MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
COUNCIL ON TEACHER EDUCATION

October 10, 2001
3:10 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Room 38C, EDUCATION BUILDING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Fowler, John Grashel, Joe Harper, Eve Harwood, Christine Jenkins, James Leach, Ann Mester, Linda Sloat, Trudy Walters, Leigh Witt, Patricia Wojtowicz, Chet Zych

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ave Alvarado, Kim Graber, Brenda Lindsey, Keith Marshall, Marisa Ptak

STAFF: Cicely McClennon

1. Approval of Minutes, Announcements, and Additions to Agenda

   a. The meeting was called to order by Benson at 3:10 p.m. Benson asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of September 12, 2001. Mester, seconded by Grashel, moved approval of the minutes as presented. Unanimously approved.

   b. Benson introduced Cicely McClennon, who has recently been hired to replace Sandy Manter as the Certification Specialist. Manter has moved into the new position of Data Manager for the Council.

   In response to questions, Benson explained that staff needs electronic copies of course syllabi for the ISBE Review, if possible. If a program requires electives from a specified list, we need to have those that are most commonly taken. Syllabi for professional education courses should be those for the most recent offering of the courses and include those for all sections of the course if multiple sections are offered.

   c. There were no additions to the agenda.

2. Proposals: None

   Benson reported that the proposed revisions to the general education requirements for LAS programs have been approved by the Senate Educational Policy committee and forwarded to the Senate. We anticipate many proposals for program changes next year as programs are brought into line with the new content standards that become effective on July 1, 2003.

   Mester reported that the Social Studies program has a proposal underway.

3. Matters for Discussion/Action:

   a. Proposed Revisions to Common Assessment for All Professional Education Preparation Programs: Benson reported that the assessment plan was discussed at a workshop on September 13th that included program coordinators, area committee chairs and co-chairs, and ISBE review lead coordinators. That group expressed serious objections to the admission/exit essay requirement.
Subsequent to the workshop, a smaller group of individuals was convened on October 3rd to discuss possible alternatives to the essay. That group discussion was facilitated by Lizzanne DeStefano and Susan Fowler.

The proposal before the Executive Committee for discussion presents the recommendations of the latter group in blue type. The essay requirement has been changed to a limited response paper in which candidates will respond to a series of vignettes based on the pillars of the conceptual framework. Scoring of the responses will be the responsibility of staff which will be hired and trained for that purpose. Results will be shared with programs. The assessment will be administered prior to student teaching, prior to receiving a recommendation for certification, and, possibly in a modified version, to program completers at the end of their first, third, and fifth years after completion of their program. The group also recommended replacing the essay requirement for admission to a professional preparation program with a requirement that candidates pass the Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS) test of Basic Skills as a condition for admission.

Fowler stressed that requiring only a minimum GPA for admission to a professional preparation program is inadequate as an initial assessment. She reported that most public institutions of higher education plan to use the Basic Skills test for admission. Understanding that requiring passage of the test may be problematical for programs that admit freshmen, we can establish a cut-off date by which the test must be passed before full admission is granted. We will also establish a procedure for review of special cases that arise. We do not want to unnecessarily delay the admission of a candidate but we need to establish a cut-off date during the first semester of enrollment. We also want to make it clear that the passage of the Basic Skills test is a requirement for admission to a professional preparation program, not admission to the University. The test requirement would become effective for those candidates entering professional preparation programs in the fall of 2003.

In the discussion that followed, it was suggested that the first limited response paper be incorporated into the first course in each program that requires clinical experience. The consistency of administration is important in order to obtain reliable assessments and the administration of the exercise should be the same in all programs. Programs will need to assure that their candidates take the assignment seriously and will need to provide Council staff with feedback on how they use the data. That information will become part of the annual ISBE Institutional Data Report.

Council staff does not plan to provide feedback to individual students. Students will be tracked by identification numbers and data on each student will probably be kept in an electronic file. Data will be provided to the programs to use as they wish.

Benson noted that the discussions that have taken place since the last meeting of the Executive Committee have made it clear that a separate common assessment is needed for programs that do not lead to teacher certification. Consequently, the committee has before it a draft of a proposed Common Assessment Plan for Graduate Professional Education Programs Leading to Certification as School Leaders or School Service Personnel. Benson has been working with Art Lehr in EOL and Brenda Lindsey in the School of Social Work to develop this proposal.

The Executive Committee approved the dissemination of the suggested revisions to the assessment plan for further discussion. Benson will take the revised plan to the program coordinators, area committee chairs and co-chairs, and ISBE Review lead coordinators for comment. The plan will be brought back to the Executive Committee for a vote at the November meeting.
4. Updates/Reports:

a. ISBE Review: Benson handed out a chart showing the Unit Review Decisions for Continuing Accreditation that was presented at an ISBE statewide meeting for Illinois approved professional preparation institutions on September 24-25, 2001. She noted that there has been a change in the ISBE rules and institutions undergoing Fifth Year Reviews in spring 2002 are no longer under a “hold harmless” clause. The Unit may earn continuing accreditation if all six ISBE/NCATE standards are met, accreditation with conditions if one of the standards is not met, or, accreditation with probation if more than one standard is not met. Accreditation with conditions could result in a focused site visit within six months of the ISBE decision. Accreditation with probation would require a full site visit within two years of the ISBE decision.

Benson stated that, while we expect to receive continuing accreditation, she thought it important that the Executive Committee be aware of the possibilities since we had originally been told that we would be held harmless for this review.

b. Title II: Benson referenced the handout provided (State-Level Aggregate and Summary Assessment Pass-Rate Data for Regular Teacher Preparation Programs Within Institutions of Higher Education by Institution Program Year 1999-2000: ISBE) which shows UIUC in quartile 2, although our pass rate was 99%. Only institutions with a 100% pass rate were in quartile 1. This information is now available to the public. Based on information that we currently have available, our summary pass rate could slip to 98% for the 2000-2001 program year.

5. Information Items: Members were provided with copies of the CTE & CTE Executive Committees membership list for 2001-02 and the Council Area-of-Specialization Committees 01-02 membership list. Zych noted that several area committees still need student representatives.

6. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned by consensus at 4:30 p.m.

Future meetings: All meetings are scheduled for 3-5 p.m. in 38C Education Building, unless otherwise noted.

November 14, 2001
December 12, 2001
January 23, 2002
February 13, 2002
March 13, 2002
April 10, 2002

April 13-17, 2002: ISBE on-site visit*
May 8, 2002

*time and location TBA