The Assistance Component of the Work Program of U.P. Integrated School: A Qualitative Evaluation

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Thematic analysis of data gathered through formal and informal interviews, focus group discussion, analysis of documents, triangulation, and member checking showed that the program provided the students with experience to develop special interests, skills and values while rendering services to the school. All students of the Assistance Component agreed that the program was a learning gain. The students, learning coordinators, cooperating persons, and alumni perceived the program orientation as an adequate means to enhance student awareness of the program goals. The students' understanding of the program was manifested through their output and attitude towards the assigned tasks. Some students greatly enjoyed doing these tasks while others experienced dissatisfaction. The problems generally encountered were conflict of schedule between the students and their cooperating persons, lack of awareness of the goals and expectations of the Work Program, and lack of proper attitude and prerequisite skills among the students.

Introduction

The University of the Philippines Integrated School (UPIS) developed the Work Program in AY 1979–1980 to provide grade 10 students the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills and to "explore in a relatively controlled environment their preferred occupational roles and related life-styles" (UPIS Catalogue 2002, p. 2). The Work Program has four components: Assistance Component, Media Center, Science Learning Center, and Practical Arts Center.

The Assistance Component (AC) aims to develop special interests and skills while rendering services to the school. UPIS grade 10 students can choose to assist in one semester the school Clinic, Library, Guidance, Office, Research, and Teacher Assistance sections. They may opt to enroll in a section for one quarter (30 hours) and in another section for another 30 hours, or spend the entire 60 hours in only one section. Students are individually assigned to assist a cooperating person who may be a UPIS teacher, nurse, librarian, guidance counselor, or member of the administrative/research staff.

Since its implementation in 1979, two surveys gathered student feedback on the pilot classes of the Assistance Component. These were conducted by two groups of UPIS high school students enrolled in the elective Statistics. Abalajon, et al. (1980) and Duba, et al. (1981) distributed questionnaires to their co-students in the AC program in AYs 1979-80 and 1980-81, respectively. Both groups reported that most of the students signed up in the AC program to gain knowledge and experience.

Abalajon, et al. found that the students chose the AC component because of lack of interest in the other offered electives, curiosity, desire to be of service to the school, and teacher influence. Duba's group added that the students wanted to lessen their academic load and to apply what they learned in their electives. Majority of the respondents in the student surveys had an idea of the activities that they would be undertaking in the program. They agreed that possessing good typing skills and ability to deal with different types of persons were most helpful in undertaking their assigned work. They rated as "moderately achieved" the extent to which the AC Program attained its goals. The most common gains were experience, new knowledge/skills, and new friends/acquaintances. Student participants also mentioned self-awareness, correct work habits, discipline, ability to deal with people, and development of desirable values such as cooperation, respect for superiors, and resourcefulness.

Abalajon, et al. (1980) disclosed that the students found the AC schedule too late in the afternoon and not flexible. On the contrary, Duba, et al. (1981) found that the schedule was just right for their respondents. However, the students agreed that the course was too short and one quarter spent in a section was not enough. Abalajon's group also mentioned that the working atmosphere of AC Program was fairly encouraging to students and that the services the students rendered were very useful to the school and were very much appreciated.

Purposes and Method

The present study aimed to assess the implementation of the Assistance Component of the UPIS Work Program through qualitative analysis. It sought to find out (1) how the AC students, cooperating persons (CPs), learning coordinators (LCs), and alumni perceive these activities: orientation, assignment of AC sections, assignment and monitoring of AC activities, and evaluation of students' performance and attitude; (2) what problems were encountered and how these problems were resolved; and (3) the extent to which the AC program has attained its objective of providing the students with experiences to develop special interests and skills and desirable work attitudes.

The study employed multiple investigators, different sources of data and varied data collection methods such as formal and informal interviews, focus group discussions, analysis of documents and previous studies conducted, and observations. Triangulation and member checking were also employed for validity and reliability.

The 66 subjects of the study included 27 (41%) students in the AC Program in the first semester of AY 2003-04, 29 (44%) cooperating persons, 2 (3%) learning coordinators, and 8 (12%) UPIS alumni. Sampling was done using proportional allocation to ensure that all six AC sections were represented and that each of the eight departments in the teaching section had at least two representatives, one from the elementary and the other from high school. The alumni included some college students and some professionals; two of them were serving as CPs.

An interview guide for AC students and a parallel guide question for CPs were developed as were similar guides for the alumni and LC respondents. The interview schedules had three main parts: (1) on the perceptions on four aspects of the AC program – the orientation, assigning of students, monitoring of activities and evaluation; (2) on the attainment of AC goals; and (3) on the problems encountered in program implementation.

The semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted over a four-week period. Interview guides were constantly modified as data gathering proceeded so as not to miss any concern; the four researchers used the interview schedules. only as guides so as not to deviate from the focus of the study. All interviews and FGDs were tape recorded except telephone interviews and upon the CPs' request not to record the interview. Because of time constraints, interviews were transcribed in full; in the course of data analysis, the tapes were repeatedly played as needed. The team of researchers also observed the weekly plenary sessions of AC program, as well as the actual AC sessions with the CPs. Moreover, the team browsed the student journals for better insights on the program.

The data gathered from the interviews were interpreted through thematic analysis (Strauss and Corbin 1990) by coding strips of information at two levels: the primary level where the data were identified, grouped and coded according to content categories or different aspects of the program; and the secondary levels where the categories were related to themes that emerged from the data.

Discussion of Results

Perceptions on the AC Program

On the Orientation: Orientations on the AC Program were held at the start of each semester. The views of the AC students, cooperating persons and alumni on the orientation were categorized into two major themes: (1) the orientation as a means to enhance students' awareness of the goals and objectives of the AC Program and to explain what is expected of an AC student, and (2) the orientation as a venue to help students make decisions.

Majority of the students stressed that they were aware of the goals and objectives of the Program since the orientation given by the LCs emphasized the objectives and scope of the AC Program, the expectations of the six AC sections, and the duties and responsibilities of the AC students. Among the comments given were:

> *"Diniscuss ... kung saan magtatrabaho at tapos kung ano ang pwedeng ipagawa sa amin, mga sakop, mga dapat..."* (It was discussed...where to work and what tasks could be assigned... what must be done and could be done.)
>
> *"Hindi kayo ST [student teachers], assistant lang..."* (You aren't STs, you're assistants only...)
>
> *"Huwag bibili ng pagkain ng teachers, bawal!"* (Do not buy food for the teachers, it's prohibited!)
>
> *"Nagbigay din ng tips* (Tips were given) on how to become effective and how to cope with the schedule of the teacher."

In addition, the course requirements and grading system were explained. Proper attitude towards work was likewise emphasized.

> *"Huwag maglakwatsa... para matulungan sina Ma'am, yung nagha-handle sa amin, matulungan din naming mapadali ang trabaho para if ever meron dapat madaliin, hindi sila masyadong nape-pressure."* (Do not roam around...to be able to help Ma'am and the others who handle us. We can help them ease their work so that if there is something to finish at once, they will not be pressured too much.)

Also stressed during orientation was the students' selection of work area, or which AC section to enroll in. Application letters to the chosen CPs were then drafted by the students. The final letters were noted by LCs and endorsed by the department heads.

> *"... Pinapili po kami kung ano ang gusto naming AC section."* (...We were made to choose what we wanted.)
>
> *"Dapat may requirements at prerequisites."* (We must have requirements and prerequisites.)

The students pointed out that their LCs were able to give sufficient briefing on the AC Program during the orientation. When interviewed, most of the students did not specifically state the main goals of the AC program as enumerated in the documents. They expressed the goals in terms of what they experienced, like development of skills and leadership qualities, assisting the CPs and exposure to work, and how they perceived the AC program to prepare them for their future.

> *"To prepare students sa task na ipu-pursue sa college... Kunwari, gusto mo maging teacher o doctor ..."* (Prepare students to tasks that will be pursued in college... For example, you want to be a teacher or a doctor ...)
>
> *"Para matulungan po sa pag-apply ng job."* (To be helped when applying for a job.)
>
> *"Para ma-apply ang pinag-aralan sa iskul."* (To be able to apply what was learned in school.)
>
> *"Para ma-expose sa actual na trabaho. Habang bata pa lang inihahanda na sa trabaho."* (To be exposed to actual work. While still young, [we are] being prepared for work).

The goals mentioned by the AC students were confirmed by some CPs: "To assist CP in case s/he is absent."

> *"Para ma-experience ang work ng ina-assist nila."* (To experience the work of the person they are assisting.)

The alumni responses were more focused on the preparation of students for work.

> "To produce graduates ready to work."
>
> "It helps us see what we want to pursue in college."
>
> 'It's something about *na kung hindi gra-graduate, at least may background na for work.*" (If we will not graduate, at least we already have background for work.)
>
> Only one mentioned about development of proper attitude: " *Tinuruan kami kung ano ang dapat na attitude.*" (We were taught the proper attitude.)

According to some CPs, the understanding of the program goals by the AC students was manifested in their output and attendance during AC sessions.

> *"...Lahat ng pinapagawa, natatapos on time... May* positive attitude towards work." (All that were assigned were finished on time... There's a positive attitude towards work manifested in accepting what's assigned to her and doing good in the assigned task."

> *Depende sa estudyante, may mga bata na makatapos lang ng assignments... May mga batang pulido ang trabaho. Minsan naman, inuulit ko pa.* "(It depends on the student ...there are students who would just finish their assignments for the sake of finishing. There are children whose work are very good. Sometimes, I had to repeat their work.)

The manifestation of student understanding of the AC Program goals could not be verified by CPs who themselves were not properly oriented about the program.

> "Not sure... I'm not aware of the goals."
>
> "I can't see the manifestation ... not aware of the goals of AC."

It was noted that the LCs gave a formal orientation on the goals of the AC Program and on the objectives of the specific AC sections. On the other hand, the CPs who made an effort to do the same did it in passing only because they assumed that the LCs made such an orientation already. The CPs generally gave an informal and a more specific orientation on the tasks to be accomplished in each particular section.

On Assigning Students to AC Sections. The students, LCs and CPs were interviewed on how students were assigned to a particular AC section. Three themes emerged from their responses: (1) the electives taken, the AC section assignment, and the intended courses of the students were not always aligned; (2) the rule on AC prerequisite electives was not strictly followed; and (3) the student's personal choice, the electives taken, and his/her intended career were always considered in assigning him/her to a particular AC section.

About half of the student respondents took up electives that were attuned to their AC Program. For example, some of those who enlisted in the Research and Guidance sections took up the elective Statistics and the elective Personality Development & Leadership Training, respectively. Those enrolled in the Teacher Assistance Section, particularly in the English and Science departments, had taken Business Communication and Selected Topics in Biology, respectively. These electives were found to be related to their intended career.

Some students took electives which were not related to their AC sections, although they considered these electives as a preparation for their intended

> "*In a way, kasi yung Business Communication, nakatulong sa paggawa ng resume.*" (In a way, because Business Communication is a help in making our resume.)
>
> "*Kasi ang English medium, kahit saan ka pumunta, working here and abroad, ginagamit ay English...*" (Because English is the medium, anywhere you go, whether you work here or abroad, English is being used...)

Some students were assigned to AC sections not directly in line with their intended courses because of lack of CPs, inability to meet the minimum grade required by a specific department for a course in the teaching section, and other unavoidable circumstances such as CPs taking a leave of absence at the start of the semester.

> "I was rejected by the Math Department because *hindi umabot ang grade ko sa grade requirement.*" (My grade did not meet the grade requirement).
>
> "Gusto ko sana sa PA [Practical Arts] kaya lang may naka-assign na." (I wanted PA but somebody was already assigned there.)
>
> "*Ang nangyari sa akin, kung sino ang walang AC, iyon na lang ang ibinigay sa akin.*" (What happened was that those who had no AC were assigned to me.)

Certain electives were required but were not strictly implemented. For example, the Guidance Section specified that their AC students take the Personality Development & Leadership Training (PDLT) first. However, the students interviewed in this area did not enroll in such a course and instead took up either Drafting and Practical Law, or Environmental Science and Electronics. Students in the Office/Record Section were required to take Business Communication but some AC students assigned there did not take this prerequisite elective.

The students' personal choice for their CPs was also given priority in assignments. In fact, some students had informally signified their intention to assist their CPs even prior to enrolling in the Work Program. They were given the freedom to choose their own CPs and to stay with their CPs for two quarters, or to shift to another CP in the second quarter. More often than not, they stayed because of the good relationship they had established with their CPs. They also wanted to avoid another adjustment in work.

> "*Adjusted na ako. Pag mag-shift, susulat uli ng application letter at mag-a-adjust na naman.*" (I had already adjusted. If I were to shift, I would have to write an application letter again and undergo another adjustment.)
>
> "*Masaya dito... di mahirap ang trabaho, di masungit ang CP,... nakakapag-chika-chika pa sa mga kaibigan at ka-vibes na ang mga ST [student teacher].*" (I'm happy here, the work is not difficult, the CP is not grouchy. I can talk to friends anytime and I can get along with the STs.)

Other reasons that the students gave for not shifting to another AC section in the second quarter were convenience (no need to transfer from one campus to the other), the condition of the place (air conditioned work area), their experiences with their CP, and the grade given to them by their CPs in the first quarter.

On Monitoring of AC Activities. The discussion in this theme is divided into two: (1) the different tasks assigned to the AC students, and (2) the method of monitoring these tasks.

The students and alumni were asked what they did during AC time. Table 1 shows that the students performed varied tasks that were somewhat similar to the activities that the CPs assigned to them and what the alumni remembered doing. Three themes emerged from the interviews: (1) a task can be a source of enjoyment, dissatisfaction, and learning for the AC students; (2) the allowable student tasks for each AC section was not very clear to the students; and (3) some CPs share the services of their AC students with other teachers.

Table 1. Activities Done by AC Students as Mentioned by the AC Students, CPs and Alumni

AC Section	Students' Response	Alumni's response	CPs' Response
Library	Shelving books, shelf-reading, manning the front desk and reserved sections, cutting clippings, working on projects	Shelf-reading, tallying the number of persons coming in and going out of the library	Shelving, making vertical files, cutting clippings, indexing, encoding, working on projects, labeling of shelves, making book pockets
Office	Typing, making cut-outs for the bulletin boards, preparing invitations, arranging files and bills, making list of graduates, delivering letters, checking test papers		Typing, recording, filing, collating papers, posting memos, sorting files
Research	Typing, sorting, collating, shuffling, arranging data chronologically, labeling, cataloguing, fixing evaluation sheets, doing research on the UPIS history and on basic education	Tallying data, recording survey results	Indexing and filing information materials, making bibliographies, cataloguing, photocopying materials, collating instructional materials, doing research on UPIS history, gathering data on Basic Education, looking for feelers for Alipato Journal, surfing the net for research, assisting in sampling for a research, constructing research instruments, assisting in administration of research instruments, tallying teacher evaluation results
Guidance	Compiling records, checking and encoding test results	Encoding survey results	Checking tests, making instructional materials, compiling records, interviewing students, facilitating group guidance activities, tallying of data, preparing bulletin board
Clinic	Arranging medicine cabinet, making cotton balls, cleaning wounds, arranging records in cabinet	Giving first aid, making cotton balls	Getting blood pressure, making the bed, giving first aid, arranging records, logging in of needed information on the child seeking medical attention, graphing records, making bulletin board displays, making cotton balls

AC Section	Students' Response	Alumni's response	CPs' Response
Teacher	Checking papers, recording, making visual aids, facilitating the class activity, observing classes, actual teaching, decorating the room / bulletin boards, watching over the class, computing partial grades, constructing test, gathering different techniques in proving problems in geometry, doing errands/ messenger work, collecting survey forms, constructing/ solving word problems, covering the table in the department, doing test item analysis, making visual aids, collecting for a pool of questions	Checking papers/ module, recording, making of visual aids, transcribing tapes, actual teaching, constructing/ typing test, decorating the bulletin board, giving seatwork, arranging things in the department, assisting students in their activities	Checking papers, recording, preparing instructional materials, doing library work, facilitating the class, computing partial grades, conducting remediation, arranging and classifying forms, gathering of different techniques in proving problems in geometry, doing errands, coaching participants for competition, preparing make-up test, delivering communication, answering phone calls, doing item analysis, peer teaching of foreign students

Majority of the students and alumni found their work easy and enjoyable because the tasks were simple and they were together with their friends.

"Enjoy, kasi kasama ko ang close friends ko..." (Enjoy, because I am with my close friends...)... Easy, no pressure."

"Masaya kasi nakapag-handle ng actual class." (I am happy because I handled an actual class.)

"Madali, no need for mental exertion.... Easy, because I enjoy!"

Others were overwhelmed by too much work to do and experienced difficulty in checking non-objective tests, compiling, and arranging records.

"...I feel difficulty when checking papers..."

"Nauubos ang utak sa pagso-solve ng problem." (My mind is exhausted in solving problems.)

"Na-assign ako sa dalawang section pero nagtsi-check ako ng lima (-ng sections). (I was assigned to two section), but I am checking five sections.")

"Nahihilo ako sa computer." (I feel dizzy working on the computer.)

"Mahirap mag-collate ng survey forms." (It is difficult to collate survey forms.)

"... I feel bad during compilation of records... masakit sa ulo dahil lumang-luma na. (My head aches because the records are too old).

Even if some tasks were a bit difficult, some students saw some advantages in accomplishing them and therefore enjoyed the activities.

"Nahihirapan ako sa pag-check ng proving sa geometry...dahil sinundan ko ang sagot ng bawat estudyante...hirap magbigay ng partial point... pero fulfilled ako pagkatapos." (I find it difficult to check proving in geometry...because I followed the answer of each student...it's difficult to give partial points...but I felt fulfilled afterwards.)

"Enjoy kahit mahirap...kasi ginugulo ulit ng mga bata ang mga books." (Enjoy even if it's difficult...because the children disarrange the books again.)

"...Katulad ng kaibigan ko sa records... Noong una, madali lang, too boring, pero noong marami na s'yang ginagawa, marami na s'yang natututunan, nag-enjoy na rin po siya." (...Just like my friend in the records section... At first, the tasks were too easy, too boring, but when he was working on many things already, he was learning a lot so he enjoyed already.)

"Hirap akong mag-check ng test papers sa Math...Ako pa ang gumawa ng answer key... (It's difficult to check test papers in Math. I do the answer key myself.)

"Dati hirap na hirap akong mag-intindi pero pagkatapos madali lang pala ... Na-refresh ako at advantage pala sa UPCAT [UP College Admissions Test] kasi sa lower math ito." (Before, it was difficult for me to understand but later, it became easy. I was refreshed and it was advantageous for UPCAT because it involved lower math.)

Some students thought that some tasks assigned to them (like setting up homeroom bulletin boards, covering the working table in the department area, delivering letters, answering phone calls, photocopying of papers, running errands for teachers, and checking papers for non-CPs) were beyond the scope of their AC sections. But their CPs felt otherwise. Since some CPs were also classroom advisers, club advisers and administrators, they felt that these tasks were still within the scope of the AC work. It can be inferred that the tasks under a particular section were not made clear to the students.

The students said that almost all of the activities they did were assigned to them by their CPs, except in some cases when they volunteered their services to other teachers who did not have AC students, or when their CPs instructed them to assist other teachers. The sharing of services of the AC students became necessary when the CPs forgot to assign tasks for the students to accomplish, when the CPs could not think of any other activity to assign to their AC students who had relatively light work load, or when the CPs had student teachers who could regularly assist them.

The tasks given by CPs to students generally helped both parties. The AC students were considered by almost all their CPs as "help rather than burden." As regards CPs with student teachers, some CPs and their corresponding AC students confirmed that tasks assigned to them did not overlap.

Aside from the activities under the CPs, the AC students also had KITTY-CAT done some days before the end of the semester. This activity was an "on the job training" outside the school for the students to gain actual job experience. During the interview period, the AC students had not undergone

their KITTY-CAT experience yet and so only the alumni respondents were able to share their experiences on this activity. Most of them worked in the job sites of their parents and close relatives. They recounted positive experiences but also noted that the time was limited to one or two days only.

Monitoring of AC Students . The following themes emerged from the data gathered on how the students were monitored by CPs: (1) most CPs found their AC students reliable so they supervised them minimally, and (2) some AC students were not closely supervised due to conflict in schedules.

Majority of the students reported their CPs' confidence in them because they were allowed to work independently with minimum supervision.

> "*Binibigyan ako ng direksyon pagkatapos iniiwan to work...lumalapit lang kung may problema.*" (I am given directions afterwards I am left to work alone...goes to me only if there is a problem.)
>
> "*Nasa tabi siya, pasilip-silip... nagco-comment kung minsan.*" (She stays nearby, looks once in a while... sometimes gives comments.)
>
> "*Di po masyado... hinahayaang tapusin ko ang trabaho.*" (Not so much... lets me finish the job.) Sometimes the teacher just "*calls my attention pag may mistakes*" (calls my attention only if there are mistakes).
>
> "*Hindi naman as in sobrang bantay ...tina-trust naman ako niya...kapag may tanong ako especially kung meron akong hindi maintindihan, nagtatanong ako sa kanya.*" (Not so much as in too close supervision...she trusts me...if I have a question especially if there is anything I can't understand, I ask her.)
>
> "My CP just observes and gives tips. *Nakikiramdam siya* ...(She observes me)... [She is always] present in the room."

These findings among students were confirmed by some of the CPs.

> "*Nakikita ko naman siya.*" (I could see him from where I am.)
>
> "*Di naman binabantayan, responsible naman sila ... walang napupunta sa akin na di gumagawa.*" (They aren't monitored, they are responsible... everyone does his work..)
>
> "*Ini-istress ko ang accuracy para di ko na balikan pa ang test papers na tsini-check nila.*" (I stress accuracy so I would not have to re-check anymore the test papers they checked.)

On the other hand, a few CPs had other views regarding monitoring activities of their AC students:

> "*Di ko 'yan mapapabayaan dahil responsibilidad ko kung may mangyayari sa bata* [referring to sick students who go to the clinic]." (I cannot neglect him because it is my responsibility if anything happens to the child.)

"In checking papers, I have to go over *kasi parang utusan sila kung di ko nire-recheck.*" (They would seem like slaves if I don't recheck).

"Guide them *para ma-maximize ang time.*" (To maximize the time)

But some students claimed that they were not supervised at all.

"*Hindi, dahil laging di kami nagkikita... seldom kaming nagco-communicate personally... kadalasan wala siya, hinuhulog ko lang [sa tray] ang ginawa ko ... the next time, ganun din, may note siya kung ano ang gagawin at ihuhulog ko din sa tray niya ang nagawa ko.*" (No, since we do not see each other often, we seldom communicate personally...most of the time, she is not around, I just drop [in the tray] what I finished...the next time, it's the same thing, she has a note on what I will do and I also drop in the tray what I finished.)

When asked whether the AC students reported regularly during AC time, the students claimed that they did, except when school activities such as "Linggo ng Wika" called for practice or when they needed time for co/extra-curricular activities. Nonetheless, some CPs admitted that they were flexible regarding the regularity of the attendance of their AC students. In cases where the AC students could not comply with the 30-hour requirement for the quarter, take home tasks were given to compensate for the lack of hours.

On Evaluation of AC Student. Two emerging themes came out from the analysis of responses regarding the evaluation of AC students' performance: (1) the basis for evaluating student performance was quite clear to the AC students, although the CPs felt that the criteria need to be revised; and(2) both the CPs and students felt that the CPs need to be evaluated also to give them feedback.

At the end of each quarter, the CPs were furnished copies of Student Evaluation Sheet and Attitude Rating for the Students. The Student Evaluation Sheet consisted of two parts: (1) the CPs identified the tasks listed on the sheet that were actually done by their AC students, assigned points to these tasks, and then gave the corresponding points earned by the student on these tasks (this constituted 60% of the CPs' grade for the student); and (2) the CPs rated the remaining 40% on the students' attitude towards work in the learning site. In some cases, students were asked by their CPs to do self-evaluation, using the two instruments, before they conferred with each other. The grade given by the CP constituted 60% of the final grade of the student, while 40% came from the LCs. The LCs' criteria for grading the students included attendance (30%), diary/journal (40%), application letter (10%), and group project (10%).

Most of the CPs suggested that the evaluation forms be revised. They preferred the Attitude Rating for the Students instead of the Student Evaluation Sheet because it was more specific. Some CPs recommended that more specific rubrics be added on the different aspects of the student evaluation. Abalajon, et al. (1980) also recommended that the grading system of the AC students be revised.

The AC students were required to write weekly journal entries and submit them to the LCs. These journals contained the student's experiences, insights, feelings, activities, comments, and suggestions. According to AC students and alumni, the journals were confidential in nature and were seldom read by their CPs. This was confirmed by the LCs and the CPs. The students also mentioned that the LCs never gave them feedback on what was written in these students' journal. But for most of the students and alumni, the journals were personal and they did not want their CPs to read them.

> "Ayaw ko, nakakahiya...di ko kasi masabi kay Ma'am na mahirap ang pinapagawa niya." (I don't like, it's embarrassing...I can not tell Ma'am that what she assigns is too difficult.)
>
> "No, confidential ang sinulat ko." (No,what I wrote was confidential.)
>
> "Hindi po, personal kasi yon, e." (No, that is personal.)
>
> "Hindi po, pag hindi maganda ang nakasulat baka magalit ang CP!" (No, the CP might get mad if what was written is not good!)
>
> Only one AC student said, " Yes, kasi dito lang nasasabi ang damdamin ko." (Yes, because this is only where I can express my feelings); and one alumnus commented, "Pwede, okey lang na basahin n'ya." (It's okey if she reads it.)

When asked if the CPs were evaluated by their own AC students just like any other teacher evaluation given towards the end of the school year, the LCs and the CPs said that this was not so although they were amenable to the idea.

> "Ok lang." (It's just ok.) "Yes, to give us feedback on our performance as CP."
>
> "Yes, basta objective ang pag-rate nila." (Yes, as long as they rate us objectively.)
>
> "I like being evaluated... It should be done ... for improvement.."
>
> "Ok lang ma-evaluate para sa susunod na hahawak...kung may gustong baguhin..." (It's ok to be evaluated for the next who will handle it... if there is anything to be changed...)
>
> Only one CP remarked, "No need kasi di naman palagian kaming nagkikita." (Because we seldom see each other).

Meanwhile, majority of the AC students said they would also want to evaluate their CPs.

> "Yes, for awareness on the side of the CP."
>
> "Yes, for them to have feedback."
>
> Only one commented, "Di na kailangan kasi open naman ang communication namin." (There is no need because we have open communication.)

Problems Encountered in the AC Program

Three themes emerged from the data gathered on problems encountered by the AC students, CPs and alumni. These were (1) conflict in schedule between AC students and CPs which resulted to lack of communication; (2) inadequacy of assigned tasks and sharing of AC students among faculty members; (3) some CPs' lack of awareness of the goals and expectations of the work program and so some students felt they were given activities beyond the scope of the AC program; and (4) some AC students' lack of proper attitude and skills to cope with some of the tasks given them. Table 2 summarizes the problems encountered by the AC students, the causes of these problems, and how these were solved.

Table 2. Students' Problems in the Assistance Component

Students' Problem	Perceived Cause	Solutions
"Naghahabol ng oras." [Can't meet the required 30 hours of work]	- CP forgot to leave activities - CP could not think of tasks to give the AC student because CP has a light load and a student teacher - CP went on leave	- Asked work from other teachers or staff members - CP gave take-home tasks/ assignments. - Student was assigned to another AC section.
Difficulty in checking non-objective type of test (essay, problem solving,...)	- Handwriting of students could not be read. - AC student found it hard to rate "creativity" and grammar. - AC student had to read the novel first before he could check the test. - CP did not give an answer key.	- Some CPs gave guide-lines on checking papers. - Conferred with CP on how to allocate partial points.
Tardiness	Student activities overlapped with the AC time.	CP gave homework.
Lack of student's interest	AC section or CP was not his first choice.	
Cannot submit an assignment in the morning	AC was scheduled in the after-noon only.	
"Sobrang dami ang pinapa-gawa." (Too much work to be done.)	- The AC Section had listed so many things for the students to do. - The periodic test was recently administered and CP handled many sections.	

Students' Problem	Perceived Cause	Solutions
"Hindi ako nakakagawa nang maayos." (I cannot work well.)	"Sobrang dami, masikip ang kabinet." (Too many, the cabinet is full.)	The student did his best.
- Waste of time in going to elementary grounds especially during rainy days. - Danger in crossing the road.	Elementary and high school buildings are on separate grounds.	
AC student does not meet the CP regularly	- CP handled classes both in high school and elementary levels. - CP had administrative load.	- CP and AC student texted each other. - Take home assignments were given.
Difficulty in doing item analysis	- AC did not have a previous experience in doing item analysis. - Tallying of long test scores took time.	CP guided the AC students.
The feeling that some work were not within the scope of AC section	The activities within the bounds of AC program were not clear to the AC students.	

The Assistance Component has been implemented in UPIS for almost a decade and a half but some perennial problems were noted like "*naghahabol sa oras ang AC students*" (the AC students run after time [because they cannot complete the 30-hour requirement]), "*walang maipagawa ang mga CP*" (CPs ran out of tasks to assign), "*nanghihingi ng trabaho sa ibang teachers*" (they ask for work from other teachers), and "*wala ang CPs at walang trabahong iniwan*" (The CPs were not around and they did not leave any assigned work).

This was confirmed by one faculty member.

"...There are some things which should be considered to ensure the continued success of the program. I think one problem lies in the cooperating persons themselves, specifically on the amount of work they give the ACs. Most of the time, the students are left with nothing to do, they just stay idle and are sometimes tempted to roam around during working hours. ... The CPs tend to neglect them... and do not check the attendance and work done by the respective ACs, so that when the time comes for them to evaluate their assistants, they do not know what rating to give. ..These CPs cannot attend to these students all the time since they are also busy with their own work. They tend to take the students for granted, attending to them only when they need help on some tasks."

Table 3 presents the problems encountered by the CPs, the causes and solutions. It shows that the main problem was the irregularity of the attendance of AC students. The perceived causes were the conflict of schedules of students and CPs who had classes, students' flexibility of schedule, student's lack of interest in their work, and conflict of activities. Some students had irregular attendance because their CPs could not monitor them, resulting in non-compliance with the 30-hour requirement. In some cases, this was resolved by giving the students some homework.

Table 3.   Cooperating Persons' Problems

CPs' Problem	Perceived Cause	Solution done
- AC students did not report regularly. - AC students did not come on time. - Some students just logged in and left the work area. - AC student was not available when his services were needed.	- Conflict of schedule of AC students and CP - Overlapping of activities (Linggo ng Wika, UPCAT, etc.) - AC student was not aware of the nature of tasks in a particular section - AC student was banking on the flexibility of their time. - AC student was not interested. - AC student was not focused. (He was busy courting another student.) - AC student was lazy to cross the road from the high school to the elementary campus and back.	- Gave take home assignment - [A CP suggested the improvement of AC schedule.] - [A CP suggested the AC students' advance visitation of the work area.] - [A CP suggested LC's proper monitoring of the AC students' attendance] -"Babaan ang (lower the) rating... give warning... give additional work."
CP and AC students could not meet each other.	CP handled classes both at high school and elementary levels.	- CP resorted to text messages. - CP gave take-home tasks.
An AC student could not complete the required number of hours.	The AC student did not like to shelve the dirty books.	He was given the chance to render services during summer.
AC student did not produce quality work.	- AC student did not do his best. - CP expected so much.	CP did the work himself.
AC students did not accomplish the tasks on time.	AC students did not value punctuality.	CP did the work himself.
Some CPs were not aware of goals and expectations of the AC program.	CPs were not given an orientation on the rationale and goals of the AC program.	[A CP suggested that LC should orient CPs on the goals and objectives of the AC program.]
AC student did not experience actual teaching.	AC time did not coincide with the scheduled teaching load of some CPs.	[A CP suggested that the schedule be arranged so that the AC time and the CP class schedule coincide with each other.)
CP had no more work to assign to AC	CP had a light load and a student teacher at the same time.	Shared the services of AC student with other teachers.
Student's tasks could not be closely monitored by CP and LC.	Conflict of schedule between AC hours and CP classes.	Sometimes CP left notes regarding tasks to do.

Some CPs, particularly the junior faculty members, also admitted that they were not sure of the goals of the program since they were not given proper orientation about it. This led to some confusion on what tasks to assign to their AC students. As mentioned earlier, some students felt that they were made to do tasks outside the scope of the program such as covering the long table in the department area, doing errands for the teacher, doing test item analysis which they were not familiar with, and decorating bulletin boards for specific homerooms which they felt was the duty of homeroom class officers and members. Some CPs themselves even suggested that the learning coordinators should give them orientation on the goals and rationale of the program.

Aside from not being able to meet their AC students regularly, the CPs' main problem was the lack of proper attitude and skills among the students. Some CPs complained of the quality of work done by their ACs. "*Minsan inuulit ko pa!*" (Sometimes I had to redo their work). Other CPs experienced problems on the punctuality of their students. "*Parating late...minsan hindi sumisipot*" (Always late... sometimes he does not come).

The problems encountered by the alumni were similar to the ones listed in Table 3. Of special mention were the conflict in schedule especially when there were school activities and the difficulty of checking non-objective type of tests.

Evaluation of the AC Program by Respondents

The AC students and alumni were asked to what extent has the AC Program attained its objectives in providing students with experiences that develop special interests, skills and desirable work attitude and values. All groups claimed that the program was generally successful in terms of learning gains. Table 4 summarizes the specific concepts/skills and work attitudes/ values mentioned as having been developed by the program and what the CPS mentioned as having been emphasized to their students.

Among the concepts and skills developed among the AC students, interpersonal skills or establishing good relations was most frequently mentioned by the AC students and the CPs. Next to this, the AC students reported to have developed skills in checking papers, working systematically and managing time. Meanwhile, the CPs' second and third most frequent responses were the development of creativity and being accurate and systematic in work. It is quite noticeable that none of the AC students mentioned about the development of creativity, although two alumni mentioned it. The alumni also cited the development of their skills in checking test papers and being resourceful.

Table 4. Learning Gains in Frequency of Responses

Learning Gains	Student	CP	Alumni
Concepts/Skills			
Interpersonal skills	8	10	
Checking papers	5	1	1
Accuracy and working systematically	4	7	
Managing/budgeting time	4	2	
Doing item analysis	2	1	
Constructing and solving word problems	2	1	
Research skills	1	1	
Resourcefulness	1		1
Shelving and shelf reading	1	1	
Creativity/Critical thinking skills		8	2
Decision-making skills		3	
Constructing visual aids		1	
Classroom management		1	
None	2	3	
Work Attitudes/Values			
Patience	9	5	1
Being responsible	7	9	
Pakikisama (cooperation)	7	5	
Working hard/ giving your best/ diligence/ being industrious	6	7	
Perseverance/dedication	4	5	
Time consciousness/valuing time	3	8	
Discipline	3	7	
Honesty	3	6	
Obedience	3	3	
Understanding and respect for others	2	11	1
Appreciation of the work of teachers	2	7	
Self-reliance	1	3	
Commitment and love for work		9	
Punctuality/promptness		6	

As regards values developed, the most frequent reply from the students was patience. It was followed by "*pakikisama*" (coope-ration) and being responsible . The CPs' top response was emphasizing understanding and respect for others; the second was helping the students to become responsible and to develop commitment and love for work. The alumni also reported having deve-loped patience and understanding/ respect for others. It is interesting to note that punctuality/ promptness was never mentioned by the AC students nor by the alumni.

The students obviously gained many realization about the Assistance Component Program. Some AC students would even like to recom-mend the program to other students. When asked whether they would have enrolled in the program even if it were not required of them, many of the students replied that they still would.

The CPs also had varied views. To some, the AC Program was still worthwhile for the students to enroll in because it "exposes them to actual work; affects their values, and develops their self-confidence and personality." However, a few wanted to "abandon" the program "since its contribution to the student's growth is only on social relations or EQ (Emotional Quotient)." Others viewed it as irrelevant because for them, the program's primary goal is to prepare students for work after graduation but in reality, very few UPIS graduates go to work after high school. "...In fact, *lahat ay nag-e-expect na makapasa sa UPCAT* (UP College Admissions Test" (All expect to pass UPCAT). Other CPs suggested that the stu-dents focus more on their academics.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This qualitative study on the UPIS Assistance Component of the Work Program showed that the program is generally successful in attaining its objective of providing students experience for the purpose of developing special interests, skills and values while rendering services to the school. All AC students agreed that the program was a learning gain for them. Their understanding of the program was manifested through their output and positive attitude towards the assigned tasks. Some students greatly enjoyed doing these tasks although a few experienced dissatisfaction.

The AC students, cooperating persons and alumni gerterally encoun-tered the same problems. Conflict of schedule of the students and their CPs, lack of awareness of the goals and expectations of the Work Program among some CPs, and lack of proper attitude and prerequisite skills on the part of the AC students were the main problems.

Based on the preceding discussions, the researchers recommend the following, some of which are suggestions of the respondents: (a) proper orientation on goals and objectives of the AC program for AC students and cooper-ating persons and defining the roles of CPs and LCs; (b) arrangement of the AC schedule to coincide with the schedule of classes of CPs to enable the students to assist in the actual teaching-learning process; (c) shortening the number of hours for AC and reducing its credit units; (d) strict implementation of the policy on prerequisites of each AC section; (e) consultation with the different department chairs regarding the

number of AC students to be fielded and number of available CPs; (f) planning and working together of CPs and LCs to tackle issues and problems in the implementation of the AC program; (g) regular feedback of LCs to CPs about their AC students' activities and problems; (h) development of specific rubrics to measure the performance of AC students; and (i) AC students' evaluation of their CPs to give them feedback.

It is also recommended that AC students be given more exposure to actual work. They should not be confined to UPIS campus and Kitty-Cat experience only. The LCs and CPs can establish linkages with the other colleges of the UP System and with business companies for other AC venues.

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