

# Methods Classes and Clinical Practice: A Crisis of Misalignment

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# Voices from Clinical Practice

**It's one of the worst experiences of my life.**

**Part of me wishes I had dropped out right before student teaching.**

**Nobody has good student teaching experiences . . . I was really excited to start student teaching . . . but it was absolutely awful.**

**I repeatedly wake up in the morning and say I don't want to go.**

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**WHAT SHOULD WE DO?**



# THE FIX, PART ONE: WHAT IS GOING ON?



# What is Student Teaching: From Research

- For PSTs → Powerful
- For Policymakers and Programs → Crucial/Universal
- For Researchers → Highly Variable, Often Misaligned

# Examining Student Teaching: Our Local Context

## Survey & Interviews

- Activities?
- Goals?
- Successes/Challenges?

# Initial Finding

**It's one of the worst  
experiences in my  
life.**

# Digging Deeper

Interns Felt **Unprepared**  
for:

- Planning
- Classroom Management

Methods Instructor **Concentrated**  
on:

- Planning
- Classroom Management



# Digging Deeper

Interns Felt Unprepared for: Methods Instructor Concentrated on:

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WHY?

Digging Deeper

# Misalignment

Interns Felt Unprepared for Methods Instructor Concentrated on:

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- Classroom Management

# Misalignment 1: Planning

## Planning in Methods Class did not transfer to planning in Clinical Practice

### In Methods Class

- Instructional routines (Which One Doesn't Belong, etc.)
- Cycle of planning, rehearsing, revising
- Collaborative
- Lots of time for one activity

### In Clinical Practice

- Different Routines (Guided notes)
- One and Done
- Individual
- Little time for many lessons

# Misalignment 2: Management

## Management in Methods Class did not transfer to Clinical Practice

### In Methods Class

- Setting up environment through specific routines
- Explicit norms and moves
- Anticipate student behaviors
- Lesson Planning

### In Clinical Practice

- Classroom and school environment already set up
- Implicit norms and moves
- React to misbehavior
- Rewards and punishments

# Misalignment 3: Goals

**Program goals did not match Intern goals**

## **Program Goals**

Learn and **skills and knowledge** that support effective teaching

- Learn specific teacher moves
- Learn how to anticipate typical student thinking/behavior
- Develop habit of reflection

# Misalignment 3: Goals

## Program goals did not match Intern goals

### Program Goals

Learn and **skills and knowledge** that support effective teaching

- Learn specific teacher **moves**
- Learn how to **anticipate** typical student thinking/behavior
- Develop **habit of reflection**

### Intern Goals

Develop **identity** as teacher

- Feel **comfortable** in front of class
- Develop **confidence**
- Learn what it would **feel like** to teach

# Old, Old Story

We want teacher candidates to be student-centered, start with where students are and what they know

Yet the goals we have for them are far from their own experience - past and future.

How can we bring our own philosophy to bear on this crisis . . . NOW

# Potential Action

## **Short term - in methods classes**

- Share routines with mentor teachers
- Plan under realistic constraints

## **Long term - Systemic**

- Attend to identity
- Collaborate with teachers/districts



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Teacher Educator



# What about research? How do researchers respond to urgent crises?



# Research/Practitioner Dilemmas

What counts as knowledge?

What counts as useful?

How long does it take? How good does it have to be?

# Google Form/poll questions

Are these issues similar to/different from  
your own experience?

What have you done?

What others ideas, suggestions or questions do you have?

Click [here](#)

or go to this link <https://forms.gle/fsjDCGJMLgATNHXb9>

# Thank You

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