

Experience-base License “Boot Camp” Report

Cohort 1: Fall 2017 to Spring 2019

This boot camp consisted of a cohort of experience-base licensed teachers from Racine Unified School District and Kenosha Unified School District who attended a series of four seminars from Fall 2017 through Spring 2019. The “boot camp” seminars were designed to help the participants, hired as content experts, become effective CTE teachers. Each seminar consisted of two days of face-to-face instruction with faculty identified by the University of Wisconsin-Stout as having expertise in the seminar content as well as K-12 experience. The face-to-face sessions were followed by online interaction and assignments over the remainder of the fall or spring semester. Demographic data describing the participants is provided in Appendix A.

Before the first seminar, participants were asked to respond to survey questions about their past experience, and identify their strengths and areas for improvement based on a list of learning objectives for the four seminars. Over 40% of the participants had more than 10 years of industry experience in their content area, followed by 21% with 7-10 years and 21% with 4-6 years. Their education or teaching related experience prior to being hired varied as widely as the participants, from substitute teaching or being a professional educator in a different discipline or grade level to training individuals or groups at work, teaching Boy/Girl Scouts, exercise classes, church classes, or coaching. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being a very effective teacher, 58% of participants rated themselves a 4 prior to the seminars. Table 1 indicates the strengths and areas for improvement identified by participants in their teaching prior to the seminars.

Table 1.

Teaching strengths and areas for improvement identified by EBL Boot Camp participants before Seminar 1. (1 = top strength or area in greatest need of improvement, 2 = next strength or area for improvement, etc.)

| Objectives | Strengths | | | Areas for Improvement | | |
|--|-----------|--------|--------|-----------------------|--------|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Building positive relationships with students | 68.42% | | | | | |
| Maintaining a positive classroom learning environment for all students | | 52.94% | | | | |
| Teaching technical content related to my work or life experience | | | | | | |
| Developing daily lesson plans | | | | | | |
| Delivering instruction that engages all students | | | 23.53% | | | |
| Assessing student learning with formative assessment | | | | 31.25% | | |
| Assessing students with summative assessments | | | | | 23.53% | |
| Adjusting instruction based on formative assessment | | | | | | 20.00% |
| Supervising student work-based learning experiences | | | | | | |
| Advising student organizations | | | | | | |

Following each seminar, participants completed a different survey and were asked to rate their knowledge of the learning objectives addressed only in that seminar. Although the survey was administered after the seminar, they were asked to rate their knowledge before as well as after the seminar. Table 2 shows those results. Participants rated themselves higher after the seminars on all objectives except “building positive relationships with students” and “maintaining a positive classroom learning environment” which went down, and “developing daily lesson plans” which remained the same. The first EBL seminar was about inclusive teaching and equity, which may have led the teachers’ to realize that their teaching practices were not as inclusive as they thought, resulting in lower ratings after the seminar. The objectives related to assessing student learning were the areas participants felt were their weakest, and their ratings after the seminars suggest they are much more confident in this area.

Table 2.

Teachers' ratings on knowledge of the objective before and after participating in the seminar course. (1 = limited knowledge, 5 = highly knowledgeable)

| Learning Objectives | EBL 1 rating (Fall 2017: n=16) | | EBL 2 rating (Spring 2018: n=11) | | EBL 3 rating (Fall 2018: n=12) | | EBL 4 rating (Spring 2019: n=15) | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------|--|-------|--------------------------------------|-------|--|-------|
| | Before | After | Before | After | Before | After | Before | After |
| Building positive relationships with students | 3.94 | 3.88 | | | | | | |
| Maintaining a positive classroom learning environment for all students | 3.31 | 3.63 | | | | | | |
| Teaching technical content related to my work or life experience | | | 4.00 | 4.09 | | | | |
| Developing daily lesson plans | | | 3.00 | 3.00 | | | | |
| Delivering instruction that engages all students | | | 3.55 | 3.73 | | | | |
| Assessing student learning with formative assessment | | | 3.36 | 3.82 | 3.17 | 4.42 | | |
| Assessing students with summative assessments | | | | | 2.92 | 4.33 | | |
| Adjusting instruction based on formative assessment | | | | | 2.83 | 4.17 | | |
| Supervising student work-based learning experiences | | | | | | | 2.80 | 4.27 |
| Advising student organizations | | | | | | | 2.87 | 4.27 |

Participants were also asked to respond to three qualitative questions on the post-seminar surveys. The same questions were asked upon completion of each boot-camp seminar and the following paragraphs include the themes that emerged.

Question 1: Areas of Greatest Growth

EBL 1- Leading Learning in the Inclusive Classroom

Overall, many of the respondents grew the most from learning how to interact with students with disabilities and those who come from different backgrounds. They gained more awareness about how these students learn and what must be implemented in order for them to succeed (i.e. IEP's).

EBL 2- Instructional Planning, Methods, and Formative Assessment

Most of the responses included learning a lot more about creating lesson plans and integrating behavioral objectives into the lessons and aligning the standards to the goals with the lessons. Participants also grew through this seminar course by gaining more knowledge about creating their own scope and sequence and developing their own curriculum.

EBL 3- Assessment and Evaluation

Those who participated in this seminar course gained a lot of knowledge about assessments, specifically how to develop questions for formative and summative assessments. In addition, they did a lot of things in groups so participants were able to learn from each other and collaborate in regards to creating effective assessments for students.

EBL 4- CTE Philosophy and Practice, Work-based Learning and CTSO Advisement

Many participants talked about lesson planning as being an area of great growth. In addition, DECA, CTSOs, and how to integrate work-based learning into one's program were identified by many as helpful. And finally, some participants in the seminar course appreciated learning about how to advise student organizations and learned about other organizations that are available outside of school in which students can participate.

Question 2: What was most applicable to their practice as a teacher

EBL 1- Leading Learning in the Inclusive Classroom

The majority of the participants stated that they found the process of creating action plans and learning how to successfully manage a classroom being the most applicable to their practice as a teacher. They recognized this could be done through collaborating with other teachers and learning how they deal with classroom management. In addition, people talked about the importance of making sure students understand the classroom rules and of including those students with disabilities into the classroom.

EBL 2- Instructional Planning, Methods, and Formative Assessment

Participants found the knowledge of building curriculum and lesson planning to be the most applicable to their practice as a teacher. Specifically, they found the process of creating

behavioral objectives to be beneficial and also learning how to create their own scope and sequence. In addition, they learned how to align the standards into the lesson plans, which was very helpful.

EBL 3- Assessment and Evaluation

Many of the participants found the information pertaining to assessments, both formative and summative, to be the most applicable to their practice as a teacher. In addition, they found it very beneficial to learn how to write their own tests and match the questions to the objectives. Finally, another theme from this question was rubric improvement.

EBL 4- CTE Philosophy and Practice, Work-based Learning and CTSO Advisement

There were a lot of different themes that emerged from this question. First, some participants found that not only was it important for them to understand CTE and the different areas, but it was also important to educate others about CTE. Next, participants found curriculum building and lesson planning to be the most applicable to their practice as a teacher. In addition, information on running student organizations and learning from other teachers through collaboration was helpful. And finally, the themes of work-based learning and CTSO integration in the classroom were also applicable to them.

Question 3: Areas for further professional development

EBL 1- Leading Learning in the Inclusive Classroom

Participants talked about several areas in which they needed further professional development. First, professional development (PD) courses about classroom management techniques and learning more about PBIS and special education planning was suggested as being helpful. Next, participants talked about getting PD about different strategies to best accommodate students with diverse needs and keeping students engaged in the learning process. Many participants also mentioned wanting to understand IEP's and 504 plans better so that students in their classroom with disabilities could succeed. And finally, participants needed further professional development in lesson planning and curriculum building.

EBL 2- Instructional Planning, Methods, and Formative Assessment

The first theme that emerged for further professional development was how to manage a gradebook. Another aspect related to teaching that came up a lot was how to best work with students with disabilities and how they could be engaged in the classroom. And finally, getting more professional development in assessments and lesson planning was mentioned a few times by participants.

EBL 3- Assessment and Evaluation

The two main themes that emerged from this question were that participants needed more professional development with assessments and grading/utilizing rubrics. They'd like to learn more about aligning the standards to the lesson plans and relating rubrics to learning targets. In addition, they'd like to learn more about how to motivate apathetic students.

EBL 4- CTE Philosophy and Practice, Work-based Learning and CTSO Advisement

The first thing many participants said they need more of was time. They realized there was a lot to do as a teacher and they want more time to participate in professional development. Specifically, they want more professional development on lesson planning and curriculum building. And finally, participants talked about learning more about how to integrate CTSO's and work-based learning experiences into the classroom and how to properly run student organizations.

Administrator Feedback

In addition to surveying participants after each of the seminars, their school administrators were invited to participate in an interview after Year 1 and after Year 2. Three administrators participated in Spring 2018 and after repeated emails to administrators to request interviews, no administrators for the Cohort 1 teachers participated in Year 2. Administrators were asked four main questions:

1. What changes, if any, have you observed in the experience-base licensed CTE teachers in (list the content teachers have been exposed to – classroom management, lesson delivery and instruction, formative assessment, summative assessment, advising student organizations, coordinating/supervising work-based learning)?
2. What have experience-base licensed teachers shared with you about the professional development they have been receiving and the impact on their practice?
3. What benefits in addition to those already discussed have you observed among the teachers who have participated in this professional development?
4. What suggestions do you have for improvement of this professional development program as it continues?

Follow up questions were asked when clarification was needed, or more detail about what they were describing.

A theme analysis was conducted with the interview transcripts and the themes that emerged were as follows:

1. EBL seminars have added to the professional development and support being provided by the district.
 - “the work that you’re doing with them in those areas marries nicely to the work that we’re doing”
 - “We also have internal coaches here that we had help out with our [teachers]...”
 - “We also have a lot of support for them inside of our special education department”
2. Teachers are improving their practice and better understand their role as a teacher.
 - “they’re kind of moving away from that, you know, ‘I have to run the classroom and tell everyone what to do’ which I call classroom management...they’re beginning to morph into that classroom leadership, which allows them to be more of a facilitator rather than a dictator”

- “their ability to understand that school is no longer about compliance, but more about engaging and giving our kids the tools to be successful post secondary...I would wager to say that a lot of it is because of the training they’ve received. Not only from us, but from the program.”
 - “becoming more comfortable in that lesson delivery and instruction”
 - “I think they can gauge themselves better on if the delivery of a lesson has worked or not.”
 - “the program they are involved in, they don’t speak like first or second year teachers. They speak as though they’ve been doing this a very long time...They’re getting it from all different angles.”
 - “I don’t meet with them on a regular basis, generally about their professional development, but I can see it in some of their practice that they have a much better understanding of those big, big rocks that we’re always talking about.”
 - “I think I see growth in our experience-based people from the beginning of the year to the end of the year more than any other of our educators...”
3. The seminars allow the teachers to be vulnerable, ask questions, get help in a non-evaluative setting and feel more confident as a teacher.
- “it allows them to exhale a little bit. It’s a place where they can learn, and they can talk with others who are kind of going through the similar things they are.”
 - “they ask a lot of questions.”
 - “it’s another tool in their toolbox, it’s another person, maybe, sometimes telling the same thing and re-affirming what we’re telling them here...”
 - “it gives them a confidence of voice. [They might think] ‘I can have this conversation with a colleague who maybe has only been a teacher...I don’t have to feel silly about asking it because we talked about it here.’”
 - “they’ve kind of transitioned from, almost like I’m the freshman so I can’t say anything, right? They’ve almost transformed into the upperclassmen where they have some great ideas because they have been in the workplace and they’re sharing those. And they’re becoming more a part of the system rather than trying to understand the system.”
 - “having someone completely outside of the school giving them suggestions on what to do is beneficial to them because...they’re not being evaluated because of their learning.”
4. Administrators would like more information about the EBL seminars so they can reinforce what their teachers are learning.
- “I think it would be really neat to get more updates as the directing principal, so I could talk more directly about what they’re doing.”
 - “highlights of what happened. That way we can maybe follow through on it...”
 - “I don’t want too much information because I don’t want these teachers thinking that it’s not safe, still, to come in and do this. I just like to have that overview of what was talked about so that we can continue on.”
 - “share the resources that are used so that we can help reinforce the work that you’re doing. That’s that partnership.”

- “[Professional development] has to be front-loaded...in that first quarter of our year is really, really important....Figure out a way to do something in August to help prepare our teachers to be ready for day one.”
5. Administrators value the EBL teachers.
- “I knew how I wanted to see them. I knew how value added they could be”
 - “some of our teachers have been removed from the outside world for so long...I do think by having them here it bridges that gap.”
 - “there’s two things that I think they really provide. One, I think they provide, to the students, the clout, the ‘Hey, I’ve done this, I’ve been there...The other thing it brings to our staff is...it gives a different perspective to some people that have a different appreciation of what they’re doing.”
 - “I think they become a resource...they’re really teaching our other staff.”

Appendix A

Demographic Data about EBL Participants in Cohort 1

1. Gender

| Responses: | % |
|------------------|--------|
| Male | 47.37% |
| Female | 52.63% |
| Total responses: | 19 |

2. Ethnicity

| Responses: | % |
|---|--------|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0.00% |
| Asian | 0.00% |
| Black or African American | 10.53% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 0.00% |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0.00% |
| White | 78.95% |
| Two or more races | 10.53% |
| Total responses: | 19 |

3. Age

| Responses: | % |
|------------------|--------|
| Ages 25-30 | 21.05% |
| Ages 31-40 | 42.11% |
| Ages 41-50 | 26.32% |
| Ages Over 50 | 10.53% |
| Total responses: | 19 |

4. CTE content area in which they teach (some are in multiple areas)

| Responses: | % |
|--|--------|
| Business education | 24.14% |
| Engineering education (Project Lead the Way) | 10.34% |
| Family and consumer sciences | 6.90% |
| Health occupations | 6.90% |
| Information technology (computer programming, networking) | 3.45% |
| Marketing education | 13.79% |
| Technology education (includes automotive, construction, welding, CAD, printing) | 34.48% |
| Total responses: | 29 |