

MINUTES
POLICY COUNCIL
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
February 17, 2010
1:00-3:00pm
IUB – Room 2140
IUPUI – Room 3138E

What follows is a summary of speaker contributions.

Members Present: R. Appelman, P. Kloosterman, G. Lopez, S. Martinez, F. Pawan, J. Rosario, A. Teemant; **Staff Alternate:** T. Niggle; **Dean's Staff Present:** T. Brush, J. Cummings, G. Gonzalez, M. McMullen, F. Robison, R. Sherwood; **Graduate Student Members Present:** C. Chesnut; **Guests Present:** M. Nyikos.

I. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the January 27, 2010 Policy Council meeting were unanimously approved (10.28M)

II. Announcement and Discussion

a. Dean's Report:

This morning's Chronicle of Higher Education printed an article about the Obama administration's efforts to reform teacher education. It highlighted work being done at Arizona State University, a school that received both an 18 million dollar grant from a private source and the largest teacher quality grant provided by the "Race to the Top." IUPUI was also a recipient of a teacher quality grant. The article featured ASU because it has been highlighted as a place where 1) teacher education has been changed to make sure that teachers have strong content background in the area(s) of their teaching and, 2) alternative routes to becoming a teacher are offered, including a partnership with Teach for America. The Chronicle presented ASU as possibly having started a new wave of teacher reform, even though the conversation regarding pedagogy versus content is not new. So, we can expect to see more in the coming months and years regarding this pedagogy versus content issue. It is a familiar issue most recently because of the Revisions for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA).

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education—the group which approves new degrees in higher education for the state and serves as mediator between the general assembly and the state's institutions of higher education—had a meeting last Friday in which they discussed the future of Masters Degrees in Education. Research was cited to suggest that Masters Degrees in education do not increase teacher effectiveness; that is, they do not add value to teacher preparation, viewed in connection with a teacher's ability to effect student learning or increase student achievement. Two Masters Degree proposals went before the Commission: one from Ball State and one from IU East. Both are being held by the Commission so that more discussion can take place regarding the value of a Masters Degree in a teacher's preparation.

Concerning the status of REPA: The proposal initially included such measures as the following: the elimination of secondary education majors as a route to preparing teachers of middle and high school students, limits on the number of education credit hours that a degree could contain (including a 30-hour limit on elementary education degrees, a limit of 18 hours for a secondary education minor, and the elimination of the early childhood license in the state). But, since the education community came together to express concerns about some of the proposal's more extreme aspects, and provided evidence that challenged assumptions in the proposal, some elements of the proposal were re-considered and positive changes were made. Nevertheless, there is still work to be done. For example, the Department of Education hosted a webinar last week and the presentation made clear that all Teacher Education programs in the state would have to offer the routes to preparation outlined in the proposal: including a minor in education for elementary teachers, or a minor in secondary education for those preparing to be secondary teachers, a transition to teaching program, and so on. But, the written document does not indicate that an institution will be required to offer *all* routes to teacher preparation; it says that they will be required to offer *at least one of* those routes. Jill Shedd raised a question about this matter and was told that an answer would require additional study and would therefore have to be provided at a later date. The point is that, even though a legitimate case can in fact be made that the intention of the Indiana Professional Standards Board was to ensure multiple routes to preparation while still allowing each institution to choose the route that best fit their programs, we cannot afford to do nothing. We cannot afford simply to tinker around the edges of our programs so that we can say they are in compliance with REPA. The danger in that is that it both invites scrutiny and, ultimately, the possibility that the General Assembly would put into action some of the things REPA tried to do—things that have, at least for now, been put aside. It is critical that the faculty understand the implications of the policy environment that we are in and that they embrace reforms and incorporate them into our teacher preparation programs. There is an expectation that by July 1, all the education programs in the state will conform to REPA. What REPA essentially does is say that certain pedagogical and professional education elements must be taught in the curriculum in order for a graduate of that curriculum to become licensed in the state. By 2013 (or perhaps 2012) all graduates of education programs must have met the standards and expectations of REPA. That means that all of our new students coming in the fall of 2010 would need to have documentation that the program they graduated from met the REPA standard. So, even though the public debate is over, we must continue to be very purposeful in making sure the necessary changes are made—and that includes negotiating things we value or things we may not agree with. At the end of the day, the standards need to be met.

Superimposed on all of this is the current accreditation review. Some of the concerns being raised, and that will likely show up in the final report, revolve around three critical areas: 1) assessment data for advanced programs, as well as the Master of Arts in Teaching and the Transition to Teaching Program initial license programs. Some of the concerns were that we are not *systematically using* data to improve programs. We will likely be asked to explain how data is collected and used in this regard. 2) Segregation of data for alternative route and distance education programs. We need to think about evaluating distance education programs and how data can improve these programs. 3) The extent to which we provide opportunities for our candidates to have experience with diverse populations. Finally, there were some general questions about the role of part time faculty at IUB and Columbus and the extent to which they

participate in program design and governance, and so on. Again, we must take this accreditation very seriously, particularly in the context of the policy environment we are in. We must pay close attention to data and use of it to improve programs, and we must be intentional about assessing the performance of our candidates in regards to what we say we expect them to know and be able to do.

We may be in the midst of an unprecedented effort to reform teacher education in this country. There is a high level of confluence in these efforts, and we need to be leaders in the conversation by informing the debate through our research and by making sure our teachers and our practices are supported with the best available evidence.

Some questions and discussion ensued.

- b. Agenda Committee announcement (P. Kloosterman): the spring faculty meeting will be held on April 16, 2010 at 10:00am.

III. Old Business

Diversity Topic (Martha Nyikos):

M. Nyikos presented on a Pathway Initiative Grant. Questions and discussion ensued.

IV. New Business

- a. Proposal for Peace Corps Masters International Program (10.30)
F. Pawan presented the proposal. Questions and comments were raised in relation to the program proposal.
A vote was taken and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- b. Diversity Committee Initiative (10.31).
R. Skiba was unable to attend the Policy Council meeting. P. Kloosterman gave an overview of this agenda item and the accompanying document. The item will be taken up again at the March Policy Council meeting.

V. New Courses/Courses for Changes

No new courses or course changes were proposed.

****P. Kloosterman adjourned the meeting at 2:14pm****