student-teacher is assigned. They will model effective teaching practices for the student-teacher and slowly provide them with additional teaching and learning opportunities under supervision (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Copas, 1984; Clarke et al., 2014; Grimmett & Ratzlaff, 1986; Hamlin, 1997; Henry & Beasley, 1989; Hoffman, et al., 2015; Pfister, 1983; Ramanathan, 1996; Rikard, 1982; University of North Texas, 2023).

*Council for Higher Education Accreditation [CHEA]* “A national advocate and institutional voice for academic quality through accreditation, CHEA is a U.S. association of degree-granting colleges and universities and recognizes institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations. CHEA is the only national organization focused exclusively on higher education accreditation and quality assurance” (Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2023a, p. 1). See Table 1.2.

*ESEA/ESSA* The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was signed into law in 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson. This act provides equal educational opportunities for all students through grants, funding, and scholarships. The Every Student Succeeds Act reauthorized the ESEA with updates to the allocation of funds and was signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2015 (United States Department of Education, 2023).

*Evaluator* An evaluator provides feedback to the university supervisor on their role. The evaluator could have a wide range of titles: Director of Field Experiences, Academic

Department Chair, or Dean of Education. They have the authority to hire, evaluate, and fire university supervisors within the school, college, or department of education (CSU, 2023).

*Faculty* According to Merriam-Webster, “the teaching and administrative staff and those members of the administration having academic rank in an educational institution” (2023). Many faculty are evaluated biennially for their teaching, service, research, and publication contributions.

*Field Experience* A period in which teacher candidates spend time in K-12 classrooms making observations, often before clinical or student teaching. During a field experience, students may assist a teacher, work with small groups, and even deliver a lesson to a small or large group of students (Adams et al., 2006; Burns et al., 2016; Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986; Hollins, 2015; McIntyre, 1984; McIntyre & Norris, 1980; Morris, 1980; Ramanathan, 1996; Ramanathan & Wilkins-Canter, 1997; Smith & Alvermann, 1985; Zeichner, 2010).

*For-profit* There is quite a bit of stigma related to for-profit schools of higher education in the United States. The worst for-profits have been accused of widespread fraud, ruthlessly exploiting students in lower income brackets (Beaver, 2017). Students at schools such as DeVry, ITT, and Corinthian had \$415 Million of their student loans forgiven after the U.S. Department of Education got involved in 2022 (United States Department of Education, 2022).

*Formative assessment* Ongoing informal observations and evaluations of performance, in this case, the evaluation of the student teacher’s performance while teaching, resulting in oral or written feedback rather than a numeric or letter grade. Formative assessments are tools used to identify misconceptions, struggles, and learning gaps. In addition,

they seek to improve student achievement of learning objectives through approaches that can support specific student needs (Carnegie Mellon University, 2023; Gitlin, 1981; Robertson & Gillespie, 2010).

*HEA* The Higher Education Act was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965 (University of California at Santa Barbara, 1999). It expired in 2013, but the Pell Grants and other provisions have been funded through temporary measures ever since (ACE, 2019).

*Induction* A formal introduction to a new job or position. Also known as onboarding or organizational socialization, but is more robust than orientation (Boyd et al., 2007; Breaux & Wong, 2003; Hills, 2022; Society for Human Resource Management, 2017).

*Inservice teacher* Certified teachers who are currently employed to work in the classroom (Acheson & Gall, 2003).

*K-12 schools* K-12 schools are public schools in the United States for students in kindergarten through 12th grade or ages ranging from five to 18. Education is compulsory for students aged seven to 16 in all 50 states, but as low as five and as high as 19 in a few states (Institute of Education Sciences, 2017).

*Minority Serving Institutions* The U.S. Department of Education classifies minority-serving institutions for funding purposes. See Table 1.4.

*NCATE* The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (1954-2014) was founded in 1954 as a non-profit, non-governmental, accrediting body. NCATE merged with TEAC in 2014 to form CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2020b; Heafner et al., 2014; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2010; Sawchuk, 2011).

*Normal school* A normal school was a college for teachers until around the 1950s when the titles started shifting to the Teachers College or a school of education within a larger university structure. For example, Texas State University, Eastern Kentucky University, and Western Kentucky University started as normal schools (Thelin, 2011).

*Onboarding* The action or process of integrating a new employee into an organization. Also known as induction or organizational socialization, but is more robust than orientation (Hills, 2022; Society for Human Resource Management, 2017).

*Organizational socialization* A learning and adjustment process that enables an individual to assume an organizational role that fits both organizational and individual needs (Hall & Paul, 2020).

*Preservice teacher* Student teacher or teacher candidate, before completing the certification requirements while still enrolled in a teacher or educator preparation program. Near the end of the program, they will experience a period of guided, supervised teaching commonly known as student teaching (Texas Administrative Code RULE §228.33, 2023).

*Professional Development Schools [PDS]* The Holmes Group advocated for improving colleges of education by switching to a professional development model (Holmes Group, 1995; National Association for Professional Development Schools, 2021). According to the NAPDS, there are nine essentials to being a PDS: “A comprehensive mission, Clinical preparation, Professional learning and leading, Reflection and innovation, Research and results, Articulated agreements, Shared governance structures, Boundary-spanning roles, and Resources and recognition” (2021, pp. 15-16)

*Programmatic accreditation* Programmatic accreditation systems for education include CAEP and AAQEP (NCATE and TEAC merged to form CAEP in 2014). These voluntary accountability systems allow a university to show they are worthy of being called a teacher or educator preparation program [TEP/EPP] for recruiting purposes. Programmatic accreditation is specific to a program, college, or department, whereas regional or national accreditation (e.g., SACS, NECHE) applies to the university as a whole (Will, 2019).

*Student teacher or teacher candidate* A college or university student majoring in education or interdisciplinary studies who has completed the requirements for graduation, except for their 13-16 weeks of student teaching. After successfully completing student teaching, the candidate will be eligible for teacher licensure in their state of residence. Elementary teacher candidates earn general, special education (SPED or exceptional children), bilingual certificates, or a combination. Depending on the state, they can teach early childhood, pre-kindergarten, or kindergarten through fifth or sixth grade (EC-six, PK-five, K-six). Secondary teacher candidates (grades six-12, middle school, junior high, or high school) earn a bachelor's degree and certificate in their subject area, such as math, science, or social studies. Levels vary by state, but K-12, P-12, PK-12, PK-Adult, EC-12, five-12, six-12, five to eight, seven to nine, or seven to 12 certificate earners can specialize in subjects such as music, art, or physical education and usually require the candidate to spend eight weeks each in elementary and secondary locations, for a total of 16 weeks (National Association for Music Education, 2020).

*Summative assessment* A formal evaluation of performance, generally resulting in a letter or numerical grade. In this case, the grade would be assigned by the university

supervisor or cooperating teacher for the purpose of professional development of the student-teacher. The student-teacher's performance is compared to a rubric, standard, or benchmark (Carnegie Mellon University, 2023; Hamlin, 1997).

*System* A system refers to a group of colleges and universities that are geographically distributed but act as one unit, typically governed by a Board of Regents or Board of Trustees. For example, most of the schools in Texas are part of one of the seven systems, such as the University of Texas System, which has nine main campuses and several other smaller schools. (Fun fact: Stephen F. Austin University in Texas is named after a graduate of Transylvania University in Kentucky.)

*TEAC* Teacher Education Accreditation Council (1997-2014) was a non-profit organization dedicated to improving academic degree programs for professional educators, those who will teach and lead in schools, pre-K through grade 12. TEAC merged with NCATE from 2010-2013 to form CAEP (Will, 2019).

*TEP/EPP* A teacher preparation program or educator preparation program is a high-quality institution that recruits and prepares qualified educators to meet the needs of all learners in today's and tomorrow's classrooms. The TEP/EPP can be a university, regional education service center, school district, or alternative certification entity (Texas Administrative Code RULE §228.33, 2023).

*Teacher evaluation* Several models have been developed for evaluating the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom, including InTASC Teaching Standards, Marzano's Teacher Evaluation Model [MTEM], Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, Measures of Effective Teaching [MET], Classroom Assessment Scoring System [CLASS], Value added model [VAM], and localized versions such as the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System [T-TESS] or Colorado's Teacher

Quality Standards (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012). Marzano’s five rubric levels include: Not using, Beginning, Developing, Applying, and Innovating (Marzano, 2017).

*Third space* A conceptual area between the university and K-12 schools. The university supervisor and student-teacher navigate this area as they make sense of the candidate’s theoretical learning (university) and pragmatic classroom needs (K-12 schools) (Cuenca, et al., 2011).

*Triad* The student-teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor are sometimes called a triad or a group of three connected people (Jarvis, et al., 2017).

*University-based teacher educator* An individual involved in educator preparation whose primary institutional home is a college or university. University-based teacher educators are a specific type of boundary-spanning teacher educators who engage in evaluation, coaching, instruction, and partnership and assume expanded and multiple responsibilities within, and often across, each of these four domains. A university-based teacher educator may be otherwise known as a university supervisor, university liaison, clinical supervisor, or clinical faculty. In CAEP practice, not all EPPs are located in colleges or universities. “EPP-based teacher educator” would be more inclusive (AACTE, 2018; CAEP, 2020).

*University supervisors* University supervisors serve as the liaison between student-teachers, cooperating teachers, and relevant universities’ teacher education programs – bridging the gap between theory and practical application for novice teachers through formative and summative assessments (Anderson, 1993; Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Goldhammer, 1969; Grossman et al., 2009; Ikpeze et al., 2012; Jacko & Karmos, 1977; Lohmann et al., 2019; Steadman & Brown, 2011). They are also

known as supervising field instructors, mentor teachers, field supervisors, clinical supervisors, student-teacher supervisors, University-based teacher educators, EPP-based teacher educators, university-based clinical instructors, in-service supervisors, instructional leaders, pedagogical leaders, instructional coaches, center coordinators, or college supervisors of student teaching. Their roles vary widely across states and EPPs, although there is usually some element of supervision and evaluation or development and administration (Law Insider, n.d.).

*Zone of proximal development* A concept of educational psychology that represents the space between what a student can do without help and what they cannot do even with help (Vygotsky, 1978).

The four tables of terms below (Tables 1.1-1.4) are all related to Table 4.1. Table 4.1 is a listing of all the demographics for the schools from which the participants were selected to be interviewed. This helps the reader see the variety of schools and their implications on the results of the study. Tables 1.1-1.4 help explain the dozens of acronyms used to identify school characteristics. For example, R1, Land-grant, HLC/SACS, and HBCU are the most common acronyms on these lists, while the rest are lesser known except to the institutions they identify.

Table 1.1 Carnegie Classifications

Acronym	Description
R1	Very high research activity
R2	High research activity
D/PU	Doctoral/Professional Universities
MCU	Master's Colleges and Universities (Size= M1, M2, M3)

Table 1.2 CHEA - Approved Regional Accreditors

Acronym	Description
ACCJC	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
HLC	Higher Learning Commission
MSCHE	Middle States Commission on Higher Education
NECHE	New England Commission on Higher Education
NWCHE	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
SACSCOC	Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges
WSCUC	WASC Senior College and University Commission

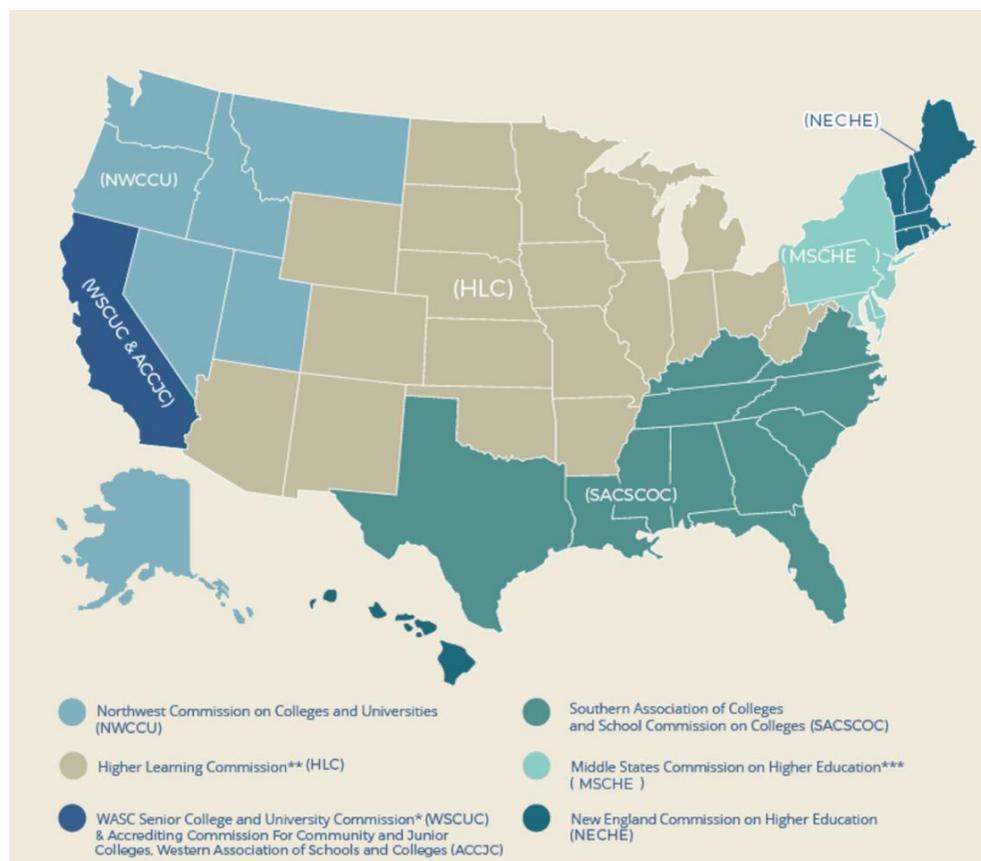


Figure 1.7 Regional Accrediting Organizations by Accretor Type

Note: From Regional Accrediting Organizations, by Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2024, CHEA.org (<https://www.chea.org/>). Copyright 2024 by CHEA. Reprinted with permission.

Table 1.3 Grant Associations

Term	Description
<i>Land-grant</i>	A land-grant college or university benefitted from funds designated by the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. These colleges were charged with providing education in the practical arts of agriculture, science, military science, and engineering. This was a departure from predominantly liberal arts schools in response to the Industrial Revolution. Most of these schools today are public “A&M” schools, but three private land-grant schools include Cornell, MIT, and Tuskegee.
<i>Sea-grant</i>	The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) supports a network of 34 universities that are committed to research, education, training, and extension projects related to the conservation and use of our coasts, Great Lakes, and marine areas.
<i>Space-grant</i>	NASA coordinates research through 52 colleges and universities as well as K-12 science education support focusing on outer space, aeronautics, aerospace, and astronautics.
<i>Sun-grant</i>	A group of six universities that research sustainable and environmentally friendly bio-based energy alternatives.

Table 1.4 Minority Serving Institution Designations

Acronym	Description
AANH	Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions
AANAPISI	Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HSI	Hispanic Serving Institutions
MSI	Minority Serving Institution
NASNTI	Native American-Serving Non-Tribal Institutions
PBI	Predominantly Black Institutions
TCU	Tribal Colleges and Universities

## **1.8 Assumptions and Delimitations**

### ***1.8.1 Assumptions***

In recent years, online surveys for evaluative purposes have increased. While this survey type is more convenient and cheaper, its use has caused a sense of burden or even fatigue on the part of the evaluator. “The overuse of surveys... can undermine their utility” (Olson, 2014, p. 93). Therefore, great care should be taken not to treat evaluations as just another Likert-scale survey.

According to Gannon (2021), COVID-19 significantly impacted the faculty evaluation process. Some faculty had limited research and service opportunities, while others were able to churn out several articles while sitting at home alone. Some tenure-clock extensions were granted, but not everyone used their time the same way. The potential inequities this represents prompted Gannon to articulate the importance of universities doing an “intentional and self-critical examination of their job-performance criteria and evaluation processes” (2021, p. 3). Since we are now several years out from the events of 2019, the evaluators should be able to speak to whether they have included trauma-informed practices or adjusted cultural or gender norms in the evaluation sphere.

### ***1.8.2 Delimitations***

Participants for this study were chosen based on their programmatic accreditation type. This helped to limit the number of contacts to a selected sample. I chose to start with the first few years of schools to complete the programmatic accreditation process for AAQEP. The first AAQEP approvals happened in 2019, and a total of 112 schools or programs have completed the accreditation process since then. Four schools have since merged or closed, two programs have moved or withdrawn, three are alternative licensure

programs outside of a single university, and two programs are outside of the 50 states, leaving 101 schools to select from.

### **1.9 Structure of this Dissertation**

The present chapter's overview begins with the structure of student teaching within traditional teacher or educator preparation programs, leading to a discussion of the evaluation of the faculty or staff serving as evaluators of those student teachers in their role as university supervisors. Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature related to university supervisors, evaluation, and accreditation policies. The third chapter outlines the interview methodology as well as the data collection process. Chapters 4 and 5 summarize the results of the study and offer recommendations for onboarding and evaluation in the future.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

University Supervisors are more than just student-teacher evaluators; the university supervisor can be a mentor and bridge builder for the student-teacher as they navigate the third space between teacher educators' knowledge and theories and the lived experiences of K-12 practitioners (Anderson et al., 1992; Cuenca et al., 2011; Daza et al., 2021; Ikpeze et al., 2012). The successful university supervisor can help a student-teacher complete their preservice training and mentor them through the first in-service year and beyond (Burns et al., 2020; Fields, 1979; Zahorik, 1988). Because of their unique position, the university supervisor can foster effective teaching practices through explicit instruction and modeling of reflective practices (Bates et al., 2009), both of which have been shown to increase teacher retention and success (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). The evaluation of student-teachers, through traditional student-teacher programs, protects K-12 students from the harm that could be caused to them by “incompetent, immoral, or unprofessional teacher behavior” (Hoover & Nolan, 2008, p. 8); therefore, teacher education programs have an obligation to make sure that their supervisors and evaluators are up to the task (Blomenkamp, 1996). The university supervisor's evaluation should differ from the standard annual staff review or goal-setting process (Murphy, 2020). The evaluation of university supervisors varies widely across institutions but can include annual or biennial reviews, 360-degree evaluations, or self-study (Burns & Badiali, 2015; Cashin, 1996; DiPaola, 20000; Goldsberry, 1988; Jacko & Karmos, 1977; Kulik & McKeachie, 1975; Laflin, 1978; Murphy, 2020; Rice University, 2019). A university supervisor also evaluates teachers who complete alternative licensure paths if they are associated with a university program, but some alternative programs use a school principal or other evaluator.

The onboarding or induction process for university supervisors also varies widely by school and department. Some schools simply pass out a packet of information, while others require regular meetings and check-ins. In recent years, some schools have moved their entire process online (Boyd et al., 2021; Capello, 2018; Ramanathan & Wilkins-Canter, 1997). University Supervisors should learn how they will be evaluated before going out into the field, like a student receiving their syllabus and rubric on the first day of class. It helps to know what to expect from your evaluator prior to performing the task that will be evaluated.

This literature review includes policies related to university supervisors, the impact of university supervisors on student-teachers, roles of the university supervisor beyond supervision and evaluation, and the evaluation of university supervisors. Ultimately, this literature review will demonstrate the need to further study current university supervisor onboarding and evaluation processes.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

Using a social constructivist phenomenology frame, I seek to interpret how evaluators and university supervisors explain their onboarding and evaluation processes. By phenomenology, “Husserl (1913) meant the study of how people describe things and experience them through their senses” (as cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 9). Creswell describes social constructivism as an interpretive framework whereby individuals seek to understand their world and develop their own meanings that correspond to their experience through interaction with others (2016). In an educational context, this is also known as educational psychology (Jaramillo, 1996), interpretivism, or *verstehen*, which means the researcher seeks to understand the world from the participant's viewpoint, including their society, culture, and history (Tracy, 2013). For this study, the participant's history might include things like

whether the evaluator was a university supervisor or whether they were involved in the accreditation process. Their culture includes aspects such as their views on how teacher evaluation should be conducted and whether they use a quantitative or qualitative approach to data collection. This framework will be the basis for the methodology and data analysis.

### **2.3 Who Should Be a University Supervisor?**

Gene Fields, Director of Student Teaching at Central Missouri State - Warrensburg, posited that the university supervisor should be:

- A full-time faculty member eligible for tenure and promotion
- Required of all faculty members in the Educator Preparation Program [EPP], keeping them up to date on public school procedures and climate
- A professional educator with expertise in supervision, public school teaching experience, and a doctoral background in curriculum, instruction, and supervision
- Continuously improving based on feedback from peers, students, and administrators
- Both evaluator and mentor (Fields, 1979, p. 8)

These are essential points for discussion, especially at schools where contingent faculty, graduate assistants, and retired educators are most often used as university supervisors. For this study, the participants are evaluators of university supervisors; therefore, I will be able to ask them to differentiate how their evaluation processes might differ between the different role types.

### **2.4 Policies Related to University Supervisors**

Historically, teachers were prepared and evaluated based on their moral character and ability to read and write (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003). Between 1960 and 1990, most new

teachers were prepared by a university Teacher Educator Program [TEP] or an Educator Preparation Program [EPP]. Under this model, teachers entered the classroom as full-time teachers after one to two years of classwork and a semester of student teaching, although these requirements vary widely by state (Hollins, 2015). Since 1990, a wider variety of alternative, hybrid, and residency programs have been introduced. However, they usually still include someone in an external evaluator role, even if they are not called university supervisors. The traditional student-teacher model consists of a triad of a student-teacher, a cooperating teacher, and a university supervisor (Acheson & Gall, 2003). There are multiple policies related to university supervisors, including federal and state guidelines, like who is taught, who can teach, and who can evaluate their teaching. The role of the university supervisor is also controlled by university and programmatic accreditation policies, such as how they are prepared for their role and what kinds of data are collected for evaluation.

#### ***2.4.1 Federal Policy***

Public education and the preparation of educators are responsibilities that the United States Constitution's 10th amendment delegates to the states (1791). Federal funding initiatives have led some states to change policies to match federal requirements, for example, Race to the Top, No Child Left Behind, and changes to the Higher Education Act by the United States Department of Education (ACE, 2019; Cuenca, 2019; Tatto, 2021; University of California at Santa Barbara, 1999) each provided incentives and funding at the federal level if states met specific criteria. The following federal policies impact teacher education, which impacts university supervisors because of the data collection expectations of regional and programmatic accreditors: ESEA/NCLB/ESSA and HEA.

Title II of the Higher Education Act [HEA] requires any college or university that receives federal funds (student loans) to provide the U.S. Secretary of Education data about teacher candidates, licensure pass rates, number of students in programs, faculty-to-student ratio, and number of supervised practicum hours (ACE, 2019; Cuenca, 2019; Tatto, 2021; University of California at Santa Barbara, 1999). Unfortunately, the data show wide discrepancies among TEP/EPP programs regarding coursework and formative and summative assessments and do not show how well their student-teachers perform after graduating (Tatto, 2021; United States Department of Education, 2021).

Federal policy requires all students aged six to 18 to attend school, although some states have slightly different age ranges. Approximately 90 percent of children attend state-funded public schools, and ten percent attend private schools or are homeschooled (Bouchrika, 2022; Tatto, 2021). There are 98,469 public elementary and secondary schools in the United States, serving 50.8 million students (Bouchrika, 2022). The average class size is 24 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 16 to one (Bouchrika, 2022). That would mean there are approximately 3.2 million teachers in public schools (Institute of Education Sciences, 2018). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, “In 2011–12, some 76 percent of public school teachers were female, 44 percent were under age 40, and 56 percent had a master’s or higher degree” (Institute of Education Sciences, 2019). As of 2012-2013, nearly 500,000 individuals were enrolled in over 25,000 teacher preparation programs (TEP/EPP). Texas had the highest number of program completers in 2013 (Tatto, 2021; United States Department of Education, 2021).

The No Child Left Behind [NCLB] Act of 2001 reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA] of 1965. While well-intentioned, “it came under attack because it was implemented without proof of its effectiveness, was severely underfunded,

and was seen as an overt attempt at undermining public schools” (Ravitch, 2007; Tatto, 2021, p. 180; United States Department of Education, 2023). NCLB also influenced teacher preparation programs by establishing that a bachelor’s degree and Subject test were sufficient to teach in a public school, minimizing the importance of traditional routes to teaching, pedagogy, and student teaching (Tatto, 2021).

The Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA], The Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA] reauthorization of 2015 ended NCLB. The new law created a more equitable system, eliminating the heavy emphasis on testing. ESSA also put teacher certification requirements back under state control but implemented the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation [CAEP] to provide guidance at a federal level. CAEP standards incorporated previous National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE] and Teacher Education Accreditation Council [TEAC] standards as well as the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards [InTASC]. The federal regulations were rescinded in 2016, but CAEP still exists on a volunteer basis. In addition, the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation [AAQEP] was formed in 2017 as a CAEP competitor (Will, 2019).

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards [NBPTS] is not a policy, but like CAEP, it started as a voluntary certification system from within education to professionalize teaching. The Board developed standards of instruction that include performance-based assessments and leads to nationally recognized certification (Tatto, 2021). The process for certification, regarded as the highest certification a teacher can earn, takes one to three years. The influence of NBPTS is still seen today in the Holmes Group, which published *Tomorrow’s Teachers* in 1986, *Tomorrow’s Schools* in 1990, and established Professional Development Schools in *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education* (Holmes Group, 1995).

The Holmes Group sought to change coursework, clinical experiences, degree, and certification requirements to reform teacher education and the teaching profession. They developed Professional Development Schools, such as those found within Colorado State University and the University of South Carolina, as models of “Tomorrow’s Schools of Education” (Holmes Group, 1995; National Association for Professional Development Schools, 2021). AACTE has since assumed ownership of The Holmes Scholars Program (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2018).

#### ***2.4.2 State Policies***

University Supervisors evaluate student teachers based on State Policies, and they, in turn, are evaluated based on university policies. Teacher licensure requirements and professional standards are codified in state statutes and regulations. Common entry requirements include a minimum GPA, a transcript of previous coursework, and a minimum number of courses at the institution of higher ed. (Tatto, 2021). TEP/EPP program graduates receive an initial license based on the state's requirements. Many states have a multi-tier system requiring additional steps after graduation to earn a full license. These steps could include passing an assessment, completing additional coursework, or earning a master’s degree. There is reciprocity among most states after the first three years of licensed teaching in that state. Most elementary school teachers earn a general K-6 or PK-5 license (with or without Bilingual or SPED endorsements). Alternatively, most middle and high school teachers earn a BA or BS in their subject area but are not required to take education courses. Clinical experiences typically include 100 hours of observation before 600 hours of internship (student teaching) (Tatto, 2021). Alternative routes to teacher licensure include programs such as: Teach for America, ABCTE, The New Teacher Project, and Urban

Teachers (Tatto, 2021). Approximately 10-20% of teachers follow the alternative route. The principal or assistant principal usually evaluates alternative teachers at the school where they teach, but an additional evaluator could grade them.

State policies regarding teacher education include structural arrangements that shape and govern initial teacher education, including entry pathways and provider authorization, initial teacher education program requirements related to the subject matter, pedagogy, research, and school experiences or fieldwork, the length of the TEP, and the degrees and certificates conferred. The state also controls the credential requirements for teacher candidates, educators, and mentors. Therefore, the state also monitors and regulates the TEP's inputs, procedures, processes, practices, systems, and outcomes to be accredited, approved, and funded by the state. TEP outcomes include TEP graduates' effectiveness, classroom performance assessments, program impact, and new teachers' employment and retention in urban, rural, or high-priority schools (Cochran-Smith, 2021).

When supporting student-teachers, the university supervisor must know the Learning Outcomes and State Standards related to their position. These are usually included in the student-teacher's lesson plans. Common Core State Standards [CCSS] were not a federal mandate or state policy but an initiative in 2009 supported by 48 of the 50 states and developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA). The idea was to align learning goals and curriculum with graduation requirements, assessment, and accountability on a more universal scale. It was facilitated by the No Child Left Behind Act (2002-2015) but was widely controversial, with support falling down party lines. Forty-one states and the District of Columbia have adopted the standards, Kentucky being the first. Eight states (Alabama, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, Alaska, Nebraska, Indiana, and South Carolina) did not adopt the standards, and one,

Minnesota, only adopted English standards, not Math. Arizona and Florida have since repealed their adoption. Nevertheless, the Standards influence what is taught and how teachers are prepared to teach (Tatto, 2021). *Race to the Top* grants (2009) were tied to the adoption of CCSS, but *Every Student Succeeds Act* grants (2015) expressly prohibited incentivizing CCSS adoption. (In 2009, Democrats controlled both houses, but by 2013 - when the ESSA was being argued - the House had shifted red; therefore, a compromise had to be reached.)

### ***2.4.3 University Policies***

The university policies governing university supervisors vary across the country, partly due to the complex web of accountability policies and reforms at the federal and state levels. According to Cochran-Smith et al., “Over the last two decades there have been multiple co-existing accountability initiatives, policies, and mechanisms... this means that the individuals, programs, and institutions associated with the preparation of teachers have had to deal with shifting and sometimes conflicting expectations, uncertainty about the consequences of accountability, and multiple sources of legitimate authority” (2018, p. 38). She goes on to establish eight dimensions of accountability that can be used when evaluating accountability policies. The eight dimensions include values, purpose, concepts, diagnostic, prognostic, control, content, and consequences (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2018, p. 39).

With these eight dimensions in mind, the policies of a few different schools and states will be reviewed in the next section of this chapter. The schools listed here had easily accessible (website-published) handbooks and policies when, typically, this information is only distributed in paper form or as a proprietary digital copy to the university supervisor and student-teachers during orientation. The university supervisor is a paid employee of the

university. The pay rate depends on the role of the university supervisor but could include financial compensation, course release, or travel reimbursements. Finding a qualified person to fill the position of university supervisor could be challenging, especially in smaller, rural areas.

The University of Scranton (PA) Education Department has posted a 40-page Student Teacher Handbook on its website, including two pages outlining the role of the university supervisor. They require the university supervisor to be an experienced teacher or administrator, with the primary goal being to “help the student-teacher achieve to the best of his or her ability” (University of Scranton, 2020). They must visit the school five times and the student-teacher’s classroom four times throughout the semester, or approximately every 15 days over the 12-week assignment, or more frequently as needed. In addition, they organize and conduct weekly on-campus seminars with their student-teachers. They also complete two formal evaluations, determine the student-teacher’s final grade, maintain all paperwork, and submit a mileage log at the end of the semester (University of Scranton, 2020). The determination of the final grade has led some cooperating teachers to resent the role of the university supervisor, feeling that the university supervisor undermines the importance of their role in evaluating the candidate's competence if the university supervisor can override their decision (Slick, 1998b).

At Miami University (Ohio), university supervisors are official members of the faculty. The university supervisor must meet face-to-face with the student-teachers eight times per semester (over 16 weeks), with additional electronic correspondence encouraged. Five of those visits should be formal observations, three of which are submitted to the edTPA. University supervisors are required to hold an Ohio teaching or administrative certificate/license that matches the content area or grade level of the student-teacher being

observed. They are expected to attend additional professional development offerings by the Office of Student Teaching (Miami University, 2014).

Oklahoma State University's website states that a university supervisor should be "a former teacher or a university faculty/staff member with significant teaching experience in the same content area as the candidate" (Oklahoma State University, 2020). The university supervisor conducts at least three formal observations, three 3-way conferences with the cooperating teacher and student-teacher, a midterm evaluation, and a final evaluation. In addition, they participate in annual training and provide a final grade (Oklahoma State University, 2020).

At Florida State University (FL), the university supervisor must conduct at least four observations (two formal) and communicate weekly. Student Teachers are evaluated based on the Florida Accomplished Educator Practices (FEAPs) established by State Board of Education Rule 6A-5.065 in 1998. In addition, the student-teacher's dispositions are also evaluated (Florida State University, 2020).

Professional dispositions for teachers are directly related to Cochran-Smith's dimensions, as they are intended to establish a score for a teacher's "values, commitments, and ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning, motivation, and development, as well as the educator's own professional growth" (Binghamton University, 2022). At Binghamton University, these dispositions include:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to learning and diversity.
2. Build rapport and serve as a strong role model to peers, colleagues, and learners.
3. Display effective communication skills (oral and written) in all settings.

4. Demonstrate professional competence and conduct (Binghamton University, 2022).

According to their Professional Dispositions Handbook, these four dispositions align with the InTASC and New York State Education Department teaching standards. Candidates must consistently meet or exceed expectations in all areas to progress through the program (Binghamton University, 2022). The *Journal of Teacher Education* explored the controversy surrounding this issue in depth in 2007 (Borko et al., 2007). The main point of contention was whether there could be a valid and reliable metric by which to judge a teacher's dispositions and whether such a score impacts a candidate's ability to teach well (Borko et al., 2007).

Sometimes, the university supervisor is not a faculty member of a college of education. For example, Missouri State University (MO) hires individuals from the English department to supervise student-teachers in reading and writing courses. They have a specific job description and must complete assignments as detailed in the supervisor responsibilities document posted on the field experiences website (Missouri State University, 2021). In this case, the university supervisor is part of the English department, not a college or school of education. This presents an interesting set of challenges. The university supervisor in this situation is potentially not held to the same standards or given the same opportunities for professional development as a university supervisor working directly with student-teachers in a college of education (Hunt, 2015; Slick, 1998a; Steadman, 2004).

Secondary teachers typically earn a BA or BS in their field of study, then complete the education courses shortly before the student teaching semester, either before (5th year senior) or after graduating with the BA (a one to two-year MA/MS program). In other words, English is one of many departments where supervisors at Missouri State or other

universities might work. Other departments offering credentialing programs include Music, Science, History, Math, Foreign Languages, Art, and Computer Science. A typical university supervisor job description requires three to five years of experience teaching that subject as a licensed teacher in a K-12 school, regardless of where they are employed.

University policies also regulate the faculty appointment, promotion, and tenure process, which includes performance review. For example, a tenured faculty member at the University of Kentucky could be reviewed every year or every other year (DiPaolo, 2000). In contrast, some schools, such as Rice University, describe a four-year pre-tenure review cycle and performance reviews every three to five years after earning tenure (Rice University, 2019).

#### ***2.4.4 Programmatic Accreditation Policies***

The Macmillan Dictionary defines accreditation as the “official approval of an organization, worker, or course of study.” In education, the terms licensure or certification are generally used in place of accreditation to indicate the official approval of a person. In general, licensure or certification is required, but accreditation is voluntary (McMullen & File, 2019). There are two types of accreditations: institutional and programmatic. Institutional accreditation looks at the institution of higher education, using standards of academic quality, improvement, and accountability. This level of accreditation is typically completed by a regional body such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges [SACSCOC], which reports to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation [CHEA] (McMullen & File, 2019). Programmatic accreditation focuses on a curriculum, department, college, or division and relies heavily on self-study, peer review, and on-site evaluation (McMullen & File, 2019).

Programmatic accreditation is tied to the state and federal policies that control TEP quality. The assumption is that improving TEP quality will improve teacher quality, which will, in turn, “enhance the value and efficacy of a country’s general education system” (Cochran-Smith, 2021, p. 9). The danger with this line of thinking, according to Cochran-Smith, is that “neoliberal market-based approaches to education reform” lead to consumer choice, charter schools, alternative routes into teaching, competition among schools, data-driven decision making, high-stakes testing, each with severe consequences for failure to meet expectations (Cochran-Smith, 2021, p. 9).

There are several types of state and local accrediting bodies, but for this literature review, I will focus on the nationally recognized AAQEP. The predecessors of AAQEP are CAEP, NCATE, and TEAC. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE] began in 1954. Still, despite NCATE’s longevity, they began struggling in the 1990s, especially on issues surrounding teacher admissions standards such as minimum GPA and diversity pools (Sawchuk, 2011) during the era of the landmark report, *A Nation at Risk* (1983) (Spellings, 2008). In 1997, a new competing accreditor was formed, the Teacher Education Accreditation Council [TEAC]. Following years of contention, in 2013, TEAC and NCATE merged into one politically strategic national accreditor, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation [CAEP] (Coupland, 2011). Cochran-Smith argued that “CAEP as an organization had profound organizational and managerial difficulties and never fully achieved the confidence of the profession” (Cochran-Smith, 2021, p. 16). This is not exactly a ringing endorsement. CAEP is still being studied and scrutinized for its rigid standards based requirements (Meadows, 2023). AAQEP began as a competitor to CAEP in 2017 (Sawchuk, 2015).

#### **2.4.4.1 Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation.**

In 2017, the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation [AAQEP] was founded as a competing national accreditor (2021, p. 16). Cochran-Smith described it at the time as a “promising practice” towards an alternative to the dominant paradigm in teacher education. In addition, it appears to meet their requirements for democratic accountability in teacher education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2018, pp. 171-179). AAQEP has quickly become the accreditor of choice for 22 states, with 123 TEPs earning or seeking to earn accreditation. AAQEP is described as a conversation with TEPs grounded in the belief that teachers know how to teach their students and are constantly striving to do better (Cochran-Smith, 2021). According to their website, “Founded in 2017, AAQEP is a quality assurance agency that provides accreditation services to the field of educator preparation” (AAQEP, 2021, p. 6).

Two out of AAQEP’s four standards emphasize research-backed criteria for quality preparation. In comparison, the remaining two standards take on a more aspirational role by tackling contextual challenges that may necessitate diverse data measures to track progress. (AAQEP, 2022; Meadows, 2023). Standard 3 of 4 relates most closely to the role of the university supervisor. Standard 3b states, “Develops and implements quality clinical experiences, where appropriate, in the context of documented and effective partnerships with P-12 schools and districts” (*AAQEP – Always Improving Together*, 2022). The standard is written as a conversation starter rather than a rigid set of guidelines. In other words, we believe you know what to do, so tell us how you are doing it and what you are planning to do in the future to make it even better. This allows for diversity and context-specific solutions through self-study, peer review, and on-site evaluation across the vast landscape of teacher or educator preparation programs.

No specific guidance is listed on the AAQEP website about evaluation methods for the university supervisor or cooperating teacher. Still, when a program is approved by AAQEP, it is implied that it is a quality program that has shown evidence of its effectiveness. It is up to each TEP/EPP to determine how to evaluate each aspect of the system fairly and equitably.

## **2.5 The Impact of University Supervisors on Student Teaching**

The arguments between scholars related to the role of the university supervisor go back to 1959 when Inlow published a comparative study with the opening line, “The role of the college or university supervisor of student teaching is a controversial one” (Inlow, 1959, p. 211). Or Jacko and Karmos’ 1977 Association of Teacher Educators conference presentation titled, *The university supervisor: What place in academe?* which outlines the importance of 360-degree evaluation for university supervisors for tenure and promotion reviews (Jacko & Karmos, 1977). In 1979, Bowman and Fields published articles in the *Journal of Teacher Education* with opposing opinions about the role (Bowman, 1979; Fields, 1979). Bowman argued that the classroom (or cooperating) teacher can supervise the student-teacher alone and does not need an outside observer. Fields rebutted that Bowman’s description highlighted institution-level concerns and not issues with the role itself.

Zimpher, deVoss, and Nott (1980) also disagreed with Bowman’s article, citing evidence from published research studies such as Friebus (1977), who concluded that university supervisors rank a close second to cooperating teachers in areas such as coaching and providing legitimation for the student-teacher (Zimpher et al., 1980, 12; Henry & Weber, 2010; Wilson et al., 2001). They go on to argue for the complexity and necessity of the triadic relationship.

Linda Darling-Hammond calls clinical preparation the “holy grail of teacher education” and advocates for Professional Development Schools [PDS], lab schools, school reform networks, and the edTPA assessment model (2014, p. 547).

Several researchers have discussed the effects of university supervisors on student teaching (Bates et al., 2009; Cochran-Smith et al., 2008; Gimbert & Nolan, 2003; Henry & Weber, 2010). Borko and Mayfield argued that student-teachers experience a form of cognitive dissonance when they begin student teaching, and the cooperating teacher and a university supervisor “must be actively present... to challenge student-teachers’ existing beliefs and practices... and model pedagogical thinking and actions” (1995, p. 502). Others have called the role of the university supervisor “one of the most crucial moments of preservice teacher learning” (Cuenca et al., 2011, p. 1068; Wilson et al., 2001). Bates et al. state that the role of the university supervisor in the student teaching triad helps “structure a strong support system that encourages and reflects on effective teacher practices” (2009, p. 90). They discuss the importance of critically reflective practices in preservice teaching. Nolan and Hoover focus on the pre-and post-observation conference. They encourage using think-aloud reflection as a scaffolding process, videotape analysis, electronic portfolios, and online professional learning communities (Nolan & Hoover, 2010). The university supervisor faces the challenge of encouraging reflection and professional growth while serving as a gatekeeper to the profession (Gitlin, 1981; Hamlin, 1997; Nolan & Hoover, 2010).

In Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Maria Villegas’ chapter of the *Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Bell & Gitomer, 2016), they argue that the role of teaching and the teacher have changed; therefore, the role of teacher and clinical education should change. They posit that alternative certification programs exist because of outdated misconceptions that teaching is a

transmission-oriented conception rather than the more constructivist-oriented model that student-teachers are collaborative and reflective practitioners, expanding or reconfiguring “preexisting understandings by engaging them in meaningful problem-solving activities... critical thinking, inquiry, collaboration, and reflection” (Bell & Gitomer, 2016, pp. 444-466). This tension between the constructivist teachings of the university and the transmission-oriented carryover from the industrial school models of the past causes a problem when student-teachers try to bridge these two worlds full of “irreconcilable differences” (Phelan et al., 2006, p. 161; Valencia et al., 2009).

Some teacher candidates regard the preservice learning experience with university supervisors as essential to their learning. For example, in a study involving 224 5th-year student-teachers and the instrument *Inventory of Experiences and Perceptions of the Teaching Practice*, the features of university supervisors and the quality of the interactions impacted the student-teachers’ emotional balance and resistance to the difficulties encountered as they entered the teaching profession (Caires & Almeida, 2007). The features of university supervisors that were rated positively include accessibility, good sense, sympathy, attentiveness, and flexibility, as well as calmness, confidence, availability, competency, and autonomy (Caires & Almeida, 2007).

## **2.6 Roles of the University Supervisor**

A university supervisor's role (administrator, faculty, student, or staff) impacts how they are evaluated. Does the evaluation process adequately reflect everything a university supervisor is expected to do? According to Steadman and Brown (2011), there are differences in how a university supervisor operates across states and universities. These differences include the following three categories:

- Category 1: Decisions initiated by the supervisor:
  - Number of visits made to the student-teachers' classrooms
  - Whether visits were scheduled
  - Length of classroom observations
  - Length of post-observation conferences
- Category 2: University paperwork: Supervisors' use of college-provided forms.
- Category 3: Requirements placed upon student-teachers:
  - Completion of lesson plans.
  - Completion of unit plans.
  - Attendance at meetings held outside of the school day.
  - Regular emailed updates on progress. (Steadman & Brown, 2011, p. 56)

How the university supervisor chooses to complete these tasks could impact the success of the preservice teacher.

In a qualitative study that asked, "What do supervisors do, and to what end?" Zimpher et al., from Ohio State, reported that "the chief activity of the university supervisor appeared to be that of defining and communicating the purposes and expectations to be fulfilled by the student-teacher and the cooperating teacher" (Zimpher et al., 1980, p. 13). The university supervisor is a "motivating presence" that encourages the student-teacher to analyze and reflect on their role in the classroom (Zimpher et al., 1980, p. 13). The university supervisor takes on the role of the outsider looking in so they can be more analytical and constructively critical (Zimpher et al., 1980). This allows the cooperating teacher to act as a

buffer between the student-teacher and the university supervisor, translating their comments into practice.

The university supervisor's perception of their role varies across institutions. For example, in a 1996 dissertation, personnel from eight universities were interviewed by telephone (Ramanathan, 1996). The researcher in this case concluded that neither the university supervisor nor the cooperating teacher is trained in the evaluation process, and neither wants to evaluate a student-teacher negatively (Ramanathan, 1996). This suggests a need for professional development and induction for university supervisors, which should likely come before the evaluation process, a belief supported by Metcalf (1991) and Rikard (1982).

Burns and her colleagues asked the following guiding research question: "What core supervisory tasks and practices do university supervisors enact that support preservice teacher (PST) learning within the clinical context?" (Burns et al., 2016a, p. 411). She concluded that the work of Preservice Teacher [PST] supervision is composed of multiple tasks and practices: (1) targeted assistance, (2) individual support, (3) collaboration and community, (4) curriculum support, and (5) research for innovation (Burns et al., 2016a).

University supervisors are called to supervise and evaluate (Hunter, 1984). Nolan and Hoover (2010) differentiated supervision and evaluation, stating that "the two functions complement each other in that teacher evaluation ensures that all teachers function at a satisfactory level of performance as a minimum, whereas teacher supervision provides opportunities for teachers to grow far beyond minimally acceptable levels of performance" (Nolan & Hoover, 2010, p. 6).

Many university supervisors are asked to provide summative evaluations of their student-teachers even though they still need professional development in this area, except in

Connecticut (Burns et al., 2022). The Likert-type scales used for the summative evaluation have shown evidence of halo and leniency effects (Clarke et al., 2014). The university supervisor should be onboarded before the semester starts to help them understand their roles and responsibilities.

## **2.7 Orientation vs. Onboarding, Induction, and Organizational Socialization**

Orientation is typically a 1-2 day event at the beginning of employment. Although a tenured faculty member might not be starting their role as a university supervisor on their first day on the job, they would still be expected to participate in the orientation activities for incoming student teachers at the beginning of each year. For most people, orientation includes an introduction to benefits, pay, and access information (how to get in the building, your office, etc.) and filling in required paperwork such as I-9 and W-4. At higher education institutions, there may be separate orientations for full-time staff, part-time staff, and faculty, who are also introduced to the functions of their roles. The issue with most orientations in the business world is that they stop short of what you need to know to be an engaged employee, even though there is a known positive correlation between employee engagement and profitability, product quality, and customer ratings (Society for Human Resource Management, 2017), as well as 20% turnover in the first 45 days (Carucci, 2018). Higher education is not like a typical business, but it has unique retention challenges that were highlighted by COVID-19, with high burnout among faculty and staff partially due to inequalities of pay and education requirements as well as outdated talent development and retention practices (Lederman, 2022).

Onboarding goes beyond a standard 1-2 day orientation. Onboarding is a more comprehensive way of working with a new hire, integrating them into company culture,

vision, mission, and values (Hills, 2022; Levine, 2011). Effective onboarding fosters “a supportive relationship between new hires and management, reinforcing the company's commitment to helping employees’ professional growth and proving that management recognizes the employees’ talent” (Society for Human Resource Management, 2017). For Teacher Educators, a published onboarding manual provides guidance as they transition to their new role (Boyd et al., 2007).

Several models for structuring an onboarding timetable include those established by Carucci and Bauer (Bauer, 2022; Carucci, 2018). Carucci recommends a three-dimensional approach, including organizational onboarding (teach them how things work, help them assimilate), technical onboarding (define what good looks like and set up early wins), and social onboarding (build a sense of community) (2018). Bauer has a six-pronged approach to onboarding: Compliance, Clarification, Confidence, Connection, Culture, and Checkback (2022). Compliance includes all the mandatory forms and training, such as I-9 and a video on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. Clarification refers to an employee’s expectations of their role and performance. Confidence means whether a new employee feels competent to do the job well. Connection is establishing a sense of belonging. Culture has to do with a company’s norms, values, and mission. Checkbacks evaluate the onboarding experience and how it can be improved for future new hires.

Organizational socialization, another term for onboarding, describes transitioning newcomers from outsiders to insiders through role clarity, self-efficacy, social acceptance, and company culture (Hall & Paul, 2020). Role clarity is to understand job expectations and evaluation measures. Self-efficacy relates to the employee’s confidence in their ability to do the job as outlined. Social acceptance is the inclusion of the new employee in the existing group of colleagues. Company culture is a shared set of workplace norms, beliefs, values,

attitudes, and behaviors. Together, these four characteristics outline an onboarding plan that promotes retention and employee success.

Orientation for university supervisors and student teachers is typically a brief presentation about the program's basic requirements, sometimes in as little as 15 minutes (Nugent, 2017). Several orientations are now available as YouTube videos since everything was online in 2020-2021. In these examples, the Director or Coordinator of Field Experiences runs the orientation from a slide deck and tells how to get a copy of the Student Teaching Handbook. In the fifteen-minute orientation for university supervisors for Concordia University Nebraska, there was no mention of how the supervisor would be evaluated on their performance (Nugent, 2017).

## **2.8 Evaluation of the University Supervisor**

Colleges and universities across the country differ in their evaluation methods. According to a survey of directors of student teaching at North Central institutions of higher learning, at 32% of schools surveyed, the university supervisor and cooperating teacher provided formative and summative assessments to the student-teacher (Blomenkamp, 1996). Still, the university supervisor was the only one submitting a final grade to the college or university 40% of the time (Blomenkamp, 1996). This leads some cooperating teachers to feel that their evaluative voice is diminished.

Evaluation should be comprehensive or 360-degree (Blomenkamp, 1996; Jacko & Karmos, 1977). The cooperating teacher and student-teacher should evaluate the university supervisor, and the university supervisor and student-teacher should evaluate the cooperating teacher. However, according to Blomenkamp, only 23% of respondents were evaluated this way (Blomenkamp, 1996). If the university supervisor is staff (not faculty),

self-evaluations are often included on an annual basis. Depending on the school, these evaluation forms are managed by a director of student teaching, a clinical supervisor, a department chair, a dean, or an associate dean.

Holbrook (2022) used Rasch analysis to develop a University Supervisory Quality (USQ) evaluation tool as part of his dissertation. His tool uses scenarios and a 5-point Likert scale for the student-teachers to evaluate their own university supervisor as better/same/worse than the university supervisor in the scenario. There were 61 student teachers in his study, all of whom had completed their clinical education within the last 3 years (Holbrook, 2022, p. 45)

Professional Development and Evaluation are not the same thing, but there are interesting studies in Peer Support Groups for University Supervisors that could be used by evaluators as they set up or restructure an existing evaluation program. Dangel and Tanguay (2014) developed a model for clinical educator professional development entitled *Critical Friendship* (see Figure 5.3) based on the work of Levine (2011) and Bisplinghoff's Critical Friends Groups [CFGs] (Bisplinghoff, 2005). Wittek et al. followed a similar model called Peer Support Groups in Norway (2023). There are four components of Dangel and Tanguay's model: 1) Learning from each other; 2) Develop a shared understanding of the program, teacher, candidates, and schools; 3) Facilitate integration of coursework, field experience, and schools; and 4) Strengthen and extend coaching skills (2014).

At Purdue University in the 1990s, Kreuger reported that data was collected from student-teacher surveys. However, something still needs to be done with the data to change the evaluation or training process for university supervisors. "No research project has been initiated related to the effectiveness of the university supervisor" (Kreuger, 1991, p. 32). Two program areas created their own survey and used the data each year to determine the

necessity to re-train and' or determine renewal of contract (Krueger, 1991). Another university responded to her request for information about their program. At that school, field instructors receive a full day of orientation, and meetings are held throughout the year to discuss the field experience process. The university supervisor is evaluated by both the student-teacher and the cooperating teacher. The Office of Field Experiences collects this data and uses it to conduct “orientation, training, and follow-up” with the university supervisor (Krueger, 1991, p. 34).

Morris (1980) describes the evaluation of university supervisors as situational. The university supervisor is responsible for supervising student-teachers and visiting them (non-evaluative mentoring). How the university supervisor is evaluated depends on the expectations of the evaluator and the importance they place on supervision or visitation. According to Morris, the needs of the K-12 school-based personnel are also a factor in evaluation (1980). The evaluator impacts the university supervisor's ability to determine and respond to those needs. The evaluator should describe role expectations, an attitude of expectation and participation, and a process for collection, analysis, interpretation, and feedback (Morris, 1980). The evaluation process can include formal and informal elements; for example, evaluation rubrics can be given to the student-teacher, cooperating teacher, and the host principal; informal evaluation can include a weekly summary of activities by the university supervisor. Each of these evaluation types can be used to improve university supervisor and student-teacher performance.

### ***2.8.1 Evaluation of the Written Feedback Given by the University Supervisor***

Flushman et al. (2019) reviewed the content and purpose of university supervisors' written feedback to student-teachers. Written feedback should 1) include particular content

items, 2) be differentiated based on learner needs, 3) be specific and evidence-based, and 4) be balanced in terms of identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement (Flushman et al., 2019). University supervisors “need scaffolded support in defining quality feedback, increased buy-in on the importance of written feedback, and targeted workshops on key content” (Flushman et al., 2019, p. 59). They recommend using video norming and exemplars to help university supervisors improve the quality of their written feedback.

Bates and Burbank also review written feedback as a case study of a university supervisor, a graduate assistant in their department (2008). They argue that university supervisor feedback has become too formulaic due to standards and evidence-based mandates. This reinforces the “notion of teaching as the culmination of a formulaic set of patterns and responses. Narrowing this view has limited the teaching and modeling of the process that we value for our student-teachers - namely, paying attention to the students as individual learners with unique views, learning needs, and perspectives on the world and helping our teacher candidates to become critical thinkers with a multicultural awareness” (Bates & Burbank, 2008, p. 10).

Krueger argued that the ability to “provide thorough written and verbal feedback for student-teachers” should be a “prerequisite for hiring” (Krueger, 1991, p. 69). Blomenkamp stated that written feedback was not a factor in the student teacher’s perceptions of their supervisor because there wasn’t enough of it to have any impact (1996).

### ***2.8.2 Self-Studies of University Supervisors***

The formalizing of self-study in teacher education has its roots in a symposium at the 1992 AERA Division K meeting titled “*Holding up the Mirror: Teacher Educators Reflect on their own Teaching*” (Guilfoyle et al., 2004, p. 14). After that symposium, the researchers developed

the S-STEP (Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices) process. Thousands of self-study articles related to teaching have been published since then (Samaras & Freese, 2009). The self-studies related to university supervisors are described in the paragraphs that follow.

Steadman and her colleagues described their experiences as first-time university supervisors in a qualitative analysis of their department at Smyth University. In the process, they also explore how university supervisors within a teacher education department of a college of education at a large public U.S. institution are valued, defined, and enacted (Steadman & Brown, 2011).

Fayne surveyed 222 student-teachers about their experience with university supervisors (Fayne, 2007). She found that university supervisors play a “distinct and important function” in the clinical experience (Fayne, 2007, p. 63). They serve as managers, confidantes, and evaluators, but the key to their success is knowing when to play which role: prescriptive, interpretive, or supportive (Zahorik, 1988), which leads to increased credibility. As a result of the self-study, Fayne made several changes to her program: 1) cluster student-teachers and university supervisor together to decrease travel time, 2) increase professional development in Pathwise, a mentoring and support communication tool, 3) invite the university supervisor to faculty meetings, and 4) facilitate grade norming activities.

Donovan and Cannon’s self-study situated university supervisors in the edTPA process at Georgia State (Donovan & Cannon, 2018). They argue that edTPA became the central focus of their work, and much of the relationship-building and pedagogical conversations were lost to problem-solving and technical support. They described edTPA as a fourth part of the traditional triad. They also highlighted issues with social justice or racial equality (Cinquini, 2022). Dangel and Tanguay’s Critical Friendship model was developed at

Georgia State, so this self-study is a follow-up to the challenges mentioned at the end of their article (2014, p. 16).

The self-study *What do we supervise for?* is essentially Mark's journal and Brandon's response to what Mark wrote during Mark's first semester supervising student-teachers (Diacopoulos & Butler, 2020). Mark describes his purpose in supervising is to be better than his own supervisory experience and to encourage his student-teachers to develop their own sense of purpose while putting theory into practice (Cuenca, 2010; Diacopoulos & Butler, 2020).

## **2.9 Summary**

In this literature review, I have narrowed down who should be a university supervisor, determined which policies are relevant, and outlined current evaluation practices for university supervisors. The trend in evaluation has been standardization and checklists, but AAQEP opens the possibility for change in how we think about evaluation more broadly.

I aim to establish best practices for onboarding university supervisors in preparation for their roles and responsibilities, in alignment with AAQEP's approach to evaluation.

## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

Not much is known about the onboarding and evaluation process for university supervisors across the United States (Baum et al., 2011; Dangel & Tanguay, 2014; Grossman et al., 2009; Holloway, 1995; Levine, 2011). To learn more about how university supervisors are onboarded and evaluated at colleges and universities across the United States, I needed a method that allowed me to explore data from multiple sources. The research question led to the choice of Interviewing as a methodology because it allowed me to explore how evaluators define, understand, and implement their roles and the roles of the university supervisors they evaluate.

Qualitative research allows researchers to “study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). The participants in this study had previously chosen a method of evaluating university supervisors based on their historical context, programmatic accreditation requirements, and perceptions of evaluation in general. Before the interviews, I could research the evaluator’s programmatic accreditation status and general demographics about the school, but more in-depth information about the evaluation process required an interview. Chapter 4 reports data that was collected during interviews and through document analysis. Finally, after the interviews were completed, the data was analyzed using template coding, and qualitative analysis allowed me to discover the process for onboarding and evaluation of university supervisors at various institutions accredited by AAQEP (Seidman, 2019).

### 3.2 Research Design

Interviews were completed to show connective themes between the onboarding and evaluation processes of participants purposely chosen for their programmatic accreditation type. Tracy defines qualitative interviews as “opportunities for mutual discovery, understanding, reflection, and explanation via a path that is organic, adaptive, and oftentimes energizing” (2013, p. 132). She defines purposeful sampling as “choosing data that fit the parameters of the project’s research questions” (Tracy, 2013, p. 134). The evaluators interviewed were selected from a list of schools accredited by AAQEP because each of these schools has a Teacher or Educator Preparation Program.

According to Ferrarotti:

The primary way a researcher can investigate an educational organization, institution, or process is through the experience of the individual people, the ‘others’ who make up the organization or carry out the process. Social abstractions like ‘education’ are best understood through the experiences of the individuals whose work and lives are the stuff upon which the abstractions are built (1981, as cited in Seidman, 2019, p. 9). If you want to know what schooling is like, you should speak with the students, teachers, bus drivers, secretaries, janitors, and aides who are the essence of the school. If you want to know about university supervisors, you should also listen to the student teachers, cooperating teachers, and their evaluators. This study helps to fill a gap in the literature for evaluators of university supervisors.

Evaluators of university supervisors each have their own approach to onboarding and evaluation situated in a historical context, understood through interview and document analysis. The *verstehen*, or subjective understanding, gives the evaluator's point of view, deeply situated within their job title and role, college or department, and entire university (Seidman,

2019; Tracy, 2013). We are allowed to walk a mile in their shoes and then show connective themes between their perspective and the perspective of other evaluators. The evaluator's understanding of the historical context of programmatic accreditation requirements and methodologies has led to their evaluation choices. This choice is then socially constructed with the administration team and the university supervisors they evaluate. The interpretivist viewpoint also draws from hermeneutics and a holistic understanding of a given situation, empathetically imagining the experience, motivations, and context of the evaluator and alternating that with the collection of data from additional sources to triangulate and explain their perception of the experience (Tracy, 2013). Through the interviewing process, the participants shared their lived experiences of onboarding and evaluation (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2005). The end goal of the interview was to understand the uniqueness and complexity of the processes and not to generalize the findings (Capello, 2018; Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Maxwell, 2005).

### **3.3 Research Question**

The following research question was presented to help me determine the evaluator's perception of the role of university supervisors at various colleges and universities, including how they are onboarded and evaluated. To fully understand evaluation, it is important to include the onboarding process to determine if the evaluator or someone else from the university helped the university supervisor learn what is expected of them in this role. By inquiring about the onboarding process, I hoped to glean a fuller picture of the evaluation experience during the evaluator interviews. Finally, in this study, I focused on university supervisors and worked to distinguish them from administrators, faculty, staff, and graduate students who are evaluated in different ways.

RQ1: *What is the process for onboarding and evaluating university supervisors, if any is used?*

### **3.4 Setting**

Semi-structured interviews occurred in a Zoom meeting in the participant's natural setting. "Qualitative interviews provide opportunities for mutual discovery, understanding, reflection, and explanation via a path that is organic, adaptive, and oftentimes energizing" (Tracy, 2013, p. 132). I was situated in a quiet office space with limited distractions, and the participants chose the location, the date, and the time of the interview. The participant was asked open-ended questions and asked to provide documentation to corroborate their answers.

#### ***3.4.1 Researcher as Interviewer (Positionality)***

I have a long history of working with university supervisors, several years of working with faculty, two years of employee onboarding experience, and recently seeing my oldest daughter complete the teacher certification process. Even though I have 20 years of teaching experience, I never completed the traditional teacher licensure process. I have only taught at private schools, on an emergency license, and at the college level. I tried to complete an Alternative Certification program while living in Colorado but could not meet the requirements of the university supervisor assigned to my school. Several years later, I earned Teacher Certification in Texas, but I never taught in a K-12 school as a licensed teacher. I have been teaching at the college level and have worked as an instructional designer or learning experience designer ever since. My daughter recently completed a traditional path to teacher licensure and teaches elementary music. She shared her onboarding and evaluation

materials with me, and we have discussed how she felt during her meetings with the university supervisor.

My negative experience with the university supervisor in Colorado could cloud my research on this matter. As such, I will be careful to protect against researcher bias. To protect against researcher bias, I obtained rich data, cross-compared collected data through triangulation, and used thick descriptions throughout the study (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Maxwell, 2005). I used bricolage, or deliberate mixing of research methods, to weave together a story of what is happening across university campuses regarding the onboarding and evaluation process for university supervisors, situated in the context of each university's specific programmatic accreditation history and the evaluator's perspective (Tracy, 2013). I had no control or influence over how participants evaluated or trained the university supervisors under their purview. My position is that the university supervisor is an important role that should not be undervalued in the evaluation process. I believe that the triad process is valid and that there is a range of competent cooperating teachers and university supervisors in each role. My hope is that if there are university supervisors on the lower end of that range (less competent), then they can benefit from targeted professional development and continue working towards student success – for the benefit of the student-teachers and future K-12 students. It should also be noted that the participants were able to change my mind about how onboarding and evaluation should be approached, which indicates that I can separate my own past experiences from my current research.

### **3.5 Participants**

Participants were chosen for this study from a list of schools that started the AAQEP accreditation process in 2017. The first group of Teacher Education Programs

completed the initial AAQEP cycle in 2019. The semi-structured interviews focused on the evaluators' perceptions and their understanding of the programmatic accreditation process at their university. All participants were active (not retired) in their teacher education college or department at the time of the interview. Participants agreed to participate via email, followed by a verbal agreement to the consent form explaining their rights. Participants were asked to select a time and day for the Zoom session and instructed to change their username to a pseudonym before the recording started. The participants' interviews clarify the research questions by revealing their perceptions of their school's onboarding and evaluation process.

### ***3.5.1 Criteria for Participant Selection***

Participants in this study are evaluators of university supervisors - faculty, staff, or administrators tasked with ensuring that a university supervisor is doing their job well. Their job titles include program director, department chair, field services director, director of assessment and accreditation, co-director of the center for educator preparation, university supervisor coordinator, and clinical experiences coordinator.

Participants were selected from a purposive sample of maximum variation from a list of universities in the United States by programmatic accreditation type (Tracy, 2013). These lists of accredited schools are available on the CHEA and AAQEP websites (Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation, 2021; Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2023b). The conditions for selection in this study are schools that use university supervisors to evaluate student teachers and current AAQEP accreditation since its founding in 2017. Every school accredited by AAQEP has a teacher or educator preparation program. Therefore, the list of potential colleges and universities in the United States is reduced from nearly 4,000 to 112 (See Section 1.8.2 for more). The contact listed on

the programmatic accreditation documentation was emailed first as a gatekeeper. Then, either that person or the evaluator of their choice was contacted to schedule an interview via Zoom. Participants were invited to interview until data saturation was reached (or no unique information was received). Table 3.2 shows the demographics of each location and Table 4.1 shows the demographics of each participant. From the 101 qualified schools on the list, I started with seven interviews to determine how much overlap was in the data. From there, I determined that saturation had been reached.

### ***3.5.2 Data Saturation***

Although there is considerable debate among researchers about when data saturation has been reached, it is widely accepted that qualitative and quantitative research differ. In quantitative research, we would use terms such as sample size or power, but in a qualitative interview study, data saturation can be reached through three different methods. First, some researchers call for an emerging research design, where the number of participants is determined through the interview process as “new dimensions of the issues become apparent” from the previous participants (Seidman, 2019, p. 60; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Second, others call for a snowball approach, “in which one participant leads to another” (Seidman, 2019, p. 60; Bertaux, 1981). Third is “a purposeful sampling technique designed to gain maximum variation” (Seidman, 2019, p. 61).

Once the method is chosen, there are at least three ways to determine when there are enough participants: sufficiency, saturation of information, or information power. Sufficiency asks the question, is there enough of a sample population so that anyone else can find themselves within the selected participant? For example, if I were to study the

preference of gifts for moms on Mother's Day, I should have a sample of participants that includes my own preference for a Mother's Day gift – a day off. Saturation of information asks the question, at what point do you start to hear the same information repeated (Seidman, 2019; Douglas, 1976; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985 Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Vasileiou et al., 2018; Weiss et al., 2020)? Guest, et al. refers to this concept as the “run length” divided by the “base size” (2020), where Gugiu, et al. plotted a parametric curve and nonparametric step-curve to show the 90% point at which saturation likely occurred (2020). Malterud et al. use the phrase “information power” rather than saturation to “guide adequate sample size for qualitative studies” (2016, p. 1753). They state that,

the more information the sample holds, relevant for the actual study, the lower amount of participants is needed. We suggest that the size of a sample with sufficient information power depends on (a) the aim of the study, (b) sample specificity, (c) use of established theory, (d) quality of dialogue, and (e) analysis strategy” (Malterud et al., 2016, p. 1753).

For the research study described here, the quality of dialogue was extremely high since the participants were all Master's or Doctoral level scholars with years of experience in this field of study. One participant had recently published research on a similar topic. I believe this contributes to the information power of the seven interviews completed. According to Seidman, “enough” participants is different for every study and researcher:

The criteria of sufficiency and saturation are useful, but practical exigencies of time, money, and other resources also play a role, especially in doctoral research.... The method of in-depth, phenomenological interviewing applied to a sample of participants who all experience similar structural and social conditions gives enormous power to the stories of a relatively few participants (Seidman, 2019, p. 61).

It is worth noting that doctoral research has a special category within Seidman's Interviewing model (Seidman, 2019). Mason (2010) did a meta-analysis of PhD qualitative research studies and described the processes by which the studies reached saturation. For phenomenology studies, Mason cited Creswell's recommendation of five to 25 interviews, (1998, p. 64), although Creswell and Creswell (2018, p. 186) recommends three to ten interviews, or at least six by Morse (1994, p. 225). Mason also described the limitations of time and IRB review boards as factors in the saturation decision-making process for PhD students (Mason, 2010).

### ***3.5.3 IRB Approval***

Before conducting interviews, I obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the University of Kentucky. The approval number for this study was #90284. Permission to proceed with the study was granted on 08/29/2023. After struggling to get enough participants, a modification was initiated on 10/10/2023 and approved on 10/11/2023 to use a flyer and social media for recruiting purposes. Even though none of my participants were recruited via social media, including the flyer as an image on the email helped draw attention to the study.

Participants were provided information about the interview protocol in the recruitment email and at the beginning of the Zoom session. Then, they were asked to consent to the instructions during the Zoom interview verbally. This process allowed the participant to remain anonymous throughout the recorded portions of the interview.

Because the participants are adults and there is limited potential for risk, I sought an Exemption review from IRB (Category 2). To protect the anonymity of my participants, I allowed the Zoom caller to change their name to a pseudonym, and the video was not

recorded. I was the only one to hear the audio file, and I only shared anonymous quotes from the written transcript. The audio and transcript files will be saved on a secured external drive at my home after being downloaded and deleted from the Zoom cloud. My personal laptop and personal Zoom account will be used for this purpose. I asked the participants to review my coding system as a form of member checking and data triangulation after the data was collected and analyzed (for more on this, see Section 3.8). The transcripts and interview data will be stored on an external hard drive at my home for six years.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

I followed Seidman's model for interviewing participants (Seidman, 2019). Although he suggests a three-interview model, he also allows for a one-to-two interview model in a longer format. Academic administrators generally have very full calendars, so I decided I would have more luck completing an interview cycle if I could get a single time slot.

Following Seidman's traditional interview model, I began each interview with time for introduction and background knowledge, establishing context for their position as an evaluator. I made sure to take time to get to know each participant as an individual and develop a relationship of trust and camaraderie prior to starting the recording. The middle portion of each interview was the recorded onboarding, evaluation, and programmatic accreditation data portion. The last third included questions reflecting on their onboarding and evaluation processes.

For case selection, the pool from which to draw cases included all universities where university supervisors are used to evaluate student-teachers. The scope of conditions for selection in this study was AAQEP accreditation from 2017-2024, for a total of 112 possible locations. This purposeful selection of maximum variation allows me to show connective

themes between onboarding and evaluation methods by the evaluators, each with “unique and diverse variations that have emerged in adapting to different conditions” (Patton, 2002).

The interview questions were semi-structured and based on an interview protocol included in Appendix 2. For each interview, I printed out the interview protocols for taking notes but did not give the questions to the participants before the discussion. The use of open-ended interview questions allowed participants to share their story without interference from the interviewer. They each provided rich detail that reconstructed their experiences (Seidman, 2019). The first four questions of the protocol provided context and allowed the participant to feel comfortable sharing their story. I used the responses to questions five and six on the interview protocol, as shown in Table 3.1, to show connective themes between each school’s onboarding and evaluation processes. Questions seven and eight allowed the participant to reflect on their journey. The questions provided an opportunity for the participant to tie the questions back to the use of AAQEP as a selection factor and an understanding of the qualities of AAQEP that allow for the onboarding and evaluation processes they described thus far.

Table 3.1 Alignment of Research Question and Interview Questions

Research Question	Interview Questions
<i>RQ1: What is the process for onboarding and evaluating university supervisors, if any is used?</i>	<p><u>5a. Onboarding</u></p> <p>In what ways are university supervisors onboarded at the beginning of each semester/year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you call it: Onboarding, Induction, Orientation?</li> <li>• How do you use handbooks or other materials (PowerPoint, Video)?</li> <li>• Do you meet with all university supervisors at the beginning of each year?</li> <li>• Do you meet with all student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors at the beginning of each year?</li> </ul>

Table 3.1 Continued

Research Question	Interview Questions
<i>RQ1: What is the process for onboarding and evaluating university supervisors, if any is used?</i>	<u>5b. Carucci's Onboarding Categories</u> Organizational onboarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you teach university supervisors how things work in your department?</li> <li>• How do you help them assimilate?</li> </ul> Technical onboarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you define what "good" looks like?</li> <li>• How do you set up early wins?</li> </ul> Social Onboarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you build a sense of community?</li> <li>• How do you continue the onboarding process throughout the year?</li> </ul>
	<u>6a. Evaluation</u> How do you evaluate university supervisors?
	<u>6b. Evaluation types</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you use student evaluation?</li> <li>• How do you use rubrics or scenario-based methods?</li> <li>• How do you use a 360-degree evaluation process?</li> <li>• How do you use a self-eval or goal-setting process?</li> <li>• How do you evaluate the written feedback?</li> <li>• How do you use weekly formative assessments, such as reviewing notes with the US?</li> <li>• How do you use peer support, critical friend groups, or professional development cohorts?</li> </ul>
	<u>6c. Documentation</u> Do you have any documentation that supports your evaluation of the university supervisor (evaluation rubrics, scoring guides, evidence of effective teaching)?

I followed Seidman's *Interviewing as Qualitative Research* model (Seidman, 2019) for interviewing techniques and relationship building. Each session began with informal chatting to make the participant feel comfortable talking with me and develop rapport (Seidman, 2019). To begin the recorded interview portion, I formally introduced myself, explained the purpose of the study, and asked them to affirm their willingness to participate by giving their

verbal assent to audio record the interview. Not every question from the Interview Protocol was asked in order. Sometimes, the participant would begin talking about the next portion organically, and it would not make sense to ask them to stop talking so that I could ask the question first. I tried to follow along and ensure every question was answered, even if we had to skip around. Table 4.2 provides the participant interviews' date, location, length of the recorded portion of the interview (total interview times varied from one to two hours), and pertinent notes (something unique that we discussed in each interview). The one-on-one in-depth interviews were initially transcribed via Zoom and then member-checked for accuracy and completeness. Each participant told a distinctive story of how university supervisors are onboarded and evaluated at their institution, but all agreed that evaluation data was not required by AAQEP. They also agreed that faculty are not onboarded or evaluated in the same way as university supervisors. This led to a change in my initial research question but did not impact the quality of the data collected or the participants selected. (For more on this change, see Section 3.7.1.) The results of the interviews will be discussed in depth in Chapter 4.

### ***3.6.1 Documentation***

Before the interviews, I gathered data on the programmatic accreditation type and status of each evaluator's program. I read the summary report for that school before each interview. I also read through the school's website for the Teacher or Educator Education Program, searching specifically for anything related to "university supervisor," "student teacher," or "clinical field experience" using the Find (Ctrl-f; Command-f) function. Some schools had documents that were archived but not readily available on the College of

Education's website. One school, for example, had an archive of documents collected as evidence for the regional accreditation process.

During the interview, I requested any documentation that supports or justifies their evaluation methods and is not publicly available, such as evaluation rubrics, scoring guides, student-teacher completion rates, or examples of success as inservice teachers. Participants were also asked for data related to university supervisor onboarding or induction programs, such as PowerPoints, videos, and handbooks. This content was used to triangulate the interview data and provide context. For example, if an evaluator talked about something they included in their handbook, I could locate it there. There was some hesitation in providing materials as they are proprietary. One participant said she would not provide a rubric because it is part of her published research, but she provided a link to the article instead. One participant provided a link to her dissertation because we discussed some of her research during the interview. Another participant walked me through the school's website and showed how each document is used and how the website is used in a similar fashion to explain processes and procedures to the university supervisors during orientation.

### ***3.6.2 Participant Locations***

When choosing sites for this study, I started with the initial criteria of 2017-2024 as the last programmatic accreditation year. This produced a list of 112 schools in the AAQEP category. Eleven listings were removed from consideration for the following reasons: 1) out of the country (Guam, Virgin Islands, etc.), 2) not a university or college (Teach for America), 3) the school is closed or closing this year, 4) the school merged with another campus, 5) the school withdrew from AAQEP. Therefore, the participants were selected from a list of 101 schools.

There was a total of seven participant interviews from seven different AAQEP universities. Each participant responded to my email by selecting an appointment time on my Google Calendar using the provided link to my booking page. The booking page allowed them to select a time, adding an appointment to our calendars and a link to join a Zoom meeting. This part of the process is not anonymous unless the participant uses a Gmail account that does not include their real name. Once the participant joined the Zoom meeting, they could change their name so that it did not appear on the transcript. The meetings were recorded in the cloud and auto transcribed by Zoom. All files were deleted from the cloud after downloading to my external drive. Each participant could choose the interview location since the interviews were conducted via Zoom. The seven locations are described in more detail in Table 3.2 and the following paragraphs.

Table 3.2 Participant Locations

Pseudonym	Type	Carnegie	Regional	Grants	Other
1. “Lynda”	Private	D/PU	HLC		
2. “Sophia”	Private	R2	MSCHE	Space	Full-Year
3. “Laureen”	Public	MCU M1	NWCCU		Normal
4. “Megan”	Public	MCU M1	WSCUC		Normal, System, HSI
5. “Ann”	Public	R1	HLC	Space	System
6. “Heidi”	Public	R2	NWCCU		AANAPISI
7. “Rebecca”	Public	MCU M1	MSCHE		Regional, System, Full-Year

Note: These acronyms are spelled out in Section 1.7 and Tables 1.1-1.4.

The first interview site is a teacher education program within the School of Education at a Private institution in an urban center in the Midwest. Originally exclusive to women, the institution enrolled approximately 5,809 undergraduates and 4,150 graduate

students in 2022 and is approximately 63% white female. The TEP program offers undergraduate programs in early childhood education and elementary education, four content areas of middle-level education, and five content areas of secondary-level education. They also offer a Master of Arts program with five areas of concentration and a Doctor of Education program with four distinct specializations.

The second location selected is a distinguished private university recognized for its national research capabilities (classified as R2) and participation in the Space Grant program. The university resides in a suburban area in the Northeast and enrolls about 4,600 students at all levels. The education department grants a Master of Arts in Teaching in eleven subject areas and seven languages or a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction. The student teaching requirement is a full-year internship with a mentor teacher. This immersive experience pairs each student with a mentor teacher, fostering a robust, practical learning environment designed to prepare aspiring educators for the complexities of modern classrooms.

The third interview site is a public university in a rural area in the northwest. Founded as a normal school with the primary purpose of training teachers, this university has since expanded and evolved. Today, its Department of Teacher Education offers professional licenses in Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary education with 16 concentrations and 14 graduate programs, including Special Education.

The fourth interview location is a public university in an urban area in the west that started as a normal school. Now part of a larger system, this School of Education offers 13 Single and Multiple Subject Credentials, master's degrees, and Authorizations (added endorsements) in addition to Leadership, Administration, and Special Education programs.

The campus enrolls more than 11,000 students, with about 1,100 of those in their graduate programs.

The fifth interview location is a public, space-grant, land-grant, and high research (R1) system institution in an urban area in the Midwest. It enrolls nearly 28,000 students at all levels. Teacher education students can earn degrees at the undergraduate, master, or doctoral level. There are 16 content areas for early childhood, elementary, or secondary education. Because of the robust state requirements, only two institutions in the state have opted for national programmatic accreditation (AAQEP).

The sixth interview location is a public R2 university in an urban area in the northwest. More than 26,000 students are enrolled at all levels. The College of Education awards more than 450 degrees annually in more than 40 diverse programs.

The seventh interview location is an online, public, regional system university in the Northeast. More than 15,000 students are enrolled at all levels. Their unique teacher education programs include master's level full-year residency and teacher-of-record models rather than the standard 10-16 week internship programs. The entire program can be completed online, so the supervisors may never meet their candidates in person. All the students already hold teacher certification, so this program would be for specializations or additional endorsements.

All seven locations are regionally accredited by HLC, MSCHE, NWCCU, or WSCUC. (See Table 1.2 for a description of these acronyms and Figure 1.7 to see their location on a map.) The youngest of the universities is 59 years old, and the oldest is 154 years old. There is considerable variation between the seven participants in terms of school type, size, and location. This is important because with so much variety, you would expect more variety in the answers to the questions.

### 3.7 Data Analysis

Step one of the interview analysis process involved reading the transcripts and correcting any errors in the transcription process. After that, the audio recordings were played again while reading the transcripts to provide context for anything not reflected in the text. For example, one participant ate a salad during her lunch break and stated, “This was the wrong day for a salad,” and another stated, “Bye honey,” to her spouse as he left the room. The interview text was then coded using a priori or template analysis (King, 2012). I developed a coding system taken from ‘Truth Tables 4.3-4.4 to identify strengths and weaknesses in the onboarding and evaluation systems of each school while still allowing the voices of the participants to be heard. A study codebook was developed to establish consistency between cases (Saldaña, 2016; Yin, 2018). Semi-structured interviews allow the evaluators to give more of their own interpretations and perceptions of the onboarding and evaluation processes, but the codebook allows me to find a common language to describe the similarities and differences across a wide variety of cases. For example, when a participant discussed using a rubric, I needed to differentiate if they were discussing a rubric used to evaluate the university supervisor or the rubric used to score the student teacher. I also confirmed the differences when faculty act as university supervisors, even though the participants spent a lot of time discussing the concerns with adjuncts or contract workers who also serve in the role. There was also some confusion about data collection for AAQEP purposes, so I clarified whether the data was collected to evaluate the college as a whole or if it was specific to the evaluation of the university supervisor. The marked passages were then used to create a profile of each school. Template coding allowed me to focus on “what things exist rather than determining how many things there are” (Walker, 1985, p. 3; Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Interestingly, several participants discussed the importance of

supervisor qualifications, even though I focused my question on their roles and responsibilities (more on this in Section 4.4).

Next, any documentation received from the participants was read and interpreted to triangulate the interview data. A few participants sent me handbooks and rubrics that are distributed to the university supervisors during the orientation process. One participant showed me where to locate all their files on their website. I used the materials to confirm the information given to me during the interviews. This allowed me to build a complete and more nuanced picture of each school's orientation and evaluation processes.

Finally, after completing the interviews, I was able to attend the National Field Experience Conference, where I could present my findings to a group of scholars in the field and ask questions about the research methodology. They helped me compare the AAQEP data collection requirements with those of other programmatic accreditation systems nationwide. (For example, CAEP requires three years of data collection.) They also gave me feedback on the a priori coding system. Because this was a roundtable session, we also discussed the feasibility and limitations of using large language models (i.e., ChatGPT) in qualitative research.

### ***3.7.1 Research Question***

*RQ1: What is the process for onboarding and evaluating university supervisors, if any is used?*

The initial research question for this study was, “What is the process for onboarding and evaluating faculty serving as university supervisors?” Each participant I interviewed stated that faculty are not onboarded or evaluated the same as university supervisors. There is also a wide variety in the roles that faculty assume throughout the student-teacher candidacy process. To limit confusion and continue with the selected participants, I opted to

modify the research question to allow the participants to tell their stories of how university supervisors are onboarded and evaluated, regardless of whether they are full-time faculty or not.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

To provide trustworthy and transferable results, I used various methods and techniques shown to increase validity and reliability. First, participants were selected from a purposive sample of maximum variation of programmatic accreditation type. This heterogeneous sampling type is used when the researcher needs access to a diverse range of cases that are all relative to a particular phenomenon or event: AAQEP programmatic accreditation. Second, after the interviews were conducted, transcribed, and analyzed, participants were asked to validate the results as a form of participant validation and data triangulation, or using a variety of sources to substantiate the evidence. The participants were sent a copy of the transcript and template analysis, as well as the text from their sections of Chapters three and four and asked to verify the information. I made edits to the text based on their input. Multiple forms of documentation were collected for construct validity to validate and confirm interview data (Yin, 2018). Key informants (subject matter experts and colleagues in evaluator or university supervisor roles) were used to read the draft of the interview report with codes and verify its accuracy and validity (Yin, 2018). For internal validity, logic models were used to explain patterns (Yin, 2018). Logic models visually show a phenomenon's purpose, context, inputs, activities, outputs, and effects. Finally, replication logic was used for external validity (Yin, 2018). The conclusions can be transferable in interview research if a school meets many of the same parameters. Therefore, I will explain the context and conditions of each school as thoroughly as possible. For reliability, an

interview protocol was used, a study database and codebook were created, and a chain of evidence was established (Yin, 2018). During data collection, these methods remove as much bias from the results as possible. These strategies assist in corroborating and verifying collected data and provide trustworthy findings that provide a thick description of the case.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the qualitative research process for this interview method. The methodology, data collection procedures, and data analysis strategies described inform the procedures that were followed to present the findings and conclusions in subsequent pages.

## CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This study aimed to determine how university supervisors are onboarded or assimilated into the college of education, including the methods used to teach them what constitutes a model or exceptional university supervisor, whether through an evaluation process or a critical friend group. This qualitative interview study sampled university supervisors at institutions using AAQEP (the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation) programmatic accreditation for teacher or educator preparation programs. The research question used throughout this study was:

*RQ1: What is the process for onboarding and evaluating university supervisors, if any is used?*

This chapter presents a rich description of each institution and their onboarding and evaluation processes. If none or limited processes exist, a discussion of how they hope to change these processes and procedures is given.

Table 4.1 below provides the demographics of each participant. Their job titles include program director, department chair, field services director, director of assessment and accreditation, co-director of the center for educator preparation, university supervisor coordinator, and clinical experiences coordinator. The variety of positions and levels of the participants is good, especially considering the small sample size. They were able to provide a depth of information from multiple viewpoints, even though the topic was specific. It was somewhat surprising that all seven of the participants were female given that only 44% of tenure-track faculty members are female, but there is a higher percentage of female faculty in education majors (American Association of University Women, 2018).

Table 4.1 Demographics of Participants

Pseudonym	Position	Level	Gender Expression
1. “Lynda”	Program Director	Associate Professor	F
2. “Sophia”	Department Chair	Professor	F
3. “Laureen”	Field Services Director	Assistant Professor	F
4. “Megan”	Director of Assessment and Accreditation	Professor	F
5. “Ann”	Co-Director, Center for Educator Preparation	Associate Professor	F
6. “Heidi”	University Supervisor Coordinator	Assistant Professor	F
7. “Rebecca”	Clinical Experiences Coordinator	Staff	F

## 4.2 Interview Data

Seven interviews were conducted over the span of four months. All seven participants were female and responded to my email request by scheduling an interview time via Google calendar booking page to meet on Zoom. Each participant confirmed their status as an evaluator of university supervisors at an AAQEP-accredited school. Four of the seven were the targeted contacts from the AAQEP accreditation listing, and three emails were forwarded to another individual at the same school.

Table 4.2 below summarizes the interview dates, locations, and lengths. The length refers to only the recorded portion of the transcribed and coded interview. It does not include any time before or after the record button was pressed. Most of the interviews lasted closer to an hour and a half. The sixth interview occurred the day before my mother died, and the seventh interview took place after a short break from dissertation work.

Table 4.2 Interview Recordings

Pseudonym	Date	Location	Length	Notes
1. “Lynda”	10/09/23	Zoom	33:07	Student and mentor evals
2. “Sophia”	10/16/23	Zoom	32:18	Student and CT evals, board
3. “Laureen”	10/18/23	Zoom	45:40	Student evals
4. “Megan”	10/26/23	Zoom	32:19	Student evals, AAQEP research
5. “Ann”	10/26/23	Zoom	37:42	Independent contractors, informal
6. “Heidi”	11/22/23	Zoom	41:58	<i>Coaching for Equity</i>
7. “Rebecca”	01/18/24	Zoom	29:42	Residential teacher of record program

The summaries of the interviews provided below are designed to give key information while maintaining the anonymity of the participants.

#### ***4.2.1 Interview One “Lynda”***

The participant for my first interview was a Program Director for undergraduate education and Associate Professor at a private university located in an urban center in the Midwest, regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. The program has been AAQEP accredited since 2023. She has been in this role for four and a half years. In that time, she has developed onboarding, peer support, and evaluation methods that could be used as a model for other universities. She evaluates approximately ten university supervisors annually, across multiple locations and degree programs. Each year starts with a personalized onboarding program designed to meet the needs of each supervisor. New supervisors are given more detailed instruction, while veteran supervisors discuss goals and aggregated feedback from former students in one-on-one or small group training sessions.

As “Lynda” explained,

Each university supervisor has an onboarding meeting with me. They also have two mentors. They have a faculty mentor who's also a university supervisor. And then they also have an adjunct who's a university supervisor. So they get two mentors as well. So lots of support for them in this. And then we hold, depending on the practicum, we always have a meeting... so we do an entire university supervisor meeting. Then each practicum leader has a meeting with them before the semester starts. And then we just started this year, we do monthly open house kind of meetings with our university supervisors. ("Lynda," 2023)

Every supervisor receives evaluation feedback from their student teachers, cooperating/mentor teachers, and a self-assessment. The director also provides feedback on processes as well as coordinates the mentorship program, supports informal happy hours, and facilitates inter-rater reliability sessions. Each supervisor is paired with two mentors starting with their first year.

So we either meet on Zoom as a group of university supervisors and then we meet on campus with the students every other week. there's a lot of, you know, handholding and mentoring and help in that practicum because we're meeting constantly. Plus they're invited to those monthly meetings as well. ("Lynda," 2023)

Peer support is very important at this university, and I love that it can take the form of formal in-person meetings, or informal happy hours.

We had a happy hour online, but more than one. So, you know, so there's that camaraderie and I love that they initiate it...So all the student teacher university supervisors were meeting once a month. And that really was very helpful to them. And just sharing processes and saying, you know, 'I have a student who... what do you suggest' in that kind of group, brainstorming and problem solving. So that's why

we took it to all the university supervisors in particular, just so they could think through it. (“Lynda,” 2023)

Ironically, this participant stated that the university supervisors “do not get any form of evaluation from me” (“Lynda,” 2023), but then she went on to say that her feedback on processes is a form of evaluation and provides useful information to the university supervisors as they complete their tasks.

They know I'm taking a look at all of the scores that they're submitting, and I send them feedback at the end of each semester on that. So like a lot of times I'm evaluating them on processes. They do get that from me. Like, okay, everything, this is what I was looking for. I went into Canvas, and I went into here and, and I see everything that you need. (“Lynda,” 2023)

She described onboarding processes from all three of Carucci’s categories (organizational, technical, and social) through phrases such as “one-on-one,” “mentors,” “samples,” “training,” “feedback,” “meetings,” and “happy hour” (2018). She also described their evaluation process as 360-degree: student evaluations, cooperating teacher evaluations, inter-rater reliability, mentor support, and a review of scores and processes at the end of each semester. I found nothing lacking in her onboarding or evaluation of university supervisors and would consider it a model or exceptional program.

#### ***4.2.2 Interview Two “Sophia”***

The participant for the second interview is the Education Department Chair and Professor at a private university in a suburban area in the Northeast. This R2 school is regionally accredited by MSCHE and was AAQEP accredited through June of 2024. Building on almost 18 years of experience, she developed an award-winning induction

system based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. She prefers to hire university supervisors who are National Board certified in their area of expertise but emphasized that those individuals are scarce. “So, in terms of qualifications, the University Supervisor ideally, is a person who, is recently retired in the certification area of the student” (“Sophia,” 2023). She has a 100% pass rate and a 100% job placement rate. All of her students complete a full-year internship program with a mentor.

I enjoyed discussing how they use video recording technology to support ongoing professional development of student teachers, and how this could be used to support the development of university supervisors as well as cooperating teachers. When everyone can watch the same lesson and provide specific feedback with evidence, it is more impactful than speaking in broad generalities.

A lot of research came out of the pandemic saying, ‘Wow, these video observations have something to offer.’ So when we were able to go back to in person, we decided to split the difference, and our supervisors do 4 in person and 3 video observations each semester and the video observations are done on Teaching Channel Plus, which is a platform that's password protected and secured to protect the children but also enables the supervisor to give feedback at the point in the video where the action is happening. (“Sophia,” 2023)

Peer support is very important at this university, whether formal meetings, or informal coffee hours.

We call them Zoom coffee hours with the supervisors, and it's usually the newer supervisors who go to the monthly coffee hours to say, ‘Hey, this is happening. I don't know what to do.’ And it’s a nice little support group for them. (“Sophia,” 2023)

She discussed the importance of balancing evaluation with making them feel supported and valued.

Our supervisors are so dedicated. We're not paying them a lot of money. So they're people who really want to give back. So for the most part, they go above and beyond what we ask of them. We got one who brought a candidate an iron the other day because he didn't have an iron, and he needed an iron, you know. I mean, they take them breakfast. They do things like that. So, generally speaking, our supervisors are really just fantastic, dedicated people. (“Sophia,” 2023)

As well as how difficult it can be to balance their needs with competing interests at home.

It's hard to compete with grandchildren. So you have to balance how much formality I put on their evaluation versus my intentional actions to make them comfortable, welcomed, appreciated, and still have them do the job to the standard that we want them to do. So it's a tricky one. (“Sophia,” 2023)

She also discussed her perspectives on AAQEP as a board member.

The mindset of AAQEP is tell us what your standards are, tell us what your values are in your context, and demonstrate how you meet those claims...

AAQEP asks us to rise to the level of trustworthiness whereas CAEP asks us to rise to the level of validity. (“Sophia,” 2023)

I found this participant's interview to be the most insightful since she is a chair of the Education department and a member of the AAQEP board. I was surprised to learn that they were two weeks away from their CAEP site visit when they were approved to switch to AAQEP. She described all three onboarding processes: organizational, technical, and social, in phrases like “one-on-one,” “exemplars,” and “support group.” She uses student and peer evaluation methods, including inter-rater reliability. I found nothing lacking in her

onboarding or evaluation of university supervisors and I would consider it a model or exceptional program.

#### ***4.2.3 Interview Three “Laureen”***

The participant for the third interview is a Field Services Director who also teaches classes and supervises student teachers as an Assistant Professor at a public university in a rural area in the Northwest. This normal school is regionally accredited by NWCCU and has been AAQEP accredited since 2022. Over half of our conversation related to the assessment process for student teachers, so there are fewer quotes and information related to onboarding or evaluation, but she provided helpful background into the struggles and nuances of field experiences and clinical courses.

She only has two years of experience in the role, but we had an interesting conversation about her goals and dreams for the department as well as what she has developed so far. For example, she had the most developed website and source of online documentation of any of the schools I interviewed. She was also very concerned with grade inflation from the supervisors. She is actively working to train the supervisors on using the rubrics to grade rather than passing students that you want to do well. “I’m trying to create some training for our supervisors” (“Laureen,” 2023). She tells them, “Please be really accurate in where you rate the student teacher. So that you know they really are ready” (“Laureen,” 2023). Her supervisors are only evaluated by the student teachers. “I don’t evaluate them. I’m just grateful for what they do. The students do have the opportunity to evaluate them” (“Laureen,” 2023).

I was surprised to learn that she collects written feedback from every supervisor so that she has evidence to review for purposes of collaboration or in case of an issue. The

Student Teaching Handbook is available online as a Rise course and the evaluation instruments are gathered using a program called Sonia. I really like how thoughtful she was about how she wants the rubric scoring to be used accurately and understands the importance of adding training and inter-rater reliability to make that happen.

#### ***4.2.4 Interview Four “Megan”***

The participant for the fourth interview is a Director of Assessment and Accreditation and a Professor at a public university system in an urban area in the West. This normal school is regionally accredited by WSCUC and has been accredited by AAQEP since 2023. She served as a faculty university supervisor for 15 years before transitioning into this role. She was the first participant to mention training for the cooperating teacher. They have a 10-hour training program for the mentor (a.k.a. cooperating) teachers, two of which are done with the triad (university supervisor, mentor, and student teacher). For onboarding, they have a half-day training every year, a buddy system, and meetings every 6-8 weeks, including inter-rater reliability. One concern she mentioned was similar to “Laureen’s” concern that university supervisors were being too nice: “Well, I think a lot of times university supervisors think they’re going to be the cheerleader and at times they may overlook concerns” (“Megan,” 2023).

When asked about technical onboarding, she replied, “I’m not sure it’s intentional to be honest” (“Megan,” 2023).

The university supervisors are an important part of the clinical and field experience process, but they sometimes get left out of faculty meetings or campus events because they are away at their K-12 school sites. “It’s incumbent upon us as program leadership to make

sure that we are remembering they're there, because without them [the university supervisors] these candidates would not be growing” (“Megan,” 2023).

This participant was extremely knowledgeable about the AAQEP and CAEP accreditation models since she has completed extensive research regarding programmatic accreditation.

What AAQEP offered us the opportunity to do was to look at those things that aren't exactly going as well as we think and be able to make some changes on the fly... You know you don't have to have a minimum of 3 years' worth of data. You can tell us why you made this change, and you can do these things that you're authentically looking across the board at your programs, which is a big difference for us with the quality assurance report... CAEP is too quantitative as AAQEP is to mixed methods. (“Megan,” 2023)

This participant has a robust onboarding program, but is missing some of the technical pieces, like informing the university supervisors of what good looks like. Union rules dictate a lack of formal evaluation processes, but more intentional informal processes could be used, like evaluating written feedback, or training on how to have difficult conversations.

#### ***4.2.5 Interview Five “Ann”***

The participant for the fifth interview is an Associate Professor and Co-Director for the Center for Educator Preparation at a public university system in an urban area in the Midwest. This R1 institution is regionally accredited by HLC and has been AAQEP accredited since 2023. She has been in her current role for 8 years. This participant has struggled to return to their pre-pandemic models of onboarding and evaluation after a

significant turnover of faculty within the department. She would like to get back to their more formal processes and procedures, but for now everything is more one-on-one and informal. For a while they had monthly Zoom meetings as a whole group to prepare data for accreditation, where they did some inter-rater reliability, a crosswalk of state and AAQEP standards, and calibration of their processes. She was highly complementary to her support staff and the roles they play in making the program successful.

“So I would say, we are philosophically, we believe in more of a coaching model as compared to a supervisory model” (“Ann,” 2023). Coaching conversations are emphasized over grades due to issues with grade inflation. Part of her goals for future training would be to expand their coaching model and add diversity trainings for faculty, but there’s only so much you can do to try to remove or coach tenured faculty members with embedded behaviors.

She would also like to have a better system of data collection, analysis, and retention. “Our institutional research department does not maintain the data at the granular level that we need for our reporting” (“Ann,” 2023). But to truly have time to do the trainings and collect the amount of data they need, “I need my faculty to teach less” (“Ann,” 2023). She described the differences between research and clinical-based programs. Her full-time faculty are non tenure-track so that they can focus on the clinical side.

I was surprised to learn that one of her concerns about continuing with CAEP was the 3.0 GPA requirement. She argued that the research shows that a student’s “GPA is not a factor of success”, especially among a diverse workforce (“Ann,” 2023).

#### ***4.2.6 Interview Six “Heidi”***

The participant for the sixth interview is an Assistant Professor of Practice and University Supervisor Coordinator in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction at a public university system in an urban location in the Northwest. This R2 school is regionally accredited by NWCCU and has been AAQEP accredited since 2023. All 25 of her university supervisors are hired into the Adjunct Supervision Pool. She described her onboarding process as a whole group meeting during the summer term where they do some inter-rater reliability, discuss the POP cycle, and introduce everyone. During the fall semester they meet again to discuss how to use GoReact, discuss how to use TK20, discuss US PREP, and familiarize everyone with the trimester/semester calendar. For the spring meeting she would like to add a GoReact feedback training, as described in the quote below.

She discussed the Handbook and that it exists, but that no one really asks to see it, because “their role has increasingly become form heavy” (“Heidi,” 2023). The university supervisors are more likely to ask how to turn their documents into PDFs or ask to see a video about proper usage of GoReact.

Her hiring and onboarding process was very different this year. In an effort to hire and retain more qualified university supervisors, she would meet with interested applicants before they applied, then instruct them how to apply. Then, they would go to HR for their benefits orientation and meet with a partnership coordinator related to topics like requesting mileage reimbursement prior to starting their role. She conducted a total of 14 hours of onboarding or just-in-time meetings throughout the year.

As a new university supervisor coordinator at the beginning of COVID her role has seen its fair share of challenges. The evaluation of university supervisors has been limited and inconsistent.

So when I kind of inherited this role that [evaluation] really wasn't part of it. And it really was like, what do we need to just keep functioning [during COVID]? Is that an area that is totally missing? Absolutely one bazillion percent. (“Heidi,” 2023)

The students evaluate their cooperating teachers and university supervisors, but she never sees those results. If students are having issues they would come to her directly, but they are more likely to move a supervisor to a different department rather than letting them go. If necessary, the department chair would then be responsible for the firing process.

She would like to use GoReact not only for student teacher evaluation but also for PD for university supervisors.

I want to roll into our Spring PD that supervisors record a conversation that they have a coaching conversation they have with a candidate so they can start to give themselves some feedback and then start to have some conversations with peer groups. (“Heidi,” 2023)

This participant was put into this role in 2019 and spent most of the pandemic dealing with turnover and program changes. She is just now trying to figure out how to use onboarding and evaluation to make the program less confusing for the university supervisors. She has great ideas for implementing a GoReact PD system where they watch videos and rate them together, both in sample teaching sessions and sample coaching sessions. She also discussed using the book *Coaching for Equity* (Aguilar, 2020) as a book club or small group study. The way she described her PD sounded close to a critical friend group, but she wants to be more intentional about making that happen.

“Heidi” was extremely kind and patient with me as I tried to conduct this interview after learning that my mother could pass at any time. I was very grateful to have a script of questions to ask and only struggled briefly to come up with the word for triangulation. (I had

to look it up and email her later.) Luckily, after the interview was over, I was able to travel down and be with my mother when she died surrounded by family.

#### ***4.2.7 Interview Seven “Rebecca”***

The seventh interview participant is a Clinical Experiences Coordinator at a public university system in the Northeast. This school is regionally accredited by MSCHE and has been accredited by AAQEP since 2019.

She has been in this staff role for more than five years. She described a unique residential program that lasts the full year, as well as 4 week practicum programs for adding endorsements. “Nobody else has a program like us” (“Rebecca,” 2024). The faculty supervisors observe each student once per year, and adjuncts supervise multiple times per year for ongoing coaching and support. There is no cooperating teacher in the classroom if the student teacher is the teacher of record, but there is a host or mentor teacher. The faculty runs the onboarding meeting with the rest of their adjuncts in the fall, and then all the faculty and adjuncts meet in the spring. All the meetings are remote, including the classroom observations. The only technical onboarding they do is truly technical, making sure everyone can use the technology for remote observations.

We don’t have a need for that [technical onboarding] because they should be utilizing their own teaching experience, their own classroom experience. A good portion of them are administrators in school, so they work with teachers all day long. So it's just kind of an extension of what they're already doing. (“Rebecca,” 2024)

This participant has a unique program model, so several of the answers to the questions were not in line with other programs. She does have an orientation program for the adjunct supervisors, but the faculty are only invited to one of the meetings at the

beginning of every year. There is no evaluation of any kind, except that she reviews some of the written feedback given to each candidate. I recommend adding intentional evaluation, perhaps as a peer support group. This is a unique program, so talking to other supervisors doing the same work would be helpful. It would also be helpful to provide modules or learning materials in a course shell, on topics such as translating the content into practice or providing support for adults with learning challenges.

### **4.3 Data Analysis**

At the onset of conducting interviews, I used the following categories to identify the types of onboarding and evaluation processes. The interview process allowed me to collect data on the evaluator's experience and decide whether these categories need to be expanded or contracted in any way. After the interviews were complete, I used the categories shown below to fill in the truth tables that follow. These categories and the tables give a quick overview of the data collected.

#### ***4.3.1 Onboarding***

- Organizational onboarding
  - The evaluator teaches university supervisors how things work in their department.
  - The evaluator helps the university supervisor assimilate.
- Technical onboarding
  - The evaluator defines what “good” looks like.
  - The evaluator sets up early wins.
- Social Onboarding

- The evaluator builds a sense of community (Carucci, 2018).

Table 4.3 Truth Table - Onboarding

Pseudonym	Organizational	Technical	Social
1. "Lynda"	1	1	1
2. "Sophia"	1	1	1
3. "Laureen"	1	0	1
4. "Megan"	1	0	1
5. "Ann"	0	1	1
6. "Heidi"	1	0	0
7. "Rebecca"	0	0	0

Note: 1=yes, 0=no

#### 4.3.2 Evaluation

- The evaluator collects surveys from student evaluations of the university supervisor
- The evaluator uses a rubric to evaluate the university supervisor
- The evaluator uses a 360-degree evaluation process
- The evaluator uses a self-evaluation or goal-setting process
- The evaluator provides coaching on the written feedback of the university supervisor
- The evaluator uses weekly formative assessments
- The university supervisors use peer support, critical friend groups, or professional development cohorts.

Table 4.4 Truth Table - Evaluation

Pseudonym	Student eval.	Uses a rubric	360-degree	Self-eval.	Written feedback	Weekly formative	Peer support
1. "Lynda"	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
2. "Sophia"	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
3. "Laureen"	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

Table 4.4 Continued

Pseudonym	Student eval.	Uses a rubric	360-degree	Self-eval.	Written feedback	Weekly formative	Peer support
4. "Megan"	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
5. "Ann"	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
6. "Heidi"	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. "Rebecca"	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

Note: 1=yes, 0=no

### 4.3.3 Qualifications

Several common themes emerged when analyzing participant interviews. First, the Directors, Department Chairs, Clinical Experience Coordinators, Directors of Assessment, and University Supervisor Coordinators I spoke with all shared the opinion that AAQEP does not require anyone to collect data on the evaluation of university supervisors so it is not something they do or think they should do. They use qualifications and one-on-one interviews with the accreditation site visit team to show the effectiveness of their programs. Qualifications or "Pre-screening" were mentioned as a key factor for many of the participants in terms of trustworthiness and AAQEP's data collection requirements ("Lynda," 2023). In other words, university supervisors are qualified to do the job and AAQEP trusts them to do it. There are other types of student check-ins, peer support, and site visit interviews that can prevent poor quality, without requiring standardized evaluation practices.

The following quotes are from the seven interviews, in response to question 7b: What kinds of evaluation data are collected for programmatic accreditation purposes?

"It's not really necessary" ("Lynda," 2023).

“The results of that survey are in there, but I think I think that's it in terms of supervisor evaluation, because when it comes down to it, supervisor evaluation, it's really pretty ad hoc, you know, once we hire them, then it's [J] interacting with them pretty frequently on the monthly basis” (“Sophia,” 2023).

“...but evaluation scores for the University supervisors was not part of that...” (“Lauren,” 2023).

“The other thing is that AAQEP really doesn't ask us for evaluations of faculty” (“Megan,” 2023).

“They interviewed our coaches, they interviewed our students, they interviewed the monitor teachers, the form, the documentation, the training for filling out the form.... And then they had a conversation with our student teacher coordinator” (“Ann,” 2023).

“So we have not even had those conversations at all” (“Heidi,” 2023).

“We really don't do much data with supervisors” (“Rebecca,” 2024).

Whether stated directly or by exclusion, every participant confirmed that AAQEP does not require data collection for university supervisor evaluation.

#### ***4.3.4 Individualized Onboarding***

A second theme that emerged is that onboarding programs are more individual to the school and depend mostly on how new the university supervisor is to the position. Most schools just meet one-on-one with new supervisors to get them up to speed. If the required forms and student teacher evaluation systems are straightforward, they should not need an orientation every year to remind them how to do their job.

The following quotes were given in response to question 5a (full text of the question can be found in Appendix 2).

“It's all just very one-on-one” (“Lynda,” 2023).

“So our lead supervisor does trainings. So a brand new supervisor first is going to meet with me. One on one. Then, is going to meet with this the lead supervisor, one on one” (“Sophia,” 2023).

So most everybody has done it before, so I don't have to necessarily do a training every year. But like this year I had I just held a Zoom Meeting to go over like what I'm showing you. With them” (“Laureen,” 2023).

“New university supervisors are provided a half-day training, and all new University supervisors are required to attend and returning supervisors are encouraged to attend so that we can start to develop that collaborative conversation with them, and also introduce them to the evaluation tools that we use. And then, during the academic year, supervisors meet. we'd like to say monthly, but it's probably every six to eight weeks, and during many of those sessions we will actually take one of our performance evaluations and go through the rubric with them and do some inter-rater reliability and training on that” (“Megan,” 2023).

“We're fortunate that we have a pretty consistent group of coaches who come back on a regular basis... So there's very few that she has to train from the ground up, if you will” (“Ann,” 2023).

“Once I recommended them for hire, we would meet again, one on one” (“Heidi,” 2023).

“We have an orientation with myself, where we talk about the expectations of being a supervisor” (“Rebecca,” 2024).

Pre-COVID orientations may have looked different, but many of these processes changed by necessity and have not reverted for a variety of reasons.

#### ***4.3.5 Critical Friend Groups or Peer Support***

When asked to reflect on what they would change about their programs, six of the seven participants mentioned peer support. “Lynda” talked about “relationships,” “frequent meetings,” and “sharing processes” as items she would like to change or start doing going forward. “Sophia” talked about “identifying the gaps...like... adjunct quality... how we’re monitoring, onboarding, supporting adjuncts, and supervisors are in that pool” (“Sophia,” 2023). “Laureen” talked about intentionally scheduling group support sessions with pre-, mid-, and post-check-ins based on feedback from students. “Megan” talked about being more intentional about looking at how they can support university supervisors while doing the classroom observations including training in difficult conversations. “Ann” said “I would say we are working towards professional cohorts” (2023). “Heidi” talked about using GoReact to create peer support groups around how they are conducting coaching sessions.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the data collected throughout the interviewing process. While AAQEP does not require collection of university supervisor evaluation data, many of the participants described their current evaluation procedures, as well as possible future program improvements. With that in mind, I will present recommendations for future program improvements in Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Summary

This study aimed to determine how university supervisors are onboarded and assimilated into the college of education, including the methods used to teach them what constitutes a model or exceptional university supervisor, whether through an evaluation process or a critical friend group. Seven interviews were conducted over the span of four months. The participants agreed that faculty are onboarded and evaluated differently from university supervisors. They also agreed that AAQEP does not require evaluation data collection but rather data on their qualifications. The interview data was analyzed using *a priori* coding or template analysis due to the lack of agreement among education scholars when discussing field experiences and the roles and responsibilities of the team members responsible for evaluating student teachers. *A priori* coding allows the researcher to focus on “what things exist rather than determining how many things there are” (Walker, 1985, p. 3).

This chapter provides conclusions based on research findings from interview data collected on the onboarding and evaluation of university supervisors and discussion and recommendations for future research. According to these seven participants, university supervisors are not onboarded consistently, not evaluated consistently by their university administrators, and are overlooked in the data submitted to AAQEP, but this is not necessarily a bad thing. AAQEP looks at the credentials of the university supervisors and has individual or group conversations with them during the site visit. AAQEP focuses on what works for this school in the context and environment they work in. Education is not a one-size-fits-all thing, and the onboarding and evaluation of university supervisors could be just as individualized.

There are five steps in the onboarding and evaluation process for university supervisors that can be individualized or tailored to each school or supervisor's needs. First, university supervisors are selected to observe, coach, and evaluate student teacher candidates based on their own teaching credentials, experience, or expertise in the same subject area. In some cases, K-12 administrators are selected rather than content or subject matter experts. This could be because of a lack of subject matter experts in the geographical area, but it could also be because K-12 administrators are trusted and given the authority to evaluate teaching quality regardless of content area. The second step in the process is onboarding, which includes an initial orientation followed by ongoing training to establish policies, procedures, expectations, and inter-rater reliability. None of this stage of the process must be done in person or one-on-one, but it should be intentional. The third step is the university supervisor's student teacher and location assignment. This could range from one to thirteen student teachers per university supervisor per semester. It could also include several hours of travel per week or could be done entirely online or with the assistance of telepresence robots in the classroom (Burbank, Goldsmith, Bates, Spikner, & Park, 2021). The university supervisor is encouraged to visit the student teacher's classroom between four to ten times per semester. The fourth step is performance evaluation. This is data gathered from students, faculty, cooperating teachers, peers, or school administrators for the purpose of constructive feedback and support. The process can be formal or informal, oral or written, one-on-one or small group, one-time or ongoing. The fifth step is continuous improvement. Feedback and data are reviewed by the university supervisor and their evaluator or peers to develop and implement strategies that will enhance the quality of supervision, the quality of the student teacher's performance, and the quality of education

received by the students in the classroom. This process repeats every semester but is adjusted based on the ongoing needs of the university supervisor over time.

The evaluators' roles in this process vary based on their level of tenure, administration, and type of school. For example, a staff coordinator might support adjuncts but not faculty. A Dean or Department Chair might handle faculty evaluation or complex hiring and firing situations. Of course, there is very little consistency among schools regarding what these roles are called or who has what authority.

## **5.2 Discussion**

I began this dissertation process thinking that evaluation would be more important than I do now, like a “gotcha!” for bad supervisors. I have come to understand that the whole point of the AAQEP process is to trust the people we have hired to do a job and to do it well. Based on the interviews and from feedback at the Field Experiences Conference, I now believe that onboarding (even if it’s one virtual meeting per semester) and critical friend groups or peer support groups may be more important than evaluation for university supervisors.

The dissertation process has allowed me to explore the literature, evaluate research methods appropriate for learning about university supervisors, and interview the people who hire and fire them. Onboarding is just one way that university supervisors could be oriented to their roles and explore the processes for doing their jobs well. Evaluation is just one way that a university supervisor could have conversations with their evaluator about the quality of work they are performing, but there are many other ways this could be accomplished.

When I began this study, I wanted to find the best practices for onboarding and the recommendations for evaluation procedures. I assumed that annual onboarding was

necessary and that evaluation every semester would be the key to knowing whether a supervisor was performing well, but I was wrong. I could create an onboarding slide deck or consult with someone who needed to create a new onboarding program, but an already established program could do just as well by partnering up a new supervisor with a mentor or pairing up a content specialist with a pedagogy specialist on their first day to show them the ropes. There is no limit to how to onboard or evaluate a teacher of teachers. In a small school, one-on-one coaching conversations might work for evaluation. In a larger school, group meetings and peer support might be more effective for onboarding. A veteran faculty member paired with an adjunct could be mutually beneficial for either onboarding or evaluation.

### **5.3 Implications**

After interviewing a sample of evaluators of university supervisors, I have learned that onboarding and evaluation systems vary widely across the United States. I offer the following suggestions for the evaluators who requested additional guidance on developing an intentional onboarding and peer support program.

#### ***5.3.1 Onboarding***

My first recommendation is to have an intentional system of onboarding in place for all university supervisors, regardless of content area. The policy recommendation is to have a system, but in practice, there can and should be wide variety in the processes and procedures used to implement the policy based on contextual needs. This could be as simple as a virtual group meeting or a one-on-one meeting where the Field Experience Coordinator or Department Chair introduces themselves and some general information about the program, as

well as where to look for additional support at the university. The University of Oregon Human Resources page states that “effectively orienting and onboarding new employees to the university, your department/unit, and to their positions is critical to establishing successful, productive working relationships” (University of Oregon, 2024).

Second, provide examples of what “good” looks like. What does it mean to be a model or an exceptional university supervisor? What kinds of written feedback, coaching, mentoring, and evaluation would be most helpful for the student teachers, cooperating teachers, and the university? Several participants showed me examples of websites, handbooks, and shared storage drives that can be used for this purpose. For example, The University of North Texas College of Education has a website titled “Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations of the University Field Supervisor” (2022) where they give practical examples of what is expected of a proficient university supervisor. (Note: UNT is not a participant in this study, nor are they accredited by AAQEP.) Participants “Laureen” and “Rebecca” both mentioned collecting written feedback from their university supervisors. They could use this data to inform coaching and feedback conversations, but it could also be used as exemplars.

Third, provide an opportunity for rubric review and inter-rater reliability. This teaches the university supervisors what “good” looks like and allows for contact with other supervisors at your school. Inter-rater reliability is employed in various research contexts to ensure that multiple raters or observers consistently agree in their assessments. Among the participants I spoke with, the university supervisors all use similar rubrics to evaluate the performance of the student teachers at their school. It is important that they work together to determine how the rubric should be scored to provide reliable, consistent data across evaluators, schools, and student teachers. As a new graduate teaching assistant at Texas

State, our team watched sample speeches together to create consensus on what an A, B, C, or D graded speech looked like. I remember agreeing on the A, but the B, C, and D can be more difficult to distinguish on a continuum of harsh and easy graders. Participant “Megan” described her easy graders as “too nice,” and “Laureen” mentioned “grade inflation” as a concern among university supervisors who want to see their student teachers do well. Providing space for these conversations allows the team to achieve same-page status (McLean, 2024).

Fourth, provide a way for university supervisors at your institution to talk to each other. This not only builds community but also provides peer support, mentoring, critical friend groups, communities of practice, and professional development cohorts. Dangel and Tanguay’s Critical Friendship Model is a good descriptor of how peer support can be used in this context (Dangel & Tanguay, 2014). The model is described in Figure 5.3 below.

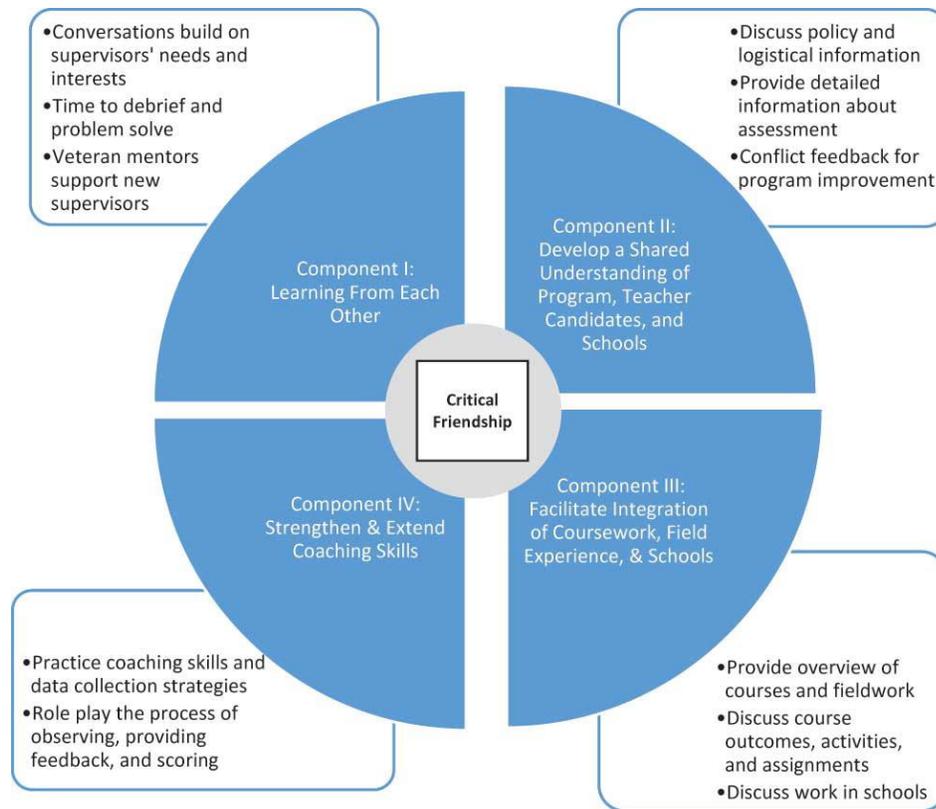


Figure 5.3 Dangel and Tanguay’s Critical Friendship Model

Note: From “Don’t leave us out there alone”: A framework for supporting supervisors, by J.R. Dangel and C. Tanguay, 2014, *Action in Teacher Education*, 36(1), p. 9. (<https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2013.864574>). Copyright 2014 by Taylor & Francis. Reprinted with permission.

This model lays out a framework for conducting university supervisor evaluations without rubrics or data collection while still meeting the community’s needs. The four components could be the agenda for the first onboarding session with follow-up meetings scheduled throughout the semester or year. In the author’s words, “Professional development that scaffolds and supports supervisors is critical for quality field experiences and is our responsibility as teacher educators” (Dangel & Tanguay, 2014, p. 3).

### ***5.3.2 Evaluation***

AAQEP does not require data collection on evaluating university supervisors, but that does not negate its importance. A learning curve exists between being evaluated as a teacher and performing the evaluations (Selke, et al., 2021; Yendol-Hoppey, Dana, & Hoppey, 2019). To that end, I recommend establishing an intentional system of support for all university supervisors, irrespective of their field of expertise, academic level, or tenure. The evaluation of prospective educators necessitates distinct competencies separate from how the university supervisors were evaluated as teachers (Swennen & van der Klink, 2009). Training or mentorship is just as important for tenured faculty as it is for adjuncts or grad assistants but should not be a one-size-fits-all approach (Gannon, 2021).

Many of the participants in this study referred to a one-on-one approach for onboarding and evaluation. As a member of the staff at a public community college, each member of my team creates an individualized development plan that aligns with the goals of our boss, the department, and the college. We meet with our supervisors weekly to check-in on the progress of our goals and our annual evaluation provides a score of how well we completed them. A similar system on a smaller scale could be implemented without the need for an expensive Learning Management System like Workday.

Several participants mentioned a scarcity of content area specialists in all geographical areas. The scarcity of adequately compensated personnel does not justify a lack of oversight regarding the performance of their responsibilities. In an environment where competent university supervisors are scarce, it is especially important that the supervisors we have receive guidance, coaching, and mentorship rather than simply being dismissed or reassigned at the conclusion of an unsatisfactory semester (Tarallo, 2020).

But this guidance should not come in the form of yet another survey or rubric to fill out (Olson, 2014). It should not be merely a grade or score that the supervisor receives (Morris, 1980). It should not be a single student evaluation at the end of the semester (Clayson, 2008). It should come in the form of guidance from other people who know what the job entails and can help them do it well (Dangel & Tanguay, 2014). It should come in the form of technical support, not just the kind described here (“How do you describe what good looks like?”) but should include actual IT/technology support, the kind that helps older adults take handwritten notes and create a PDF, or submit a form using an automated system, or upload a grade onto Canvas or Blackboard. Coaching can come in the form of looking at written feedback and deciding if the supervisor needs instruction in giving feedback to students (Flushman et al., 2019) or in handling difficult conversations (Grenny, 2022). Coaching can happen via online technology or in person (Ardley & Johnson, 2019).

Holbrook described university supervisor quality in terms of resourcefulness, constructive feedback, mentorship, and collaboration (2022). These are qualities understood in relationships with other people; therefore, we should allow university supervisors to engage with their peers and not work in silos.

#### **5.4 Limitations**

There was a considerable amount of turnover among college administrators during COVID. This could have impacted my ability to track down the contacts from the accreditation process, or anyone who was familiar with the previous accreditation cycle.

I was unable to find administrators who evaluate full-time faculty members. This could be due to the recruitment period, and I might have had more luck if I had tried to

recruit during a less busy time of the semester rather than over the summer. It might have worked best to recruit during the spring and plan for interviews over the summer.

Administrators are very busy and do not have much free time. Therefore, the interview process was not as long or thorough as expected. It was also difficult to get responses to follow-up emails after the interview. I should have added more follow-up tangential questions to my Interview Protocol to make the interviews last longer. For example, after learning that qualifications were more important than roles and responsibilities, I could have asked them to describe their qualifications or hiring process.

Emailing administrators may not have been the best method of recruitment. Sometimes, you must call on the phone or work with an assistant first.

I should have started with the recruitment flyer rather than going through the IRB revision process to approve its use after several weeks of trying to recruit without it.

Two of the administrators I interviewed were new to their roles and were unable to answer some of the questions. It might have been better to do an initial survey first to make sure they were a good match before going through the interview process.

“Heidi” talked about her motivation for replying to my email. She stated that she gets hundreds of these types of requests, but this one caught her eye because she was interested in learning more about the topic. I found it interesting, and it made me wonder about the motivations of the other participants. What was their motivating factor? Would a \$50 gift card have motivated others to participate, or would it have prompted motivation for the wrong reasons? Would an offer of financial incentive change the results of the study?

## 5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

There is considerable variation in the types of people who are hired to perform the duties of a university supervisor. Additional research should be done to determine whether graduate students, adjunct faculty, full-time faculty, former principals/administrators, or independent contractors are most effective and which types should not be hired for this role. Fields argued in 1979 that only tenured faculty should be used as university supervisors. Does his argument still stand today considering the cost-benefit analysis of course releases for full-time faculty to do clinical work?

A fair amount of emphasis is placed on the qualifications for university supervisors in the hiring stage. These data are reported to AAQEP and are used to argue for the level of trust the school has in its supervisors. With that in mind, the following questions occurred to me. Where did the standard of qualifications originate? Many schools use a similar standard of qualifications in the job description for their adjunct or contract university supervisors, but what circumstances lead them to ignore the standards when making hiring decisions? What conditions necessitate deviating from the norm of 3 years of licensed teaching in the subject area being evaluated? Are administrators able to supervise student teachers in any subject area in every state? Under what conditions would it be more appropriate to require a content expert over a general evaluator? How helpful is a former high school English teacher to an elementary music teacher or an art teacher to a social studies teacher?

As a student of both communication and education, I am interested in instructional communication theories such as power as a relational phenomenon. How does power influence the student teacher, university supervisor, and cooperating teacher dynamic? What about the power of the evaluators and principals? In what ways are they using legitimate, coercive, reward, referent, or expert power to influence the members of the triad (Roach,

Richmond, & Mottet, 2006)? This leads me to Behavior Alteration Techniques (BATs) and Behavior Alteration Messages (BAMs). In what ways are university supervisors and cooperating teachers influencing the behavior of the student teachers (Roach, Richmond, & Mottet, 2006)?

There are fascinating developments occurring in the fields of Large Language Models (e.g., Chat GPT), generative AI, and classroom robots. How will these innovations affect university supervisors? How can Chat GPT offer feedback to student teachers and university supervisors? Will classroom robots make university supervisors, student teachers, or even classroom teachers obsolete? In what ways can humans be replaced, and where does the human element remain indispensable?

## **5.6 Conclusion**

There is not one method of onboarding or evaluation that would work across all school types and locations accredited by AAQEP. AAQEP is a programmatic accreditation body that trusts its Teacher or Educator Preparation programs to have a system of evaluation in place for student teachers. That system should include intentional onboarding and support processes and procedures for the university supervisors who evaluate them. University supervisors serve as the bridge through the third space between effective TEP/EPP programs and the graduation of effective teachers who will persist for many years, potentially impacting the lives of thousands of students. Reclaiming accountability of university supervisors (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2018) does not require a national policy shift or a complete overhaul of teacher education; it simply requires that we treat university supervisors as individuals with distinct needs and TEP/EPP programs as distinct from

programs in other schools. AAQEP allows for this distinction through dialogue rather than data.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1. EMAIL TO EVALUATORS

Subject: Interview request for dissertation study on the evaluation of university supervisors

Dear Evaluator,

I hope you are enjoying the beginning of another great semester of learning! For many of you, you will have recently completed an orientation preparing university supervisors and student teachers for their Fall semester.

I am currently in the process of recruiting evaluators of university supervisors, like you, for my dissertation research study. I aim to establish best practices for onboarding university supervisors in preparation for their roles and responsibilities, in alignment with AAQEP's approach to evaluation. My results will be shared with each participating evaluator.

Are you available to meet with me for a 60-minute Zoom interview? If you are not available, can you forward this email to a colleague who also meets the requirement of being an evaluator of university supervisors at your school?

To set up an interview time, please use this link to choose a date and time on my appointment calendar: <https://calendar.app.google/1AyWKJNXnpM33RMS8>. For identity protection, please choose a pseudonym for use on the Zoom call. (I will give instructions on how to change your name prior to starting the recording.)

To prepare for the meeting, please gather any documentation or data you have collected regarding the evaluation of university supervisors at your school. I will ask for any documents you are able to share with me, such as onboarding materials, handbooks, evaluation rubrics, and scoring guides. I have already gathered publicly available information such as programmatic accreditation status, but any insight you can provide into the accreditation or evaluation process will be helpful.

If a 60-minute Zoom interview is not possible, for whatever reason, please consider answering the attached questions and upload your responses (including any supporting documentation) using the following form: <https://forms.gle/7yoKfl9Q1R3dxfjG6>

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Laura R. Mirochna, MA

Ph.D. Candidate in Education Policy Studies and Evaluation at the University of Kentucky  
[LinkedIn Profile](#)

## APPENDIX 2. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview which is part of my dissertation process at the University of Kentucky. Let me take just a moment to introduce myself....

Before we begin, I would like to read the Informed Consent Form. Please indicate your agreement with what I have read by saying, "I agree." At this time, please confirm that you have changed your name to a pseudonym for confidentiality purposes. I will now start the recording. Please remember that I am willing to stop the interview or the recording at any time.

### Introduction and Background Knowledge

1. What is your role at the university? (For how long?)
2. Were you ever a university supervisor? (When, where, for how long?)
3. How many university supervisors do you evaluate? (For how long?)
4. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the university supervisors at your school.
  - How does this compare to your own time as a university supervisor?
  - Does your school follow the standard triad model, or do they use any other clinical models (video, coaching, collaboration, etc.)?

### Onboarding

- 5a. In what ways are university supervisors onboarded at the beginning of each semester/year?
  - What do you call it: Onboarding, Induction, Orientation?
    - How do you use handbooks or other materials (PowerPoint, Video)?
    - Do you meet with all university supervisors at the beginning of each year?
    - Do you meet with all student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors at the beginning of each year?
- 5b. Carucci's Onboarding Categories
  - Organizational Onboarding
    - How do you teach university supervisors how things work in your department?
    - How do you help them assimilate?
  - Technical onboarding
    - How do you define what "good" looks like?
    - How do you set up early wins?
  - Social Onboarding
    - How do you build a sense of community?
    - How do you continue the onboarding process throughout the year?

### Evaluation

- 6a. How do you evaluate university supervisors?
- 6b. Evaluation types
  - How do you use **student** evaluation?
  - How do you use **rubrics** or scenario-based methods?

- How do you use a **360-degree** evaluation process?
  - How do you use a **self-eval** or goal-setting process?
  - How do you evaluate the **written feedback**?
  - How do you use **weekly formative assessments**, such as reviewing notes with the US?
  - How do you use **peer support**, critical friend groups, or professional development cohorts?
- 6c. Documentation
- Do you have any documentation that supports your evaluation of the university supervisor (evaluation rubrics, scoring guides, evidence of effective teaching)?

#### Programmatic Accreditation

7. What can you tell me about the programmatic accreditation process in this department/school/college?
- What system of programmatic accreditation was used before this one?
  - What kinds of evaluation data are collected for programmatic accreditation purposes?

#### Reflection

8. Reflect on the meanings of your experience.
- If you could change anything about how you evaluate university supervisors, what would you change?
  - What challenges do you face in the evaluation process? (Changing standards, expectations, etc.)
  - Do you have a cut-off score? What happens if someone doesn't make the "cut"?

## APPENDIX 3. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

### UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title: DIALOGUE OVER DATA: AN INTERVIEW STUDY OF EVALUATORS AT INSTITUTIONS ACCREDITED BY AAQEP

Principal Investigator: Laura R. Mirochna, MA [LRMirochna@gmail.com](mailto:LRMirochna@gmail.com) (512)878-7268  
Faculty Advisor: Eric T. Weber, Ph.D. [Eric.T.Weber@uky.edu](mailto:Eric.T.Weber@uky.edu) (859)257-1849

#### Summary and Key Information about the Study

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Mrs. Laura Mirochna, a student at the University of Kentucky, as a part of her dissertation. This study aims to determine the onboarding and evaluation process used for university supervisors at your university. You have been invited to participate in this study because you help to onboard or evaluate university supervisors. This interview will be audio recorded in a Zoom call using the Zoom recording and live transcription feature. The audio recordings will not be used for additional research after this study. I will ask you to use a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality. Your total time commitment is approximately 2 hours. The interview will be about one hour plus the time it takes you to read this document (approximately 5 minutes). After the interview, you will receive a copy of the transcript. If you choose to review the transcript for accuracy, that should account for another 15 minutes of your time. More importantly, the researcher will ask you to review the codebook for feedback on codes used during the data evaluation process. The feedback process should take about 30 minutes. The most significant risks of this study include the potential loss of confidentiality and coercion, as well as virtual meeting disruption. We will discuss these risks and the rest of the study procedures below.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you are interested in learning more about this study, please review this consent form carefully and decide whether you want to participate. Please feel free to ask the researcher any questions about the study at any time.

#### Description of Procedures

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to spend one hour in a face-to-face interview with the researcher. The researcher will ask you questions about your understanding of the onboarding and evaluation methods used for university supervisors at your university. You will decide the appropriate time and place to initiate the interview by choosing a time on the Google appointment calendar and preparing yourself and your meeting space before opening Zoom. You can choose a pseudonym by using the “Rename” feature on Zoom. The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed so the researcher can be accurate when studying what you said. To participate in this study, you must be between 18 and 99 years of age and be (or have been) in a position where you evaluate university supervisors. You may skip questions or stop the interview at any time.

### Potential Risks

The researcher will ask you questions about your role as an onboarder and/or evaluator of university supervisors. A possible risk in this study is discomfort with the questions you are asked. If you become tired or upset, you may take breaks as needed. You may also stop answering questions at any time and end the interview. If you need to talk to a professional about your discomfort, the researcher can provide you with a list of resources.

Another risk in this study is the loss of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The interview will be via Zoom, so you may choose a location as private as you want. I will conduct the interview from my home, with no one else around. A pseudonym, not your real name, will be used during the interview. Only the researcher will know your real name. You can choose your name by using the “Rename” function on Zoom.

Virtual meeting disruption is another risk. To alleviate this risk, I have set up the Zoom meeting to include a waiting room and a passcode for entry.

Coercion is another possible risk. Participation in this study is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. The decision to not participate will not affect your relationship with the Principal Investigator. No rewards or punishments are associated with your participation.

The audio recording and the transcript of the interview will be stored on my external hard drive which will stay in my home. I will be the only person to hear the interview or read the full written transcript. The audio recording and the transcript will be destroyed within 6 years after the study is finished. The study results may be reported in journals or conference presentations, but your name or other identifying information will not be included. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, electronic meetings, and internet transactions.

If you choose to use the Google Form to upload documents, the name associated with the Google account you upload from will be attached to the documents. I am the only one with access to these files. Any identifying information will be removed prior to downloading the files to my external hard drive, and the responses will be deleted from the Drive as soon as they are downloaded.

Your audio recording and any personal information collected for this study will not be used or distributed for future research even after the researcher removes your personal or identifiable information (e.g., your name, school name, and contact information).

The researcher will try to prevent any problems that could happen because of this research. You should immediately inform the researcher if there is a problem, and they will try to help you. However, UKY does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are participating in this research.

### Participation and Benefits

Your involvement in this study is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. The results of the study will be emailed to you after its conclusion. This study

will contribute to general knowledge in the fields of university supervisors, teacher education, onboarding, evaluation, and programmatic accreditation.

Questions Regarding the Study

You may download and keep a copy of this consent form. If you have any questions about the research study, you should ask the researchers; their contact information is at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or how this study has been conducted, you may contact the UKY Office of Research Integrity at 859-257-9428 or [ORI@uky.edu](mailto:ORI@uky.edu).

## APPENDIX 4. AAQEP REPORT GUIDANCE

When writing the QAR, QRT, or Annual Report or preparing for the Site Visit, it might be useful to consider your team's answers to the following questions.

1. Who is evaluating the performance of student teachers during their field experience or internship year?
2. What criteria are used for their selection?
3. How are they onboarded or told what a model or exceptional university supervisor looks like?
4. How do we know if student teachers, university supervisors, and cooperating teachers are performing their jobs well?
5. What kinds of structures are in place for peer support or mentoring?
6. What is the process for training or coaching opportunities for growth?

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## VITA

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### **Education**

*Texas State University*, M.A. Communication Studies

*Colorado Christian University*, M. A. Curriculum & Instruction

*Biola University*, B. A. Communication Studies

### **Professional Positions Held**

Dallas College, Learning Experience Designer

Texas Woman's University, Instructional Designer

University of Kentucky, Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, Instructor

Asbury University, Adjunct Instructor

Eastern Kentucky, Adjunct Instructor

Midway University, Adjunct Instructor

Northwest Vista College, Adjunct Instructor

Texas State University, Graduate Instructional Assistant, Graduate Teaching Assistant

Faith Christian Academy, Secondary Teacher

Fort Morgan High School, Secondary Teacher

Aspen Academy, Primary and Secondary Teacher

Sierra Middle School, Secondary Teacher

Pinecrest Schools, Primary Teacher Aide

### **Scholastic and Professional Honors**

Love of Learning Award, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society (2022)

Distinguished Service to the Division of Student Life Redbud Award (2021)

Leslie Martin Fellowship (Fall 2017)

Dermontti F. and Regina M. Dawson Graduate Fellowship (Fall 2016, Fall 2017)

Top Paper Award: *A comparison of traditional and hybrid teaching: The effects on student learning and engagement*, Kristen LeBlanc-Farris & Laura R. Brown, Eastern Communication Association (April 2013)

### **Professional Publications**

Wong, V., Ruble, L., & Brown, L. (2020). "We are mama and papa bears": A qualitative study of parents' adaptation process during transition to adulthood. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 79(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rasd.2020.101650>

Brown, L. R. & Thelin, J. R. (2019). Higher Education in Texas: Its Beginnings to 1970 by Charles R. Matthews (review). *Journal of Southern History* 85(2), 491-492. The Southern Historical Association. <https://doi.org/10.1353/soh.2019.0117>