

Elementary TEP Renewal Brief Description & Update of Efforts, Lessons Learned & Challenges

Elham Kazemi and Cap Peck

History and Context

The renewal effort in Elementary TEP has been a complex and multi-layered effort over the last two years to engage the entire Elementary TEP community (UW supervisors, faculty, TAs, students, alumni, and K-12 teachers and administrators, and other public constituents) in a focused and collaborative effort to: 1) identify priorities for renewing the program; 2) deliberate and study questions and issues related to those priorities, and 3) offer new structures and content for the TEP renewal.

Just this past quarter, December 2006, the TEP division voted overwhelmingly in support of the newly proposed structural contours of the program. A community team is now working on drafting proposals describing the content and foci for each quarter of the renewed program for the TEP community to consider. Briefly the new structure of the program is as follows:

1. option to start in the spring or summer quarter of 2008.
2. Academic year program that continues after the spring or summer start and ends with teacher certification K-8.
3. Option (which we anticipate most will take) to continue working towards the master's degree during the 2nd academic year with flexibility for students to do this while they begin their first year of teaching. The 2nd year work includes opportunities to pursue endorsements in special education, ELL development, reading endorsement or additional content work in math and science.
4. Structure includes heavy emphasis on laying foundations work and capitalizing on experiments to conduct field-based seminars. It also includes a commitment to create mechanisms for more coherent and productive interactions between University courses and field experiences including during student teaching.

Key Experimentation with Current Program that is Feeding into Designs for Renewed Program

- Week long *orientation* at the beginning of students' first quarter to provide important foundation regarding multicultural education and student learning.
- Creation of *studio days* when methods courses meet in the field and allow for significant analysis of teaching practices with partner schools.

- *1-3-5 Seminars*, or critical friends groups, designed to support graduates in their 1st, 3rd, and 5th year of teaching to share and discuss problems of practice with university faculty. These seminars feed directly back into TEP community's understanding of the impact of program and the learning needs of new teachers. Also provides a mechanism for renewal.
- Informal opportunities for faculty, supervisors, TAs, and K-12 teachers to interact and develop stronger relationships: *knitting group*.

Lessons Learned

- Some of the most productive, creative and energized collaboration has NOT been directly funded or conceptualized as "TNE work" per se, but has come out of relatively informal, practice-grounded interactions between TEP faculty, supervisors and partner school colleagues
- The kinds of data which have been routinely available in the program (satisfaction surveys, EBI survey, field evaluations of TEP students, etc.) were not particularly influential in the renewal process.
- Community-based inquiry and deliberation of program values, new kinds of collaboration with partner school colleagues, and key field studies (e.g., Edgar, Varghese, & Lenges, 2004) had substantial impact on the direction of the renewal process.

Challenges

- Maintaining momentum, engagement and participation of a relatively broad and diffuse set of constituents
- Constructing new data systems which a) maintain the flow of meaningful and actionable data into the program and b) can be implemented without TNE support
- Developing new TEP program staffing policies that are a) effective in maintaining the coherence and integrity of the program and, b) sustainable in the context of university faculty promotion and tenure policies, and COE budget constraints.