

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2006**

### **Conceptual Framework**

After much discussion that included the NCATE Committee, The Teacher Education Council (Arts and Sciences faculty and practitioners), the college Faculty Council, and the Education Advisory Council, the unit made modifications in the conceptual framework. The visual graphic was revised changing the colors from bright yellow and blue to the university colors of maroon, khaki, and white. Additionally, the wording around the border was changed slightly to depict more clearly the sequence of curricula. The images on the graphic were enhanced and the words “technology” and “diversity” were added to encircle the globe. The conceptual framework program outcomes for undergraduate and graduate courses were revised to reflect diversity, technology, and professional dispositions more clearly.

### **Standards 1 and 2**

In fall 2005, the university general education core curriculum was changed from 45 hours to 36 hours with the deletion of requirements in basic technology, junior-level writing, and public speaking. The Mississippi Department of Education revised its Process and Performance standards to require a 2.50 GPA on 44 hours of coursework rather than the previous requirement of 2.50 GPA on general education core coursework. New Mississippi Department of Education policy requires that in order to be highly qualified, teachers must have 21 hours of coursework in each core subject they teach. Additionally, all elementary education teachers must also have at least 15 hours in reading. The new curricula reflect these new requirements.

In 2006, the Mississippi Department of Education mandated that all teacher candidates read and sign acknowledgement of the Mississippi Licensure Advisory Teacher Candidate form. The signed acknowledgement was implemented in fall 2006 as part of Phase II, Admission to Teacher Education.

The School Psychology faculty is preparing to change the four year specialist program to a three year program. That will allow candidates to enter the field and serve students earlier.

In fall 2006, a new policy was passed regarding PRAXIS II requirements for teacher candidates. Effective spring 2007, candidates will be required to take the PRAXIS II Principles of Learning and Teaching and Content Specialty examinations prior to the teaching internship, Phase III. They must submit documentation to the Office of Clinical and Field-Based Instruction (OCFBI) that they have taken the examinations. They will submit scores to their Teaching Internship Seminar teachers.

Fall 2006 also saw revisions of the probation and dismissal policies in the unit. In an effort to provide remediation and improve retention in teacher education, the unit passed the following policy:

After 60 hours, teacher education candidates (enrolled and admitted) must have achieved a 2.50 overall GPA. Students whose GPAs fall below the accepted standard will be placed on probation in the College. During the probationary semester, they must improve to the acceptable standard (2.50 overall GPA) or be dismissed from teacher education. However, the candidates who do not meet the acceptable GPA standard may be granted continued probation for one additional semester provided they (a) improve their overall GPAs, and (b) take a Learning Skills (LSK) course during the first probationary semester.

At the advanced level, Ph.D. programs with the generic major of “Education” were converted to majors that reflect the specific program area.

### **Area for Improvement**

#### **Assessments at advanced level aligned with standards**

In 2004, the TaskStream data management system was adopted and piloted by Elementary Education. The system provides a web-based platform for the creation of electronic portfolios. It also facilitates the development of standards-based rubrics for the evaluation of assignments. Moreover, it provides a systematic means of aggregating the data collected. By fall 2005, Secondary Education, Teaching and Coaching, and Educational Leadership had implemented TaskStream. Faculty members have collaborated within programs and across programs to develop appropriate assignments and rubrics aligned with state and national standards.

In 2005 and 2006, Educational Leadership faculty held retreats to work on course syllabi and to review the alignment of assignments and assessments with state and national standards. The faculty collectively developed rubrics that incorporated the standards. In addition, they adopted TaskStream to facilitate electronic portfolio submissions based on the standards.

### **Standard 3**

#### **Area for Improvement**

#### **Field experiences at the advanced level in elementary and secondary education**

The Elementary and Secondary Education graduate programs refined field experiences at the graduate levels. The programs have implemented assignments appropriate for candidates already working as teachers, including research action projects and case studies. The programs require 20 hours of field work at the Master’s, 30 at the Specialist, and 40 at the Doctoral levels for candidates enrolled in elementary and secondary education graduate programs.

### **Standard 4**

A college-wide Diversity Plan was approved in fall 2006 after obtaining input from the Education Advisory Council, the College Faculty Council, and the College Diversity

Committee. The plan appears on the college web site at [www.educ.msstate.edu](http://www.educ.msstate.edu).

The Department of Music hired two new faculty members who increased its ethnic diversity (Ms. Eleanor McClellan, African-American, and Dr. Iwao Asakura, Japanese foreign national). The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision hired a totally blind employee and a totally deaf employee.

In fall 2006, 35% of the unit undergraduate enrollment was made up of minority candidates compared to 23% for the university. At the graduate level, minority candidates represented 41% of the enrollment (19% for the university). Minority faculty made up sixteen percent of unit faculty with another 4% internationals.

Again in 2006, the College of Education had the distinction of being ranked 11<sup>th</sup> nationally for the number of African-Americans awarded baccalaureate degrees by *Diversity Issues in Higher Education* in 2006 (formerly *Black Issues in Higher Education*).

## **Standard 5**

New university, college, and departmental Promotion and Tenure documents were developed in 2004 and used to evaluate candidates for P&T in fall 2005. At the same time, post-tenure reviews were implemented for all faculty tenured six years or more or for faculty with unsatisfactory ratings on their Annual Faculty Reviews (completed by department heads).

Three projects from 2002-2006 fostered professional development not only for unit faculty but Arts & Sciences faculty, P-12 practitioners, and community college faculty. The PT3 grant focused on teaching participants to use technology for both teaching and data management. The STEP (Standards-based Teacher Education Program) focused on the alignment of content with state and national standards. The ACHIEVE Mississippi project helped participants develop problem-based and standards-based teaching strategies.

In 2005-2006, four unit faculty participated in learning communities, an interdisciplinary program in which classes across colleges were paired.

Throughout the period of 2002-2006, unit faculty achieved the highest numerical average of any college in the university on the annual faculty evaluations completed by students.

In spring and fall 2006, research seminars were held for faculty in their first 2 years of employment.

Unit faculty were trained in the new CAPP system that provides an audit on candidates, showing the requirements met and not met. Unit staff participated in training workshops. Additionally, the Assistant to the Dean shared tips on advising with departments in the unit.

## **Standard 6**

Year 2005 saw several changes in unit leadership. A new dean, Dr. Richard Blackburn from Clemson University, assumed leadership of the college. Drs. Pam Kirk and Esther Howard, respective heads of the Department of Kinesiology and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, retired. Dr. Joseph Chromiak was named interim Head of Kinesiology, and Dr. Linda Coats was named interim Head of Curriculum and Instruction. National searches are underway for both positions.

During fall 2006, the University and the unit began to evaluate and revise its mission statements. Unit faculty and members of the Teacher Education Council, as well as the External Advisory Board, will be involved in the review and development of the revised mission for the unit.

In summer 2005 and 2006, the Education Advisory Council had two-day retreats to work on a strategic plan for the unit. Dr. Lee D'Andrea facilitated the 2006 retreat.

In fall 2006, the unit implemented a workload form consisting of four square blocks for the purpose of workload reporting. Each square represents 25% of the faculty's workload. Each faculty member reports the activity or activities (with respect to teaching, research and service) that make up each quarter of his or her time.

Two leadership positions that had previously been lost because of budget constraints were regained in fall 2006: a college Development Officer and an Associate Dean for Research and Assessment. Mr. Rob Jenkins began his duties as the Development Officer in September. A national search is underway for the Associate Dean for Research and Assessment.

Following the retirement of the Director of Field Experiences, Dr. Linda Jones, an interim director, Dr. Janet McCarra, was hired.

Searches are underway to replace six tenure track unit faculty who retired or resigned at the end of the 2005-2006 year.

Reflecting the comprehensive nature of the department as well as its new B.A. degree in music, the Department of Music Education changed its name to Department of Music.

The Department of Music completed 40% of a new 3.9 million dollar band and choral facility.

## **Areas for Improvement**

### **Technology**

Music Faculty members are accessing three Tech II classrooms with a significant (approximately 35% increase) in using WebCT for class room instruction, evaluation, and communication. One faculty member is participating in an experimental PodCast

program. In 2006, the Meridian Center added technology to most of its classrooms. A Mac lab with 17 computers and a Smart Board was added to the teaching resources available to unit faculty through the Learning Center in Allen Hall.

The RRTC on Blindness and Low Vision received a \$50,000 gift from the Storer Foundation to upgrade its assistive technology lab/classroom. These funds have been used to install a new audio-visual multimedia system and to equip all computers with JAWS and Zoomtext, a synthetic speech software package and screen magnification software package that provides access for students who are blind or have low vision.

The Riley Center of Performing Arts, which includes a restored theater that dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century along with numerous rooms for a convention center, opened in Meridian. With state of the art technology, the Center expands opportunities in education and the arts and humanities for candidates, faculty, and external constituents.

### **Participation of Practitioners in Governance**

Practitioners who are members of the Teacher Education Council continue to serve on the unit's Box Curriculum Council on a rotating basis. The entire Council meets at least once each semester to review data and other issues and offer advice. The Council includes practitioners, Arts and Sciences faculty, and teacher education faculty and administrators. Plans are underway to form an External Advisory Board to include business constituents and public school teachers and administrators.