

Product Evaluation of Charlotte Teachers Institute: Exploring Empowerment, Usefulness and Retention

Anthony Ellis¹ and Scott Gartlan²

¹ Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

² Executive Director, Charlotte Teachers Institute

INTRODUCTION: Program evaluation provides organizations with a decision-making framework to make informed judgements about its program merits in addition to offering methods of improvement. Charlotte Teachers Institute is a teacher professional development program aimed at strengthening teaching through content-rich seminars led by university and college professors. By providing a well-outlined CIPP model and program logic model, CTI seeks to increase teacher quality by focusing on three outcomes: (1) Empowering teachers, (2) Retaining teachers in the classroom and the district, and (3) Expanding teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in teaching.

METHODS: Six years of post-seminar questionnaire data from Fellows that completed the program from 2009-2013, and 2015 were used to construct a comprehensive database in SPSS. The questionnaire contained data on 503 Fellows who have completed the program since 2009 including teachers who participated in the program multiple years.

RESULTS: When using hierarchical liner regression to analyze teacher retention and after controlling for years of teaching experience, the more years in the program proved to have a positive impact on the number of additional years that teachers anticipated teaching in the district. Teachers who perceived the program to be more useful also displayed positive responses on the indicators of higher expectations for their students, content knowledge gain and increasing their subject mastery as an attraction for them participating in the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The following table shows programmatic recommendations for each of three program outcomes.

| Program Outcomes | Recommendations |
|-------------------------|--|
| Teacher Empowerment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlight the importance that each seminar brings to increase Fellow's mastery of the subject• Increase points of contact between Seminar Leaders and Fellows |
| Teacher Retention | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage select teachers to participate in program for consecutive years• Recruit high quality teachers, including NBCTs, to retain teachers |
| Program Usefulness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to structure each seminar offered, as well as each individual meeting to incorporate interdisciplinary activities• Encourage Fellows have discussion around ideas for enhancing expectations of their students |