

Guidelines for Discussants

2005 Career & Technical Education Research Conference

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a discussant at CTERC 2005. This role is very important to the success of the conference. The following information should help you to prepare your written discussant remarks and to lead the discussion in your section at the conference.

Written Comments: The written comments should include the strengths and weaknesses of the research presented. Please take special care to ensure that these comments are constructive in their wording and assist the author(s) and conference participants in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of this research. You may want to organize your comments as follows:

Paragraph 1 – Introduction to your comments: The authors are to be commended for conducting this study of a very timely and important topic. The conceptual framework is solid and logical..... Include other strong points of the manuscript/research.

Paragraphs 2 and 3: Areas needing improvement or that present substantial concerns in the research and/or manuscript.

Paragraph 4: Summary

Please follow these instructions for preparing your written discussant's comments:

- ◆ Use Microsoft Word to prepare your comments.
- ◆ Maximum 1 page of discussant's comments per manuscript, single-spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs.
- ◆ 12-point Times New Roman font
- ◆ Margins: 1" top, bottom, left, and right.
- ◆ Full justification (the button is called "Justify" on the Word toolbar)
- ◆ Do not use headings or subheadings
- ◆ See attached page for correct formatting.
- ◆ Paragraph Indention: The first line of paragraphs should be indented .4 inches.

The second page of this file contains a sample format for the discussant's comments. Please e-mail your discussant's comments to kotrlk@lsu.edu by Friday, August 14, 2005.

Oral Comments at the Conference: Your second task is to serve as discussion leader for the research session. You are to lead discussion, not provide the detailed comments you wrote in your comments. I suggest you start the discussion portion of the concurrent session by asking each presenter one or two questions about their research presentation that are designed to spawn additional discussion. After you get the discussion started please lead/facilitate the discussion. Please be careful to allow adequate discussion of all presentations and avoid allowing the discussion to center on one or two papers. In most sessions, one or two papers will generate most of the discussion; however, we do a disservice to the other authors if we do not adequately discuss their research.

Session B Discussant Comments

**A COMPARISON OF TEACHER EFFICACY OF TRADITIONALLY AND
ALTERNATIVELY CERTIFIED AGRICULTURE TEACHERS**

A Critique by Jim Flowers, North Carolina State University

Alternatively certified teachers in agriculture are a reality in many states, and the authors should be commended for conducting this study to provide some baseline data related to their perceived level of competency. It is important to know more about the people who we are trying to serve, and who are teaching the children in our states. This study provides some insight to this topic, but also raises some additional questions for us to pursue as a profession.

The introduction in this paper certainly provided a conceptual basis for comparing traditionally certified teachers and alternatively certified teachers. As far as methodology goes, the authors did a sound job of designing the study. The findings were presented in an understandable manner and the conclusions, while generally restatement of findings, were logically derived from the findings. A concern that I have is that teacher efficacy is such a broad term that I am not sure we have enough information to intervene if the study had found low levels of teacher efficacy in one of the groups. We certainly do not have that specific type of information presented in this paper.

The questions that I would pose for the authors deal more with the basic issues. They used an instrument developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy that consisted of 12 items that, I would suppose, would be related to responsibilities for teachers in general. But, in the introduction, the authors state that agriculture teachers have different types of roles and responsibilities/expectations than other teachers. So the question may be, did the instrument measure teacher efficacy related to those differing types of roles and responsibilities that we believe are a part of teaching agriculture? Perhaps some of those different responsibilities are the ones that create less efficacy among beginning teachers. Since the 12 items were not presented, it is impossible for the reader to determine, but perhaps there were differences in some of the items between the groups that were not revealed by an overall efficacy score. Of course, another question that could have arisen deals with one of the basic assumptions of survey research—were the respondents willing to give a true assessment of their ability to the researchers? We have to assume they were (if we are going to do the study), but the efficacy scores seem to be higher than the efficacy that many of us may have actually observed among new teachers. Finally, while the sample did include a high percentage of first year teachers, we should be reminded that the rest of the teachers were the ones who made it through the first, second, third, or fourth year of teaching. We know little about the ones who did not.

While this study raises some additional questions for the profession, that is one of the side effects of educational research. I would encourage the researchers to look deeper into this problem because we desperately need to address teacher retention issues if we have any hope of meeting the demand for teachers in our profession.