Reflections on Courtney Bell’s “Validation of Professional Practice Components of Teacher Evaluation Systems”

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Big Ideas

• We must clearly understand the problem we’re trying to solve.

• Different problems, necessitate different solutions, which should be tied to a well specified and credible theory of action.

• We must clearly understand the multi-dimensional nature of the construct.

• Context is critical. A set of assumptions may hold in one circumstance but not another.
Validation Plan

• With weighty and wise caveats, an exemplar plan is presented.

• Reasonable claims in a theory of use are proposed
  – Are the measures trustworthy?
  – Can they be used and are they used to inform practice?
  – To what extent is there an impact on teaching and learning?

• A thoughtful set research questions and analyses are pegged to each claim.
Ambitious / Attainable

• The plan very ambitious and replete with many practical examples and suggestions.
  – Even so, more could be added. Consider, for example, an investigation of unintended consequences.

• But, of course, time and resources are limited. How do we keep from making perfection the enemy of good?
Threading the Needle

• Focus on clarity of constructs and measures: these are the building blocks.

• Higher stakes = higher the burden