

Teacher Education Effectiveness Committee

Meeting: Monday, June 2, 2008

Attending: Phil Davis – Chemistry department – UT-Martin
Debbie Dane – 3rd grade – Martin Elementary School
Karen Greenockle – Chair (Health and Human Performance) – UT-Martin
Warner Pace – Tennessee State Department of Education
Lynn Brasfield – Middle School Reading – Dresden Middle School
Nancy Hurt – Retired Teacher (Dyer County High School)

Michael Poore – Interim Director of Assessment and Teacher Education
Mary Lee Hall – Dean, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Notes:

Information was shared with the committee about changes in the interview process for the teacher education program. Data to support those changes was also shared with the committee. Nancy Hurt was glad to hear that candidates who did not pass the interview were given an opportunity to interview for a second time.

As other data from exit interviews and appeals were shared with the committee, a discussion ensued about the bad grammar in both written and verbal communication by some of our teacher education candidates. Mr. Poore shared with the group that in the freshmen English classes, grammar is not covered as it was in years past. Instead the courses tend to be literature-based. An awareness of the issue with incorrect grammar has led to more focus on professional language in teacher education courses and prior to student teaching. University supervisors are also aware of the problem and seek to work with student teachers to make necessary corrections.

One of the committee members, Debbie Dane, brought a concern from her principal about students not taking PRAXIS II examinations before completing student teaching and graduating. Mr. Poore explained that the university does not require passage of the examinations before student teaching due to the ethical considerations of true Title II reporting. A 100% pass rate does not indicate the quality of a teacher education program; it reflects an artificial bar set by the program. Dr. Hall also added that the student teaching semester should also provide some content and pedagogy that would be helpful in passing the examinations. Mr. Poore shared with the group that students are being advised from the Introduction to Teaching class and throughout the program how to sequence and take their examinations to assure that they are “highly qualified”, ready for licensure and the classroom when they graduate.