

Indiana University School of Education  
Committee on Teacher Education  
February 8, 2006  
Minutes

**Present:** Jill Shedd, Paulette Dilworth, Ben Edmonds, Diana Lambdin, Gerald Campano, Tim Niggle, Laura Stachowski, Brent Gault, Tom Brush, Anne Trotter for Suzanne Eckes, David Estell, Keith Chapin

**Others Present:** Gretchen Butera to present S400 course change request and K548 redesign, Frank Lester to present N102/N103 course requests, Terry Mason to present on NRC Report on Committee on the Study of Teacher Education Programs, Jeane Novotny

**I. Approval of January 23, 2006 Minutes**

*Handout: January 23 Minutes (green)*

After reviewing the January 23 minutes, it was motioned that the minutes be approved.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

**II. New Course Request: N102, N103—Frank Lester**

*Handout: N102 request forms (yellow), N103 request forms (orange)*

Frank Lester presented a proposal to add two new courses in mathematics education to the elementary education program. The courses, N102 and N103, align with the current T102 and T103 courses offered by the mathematics department in the College of Arts and Sciences, but have a greater focus on math content and pedagogy relevant to effective instruction in elementary school classrooms.

Faculty in mathematics education designed the N102 and N103 courses based on recommendations that elementary education students be able to:

- 1) Understand math concepts as they relate to teaching young children
- 2) Understand HOW to teach math to young children
- 3) Learn in ways that are consistent with the latest recommendations about math learning and teaching
- 4) Align and relate math content courses with methods courses taken in the School of Education
- 5) Align mathematics content courses with state requirements to ensure that math preparation relates to Indiana academic standards

T102 and T103 are still available for students to take; the N102 and N103 courses simply give students another option for fulfilling their mathematics requirements. The mathematics education department recommends that students take T101 in the mathematics department followed by N102 and N103 in the School of Education. These alternative options would allow students who have taken T101 on another IU campus to count that course toward their math concentration. T101 must be taken before any of the more advanced courses; however, after T101 has been completed, students may take any combination of T102, T103, N102, and N103 to continue their coursework in mathematics.

While the mathematics department in the College of Arts and Sciences prefer that math content courses be taught in their own domain, the math education department upholds N102 and N103 as helpful alternatives, especially for students who struggle with basic math skills as they relate to teaching students math. Rather than lowering standards, the course would offer more support for students who may struggle with math and teaching math. Jill Shedd noted that advisors should be informed of the N102 and N103 alternatives, especially for students who are looking for extra tutorials in mathematics.

Tim Niggle moved to approve the course proposal as written, seconded by Paulette Dilworth.  
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

### **III. Course Change Request: Q405**

*Handout: Q405 request forms (purple)*

The science education department submitted to CTE a proposal to change the course description of Q405. The change in language would ensure that the course description matched changes made to the program in 2004-2005, which were approved by CTE at the January 20, 2005 meeting. The current proposal is a clerical change only.

After discussing the proposal, members recommended that the description exclude the last two phrases, which refer to a “field-like teaching” experience using the Saturday Science QUEST program. Removing these sentences would broaden the description and allow for more flexibility in the program so that changes to the field experience can be made without the need for a lengthy change in paperwork. Other descriptions of the course should inform students that there is a Saturday time requirement; however, this is not necessary for the official course description.

Members suggested the description be changed to: “Integrated science course/lab for elementary education majors with a science concentration. This capstone course is primarily a science course intended to expand previously gained science content knowledge; topic and field experiences at the discretion of the instructor.”

Tim Niggle motioned to approve the proposal as amended; Brent Gault seconded. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Addendum: Valarie Akerson, representing Q405, approved the amendment in an email to chair Tom Brush on February 10, 2006.

### **IV. Course Change Request: S400—Gretchen Butera**

*Handout: S400 request forms (white)*

Gretchen Butera presented to the committee a proposal to make changes to the Community of Teachers field-based seminar, S400. The revision would change the number of credit hours from a variable 2-4 to a variable 2-6.

By making this change, the credit hours received would more closely match the work load of students. An increase in credit hours would also provide FTE credits so that doctoral students in the special education department could participate in supervision of CoT students.

Diana Lambdin noted that the proposal originally requested changing the credit hours from 2-4 to 3-5. At the suggestion of the CTE Agenda Committee, CoT changed the proposal so that the credit hours would change from a 2-4 credits to 2-6 credits. This will allow the program to change the credits as they see fit without needing further CTE approval.

As CoT is based on portfolio completion rather than credit hour completion, the change in credit hours for S400 will not allow students to finish their coursework any sooner. CTE members suggested that CoT develop a standard for allowing students to sign up for a certain amount of credits. Gretchen Butera responded that the policy for awarding a certain amount of credits for students will be written in the CoT handbook. The program is currently thinking of awarding 5 credits for the course, except in unusual cases (e.g. for a student who does not yet have a field placement, less credits would be awarded).

David Estell motioned that the proposal to change the S400 credit hours from a variable 2-4 to a variable 2-6 be approved. Ben Edmonds seconded. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### **V. Report on K548 Redesign—Gretchen Butera**

Gretchen Butera reported to CTE on some of the developments taking place to the course K548: Families, School, and Society. One major intent of the course is to assist masters level special education students to obtain competence in relating to families. K548 is a course that seeks to specifically relate to family interactions and interpersonal relations. Previous feedback from students who took the course as a CTEP electronic course uncovered student perceptions that their focus on “professionalism” interfered with their relationships with parents and teachers, because they felt families and teachers were put off by the “expert” persona.

In response to this feedback, K548 has been redesigned to give students more interactions with families of special needs children. This year, K548 has included parents of special needs children as co-teachers of the course. These are parents who previously collaborated with the special education program in family projects done by special education students. There were 5 families who participated. The families served as on-going advisors to the faculty in arranging the curriculum, guest speakers to the class, and mentors who responded to students reflections through an online journal.

Overall, the feedback on the course was very positive. It created a lot of work for the course coordinators in developing relationships with families and orchestrating the co-teaching. Gretchen Butera noted that, in collaborating with these parents, the faculty felt the same sentiments experienced by their students—the difficulty in taking an expert role and relating to families.

Diana Lambdin asked if K548 would be restructured the same way if some of the difficulties were smoothed over. Gretchen Butera noted that the parents reported that they enjoyed the opportunity to have their voice heard and told the course coordinators that they would participate again. However, if the course would be offered the same way over many semesters, more parents would need to be recruited and more funding would be needed to increase the honorarium offered to these families for their participation.

CTE thanked Gretchen for the opportunity to hear about this exciting and innovative course.

#### **IV. Academic Standards Committee Report—Tim Niggle**

*Handout: ASC 2004-2005 report (blue)*

Tim Niggle presented data on Academic Standards Committee decisions during the spring and fall 2005 semesters. The full data is contained in the ASC 2004-2005 report given to CTE members. The original report given to members contained errors in the numbers of cases. Since the CTE meeting, however, these errors have been corrected and a new report has been posted on Oncourse for CTE members. During the meeting, Tim highlighted some of the categories used to organize the decisions.

Category A included all requests to waive the Praxis test for admission to the teacher education program. This request was approved in 53% of cases, and only when the student provided a waiver documented a disability which would hinder them from successfully completing the test. In these instances, the ASC will allow the student to continue in the teacher education program without a passing score, but cannot guarantee approval of licensure by the state of Indiana.

Category H included requests to graduate without certification. These requests were approved as long as the student had completed all requirements, did not complete student teaching, maintained a 2.5 GPA, and had a plan for what they were going to with a non-certification education degree (e.g. many students wanted to go on to graduate school). 36% of these cases were denied and the students were instead sent to School of continuing studies, as they had not completed enough professional education courses to be considered prepared as education majors.

Category F includes all requests to complete student teaching out of state. Tim reported that this has become more of an issue in recent years. The ASC will only grant this request if there is someone in the program who can supervise the student or guarantee adequate student teaching supervision at the requested site. These requests were approved in 50% of the cases.

Category G refers to requests to waive the GPA requirement in order to graduate. This policy is strongly enforced in TEP. There was one request in spring and fall 2005, which was denied.

Tim Niggle noted that overall, the types of decisions made by the ASC were on par with appeals from the past. However, CTE does not have data from all semesters to see a historical trend of appeals over the last few years.

CTE members thanked Tim Niggle and the Academic Standards Committee for the report.

#### **VI. Informational Item: National Resource Council's Report on Committee on the Study of Teacher Education Programs—Terry Mason**

*Handouts: Committee on the Study of Teacher Preparation Programs Meeting Summary (goldenrod), SBR and Teacher Education article (white)*

Terry Mason appeared before CTE to discuss the implications of the National Resource Council's Study of Teacher Education Programs.

Previous syntheses of studies in education have used only studies which met the “gold standard” of experimental design, to the exclusion of many studies using qualitative or other non-experimental designs. For example, by applying this “gold standard” to studies of reading vocabulary, as studied by the National Reading Panel, a group of 20,000 studies were reduced to only 50 which met criteria for inclusion in the study. Many educators feel an important voice is missing from the research by relying on such strict research criteria.

The NRC’s Report on the Committee on the Study of Teacher Education Programs will address three major questions:

1. Who enters teacher education programs? What are the general demographics?
2. What types of instruction/experiences are teacher education students receiving? Is there consistency between content and experience?
3. To what extent is the required coursework and training in reading and math align with converging scientific evidence?

According to Michael Allen the NRC study director, the current study of teacher education programs will take a broader view and will use studies not using strict experimental design. Still, there is concern that the drive of the research is politically motivated and will ultimately yield results which are not scientific but rather political. Even the questions being asked appear more political than empirical, and may continue to represent the traditional and conservative body of knowledge on both research design and education theory.

The role of the IU School of Education in the midst of this study is to be aware of the research being done and to become involved. The following are ways in which the School of Education can become more involved in the work of the NRC:

- Send representatives to the open public meetings of research groups. Terry Mason reported that there are currently two meetings scheduled for this spring. Dean Gonzalez attended the first meeting, but having a regular representative to attend is preferred. The deliberations of the committee are not public, but the public meetings provide an opportunity to give feedback to the committee.
- Bring something to the attention of the committee, be it research, data, or other information that could inform their deliberations. The committee is also maintaining a database of all submitted research, which could be an outlet for submitting information. The committee has said it will accept a broader range of inquiry methods in the research it accepts for the database.
- Be proactive about representing what is done well in the Teacher Education Program. It behooves the School of Education to support the quality of its teacher education program against the criticisms of those who would push for small privatized programs.
- Expand evaluation of TEP students beyond self-report (which is currently the most widely used method in the unit assessment system report). Try to project what is being done from students’ entry into TEP to graduation and perhaps set a regular assessment of TEP graduates. This would require more time and funding, but could eventually lead to an ever-growing database of information which could gain ground as being reputable research.

Tom Brush asked about the timeline for the committee's report. Terry Mason responded that the report is scheduled to go before Congress in the fall of 2007, which makes this report a high stakes document. It is therefore imperative that this goes beyond discussion into a proactive response from large teacher education programs such as IU. Faculty councils have been informed on the report. A structured response is now needed.