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University of Northern Iowa Elementary Teacher Education Senate Meeting Minutes, December 8, 2016

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Elementary Teacher Education Senate Meeting
3:30-5:00 Thursday, December 8, 2016
Curris Business Building, Room 319

Present:

J.D. Cryer (Coordinator, Elementary Teacher Education), Melissa Heston (Early Childhood Education), Denise Tallakson (Elementary Education), Lynne Ensworth (Middle Level Education), Kim Miller (Special Education), Aly Islam (Art Education), Shuaib Meacham (Literacy Education), Michelle Swanson (Music Education), Olly Steinhorsdottir (Mathematics Education), Deockki Hong (Physical Education and Health Education), Ranae Drey (Student Representative), Amy Lockhart (Clinical Experiences), Greg Bourassa (Professional Sequence), Rob Boody (Director of Assessment), Chad Christopher (Coordinator, Secondary Teacher Education)

Absent:

Merrilee Betts (Teacher Practitioner), Benjamin Forsyth (TEF Chair), Vickie Robinson (Associate Vice President, Educator Preparation), Lori Wurtz (Secretary II, Office of Teacher Education)

I. Minutes

Minutes approved electronically

II. Possible Revision of Application to the UNI Teacher Education Program

Discussion took place regarding revising the questions that students are prompted to write about on the application. It was determined that the purpose of the application is a writing sample. Admission is not based on the content of student writing, thus there would be no real reason to change the questions unless the content was going to be used for some purpose or to create more engaging reading for those that evaluate the writing.

There was discussion made to having the applicants read the Mission, Vision, and Belief Statements prior to writing for the application. Then, provide a set of questions, potentially related to the Mission, Vision, and Belief Statements that the applicant could then choose from to write their answer. This would allow for possible beginning of the program assessment and end of the program assessment. However, workload was an issue and who would be responsible for collecting this data? This might be something done at Level I and then later during Student Teaching. An additional consideration involved creating questions that had a connection to "Dispositions".

Finally discussion took place around possible consequences related to poorly written applications. Different consequences were discussed related to involving the TCPRC.

III. Teacher Education Program Online Application

Discussion took place regarding if the current system of a hard copy paper application should be changed to an online/on-demand application. Senators believed this would be a good step, especially if it could be linked to the UNITED system. Melissa Heston made a motion that we move to an online application process. Michelle Swanson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IV. Educator Preparation Programs Outcomes--Belief Statements

Rob Boody reengaged the Senate about the plan to create and use specific outcomes connected to the new Educator Preparation Program Belief Statements. Time was given for discussion. Melissa Heston made a motion to accept plan to create and use specific Educator Preparation Program outcomes connected to the new Belief Statements. Michelle Swanson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Teacher Education Program Class Completion Requirement

J.D. presented the statement from a decision made by the previous Council on Teacher Education from 2008. This statement read:

“Individuals will be suspended from the teacher education program if the individual is unable to meet program-mandated grade requirements for any required course in three attempts. The suspension will be for one year and will follow the defined procedures of the TCPRC.”

Senators then discussed if the “required courses” in the statement referred to Liberal Arts Courses. It was decided no, that it only dealt with required courses for each program. Another question was asked if the program-mandated grade requirements were meant for both Major content courses AND methods courses associated with the Professional Sequence. It was decided that yes, the program-mandated grade requirements were up to each individual program to decide for their major. A third question came up whether the “three attempts” meant that if a student did not meet the grade requirements for three separate classes they would be suspended OR if it mean if a student did not meet the grade requirements for one course three times the student might be suspended. The answer was if the student did not meet the grade requirements for one course three times the student might be suspended. A final question involved “what does suspension mean?” The answer was that the student would not be able to take classes within the Professional Sequence of the Teacher Education Program. The student could still take courses within the major.

Senators wondered if a “trigger” could be set within the UNITED system to initiate a notice to the student, advisor, department head and appropriate coordinator? Rob indicated that this could happen. Renae thought this would be a good idea because it would help get the student’s attention to the problem.

It was decided that it would be good for an Ad-Hoc committee to work to look into this situation and discover what possibilities are open within the UNITED system.

VI. Iowa Core Curriculum Question

J.D. brought up the need for the program to ensure that all teacher-candidates are being exposed to the Iowa Core Curriculum in a progressive manner that leads to beginning competency in knowledge and application of content by the time of graduation. To that end the direct statement from Chapter 79 was highlighted:

79.15(6) Teacher candidates demonstrate competency in content coursework directly related to the Iowa core.

1. The Core is a guideline for planning, differentiating, and assessing instruction. The effective instruction guidelines align with best practice. As candidates begin to prepare lesson plans, alignment is required as to how the lesson objectives are tied to the Iowa Core. During the clinical experience, candidates continue to document the Iowa Core standards. Candidates align their lesson to the standards of the professional organization, particularly for subject areas not addressed by the Iowa Common Core.

J.D. then asked if we would feel confident stating that during Level I and II students were “beginning” their introduction to the ICC, during Level III students were “developing” their understanding of the ICC, and by the end of Level IV students were “proficient” in their understanding and ability to apply the ICC to their planning, instruction, and assessment practice.

Senators discussed this and thought the basic idea was sound; however, because teacher-candidates take different courses at different times within our program some might not receive such a “standardized progression” with connection to the ICC. It was stated at such a large institution as UNI this “standardized progression” might not be so cut and dried. In order to document the connection to the ICC should there be something placed on individual course syllabi to identify a “beginning”, “developing”, or “proficient” level of understanding and application of the ICC?

V. Meeting adjourned.