



*Richard C. Kunkel, Dean & Professor
College of Education
236 Stone Building*

*Voice: (850) 644-0371
FAX: (850) 644-2725
E-Mail: kunkel@coe.fsu.edu*

February 25, 2005

John Winn, Commissioner
Florida Department of Education
Office of the Commissioner
Turlington Building, Suite 1514
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Commissioner Winn:

From your instructions at the February 15, 2005 workshop of the Florida Board of Education and in response to Chair Phil Handy's assignment to me please find and consider the following rule changes and commitments from Florida's colleges and universities teacher education leadership.

In arriving at these suggestions I have spoken with the executive committee of the Florida Association of Colleges of Teacher Educators, and as you probably already know I have met with Chancellor Debra Austin and all of the deans and directors of public and private teacher education programs along with community college leadership. I think we can refine specifically those current policies that are seen as limiting both the effectiveness and productivity in enrolling and graduating candidates for teaching. My discussions with these people have led to the identification of five principle issues: the specific three course requirement for teachers, general education requirements, prerequisites, the timing of national accreditation and state reviews, and colleges and universities commitment to the future.

Specific 3 Course Requirement

The state requires individual courses to meet requirements as opposed to infusing the competencies within the curriculum. This extends the number of courses required, and weakens the flexibility of teacher education programs to meet the needs of students. Thereby, negatively affecting the rate of candidates entering teacher preparation programs and retention within programs. These required courses can result in an extra semester beyond the traditional four year curriculum.

According to Rule 6A-5.066(3)(b)3b-d, Florida Administrative Code, the three course requirement includes:

- 3 semester hours in classroom management, school safety, professional ethics and educational law
- 3 semester hours in human development and learning

- 3 semester hours in assessment to include understanding of the content measured by state achievement tests, reading and interpreting data, and using data to improve student achievement

General Education Requirements

Over-prescription of general education requirements has deterred students from either choosing education as a major or completing an existing major. The general requirements for teacher preparation majors, those courses required in the first two years of college enrollment, exceed the general requirements for other degree-seeking students. This is a deterrent to students applying for admission into colleges of education.

According to Rule 6A-5.066(3)(b)1, Florida Administrative Code, requirements include:

- 9 semester hours in english to include writing, literature, and speech
- 9 semester hours in science to include earth science, life science, and physical science, with a minimum of one associated laboratory
- 9 semester hours in mathematics to include college algebra or above and geometry
- 12 semester hours in social sciences to include American history and general psychology
- 6 semester hours in humanities to include philosophy and fine arts

Prerequisites

The State of Florida has identified Common Prerequisites for all university programs. Contained within this Counseling Manual are the Common Prerequisites or their substitutions, which must be completed by all students going into that field of study and which must be accepted by all state universities and applied toward the degree (Taken from Common Prerequisites, Catalog Year 2003-2004, Articulation Coordinating Committee February 19, 2003).

Please see these prerequisite courses below:

- EDFX005 – Introduction to Education (3 semester hours)
- EDGX701 – Teaching Diverse Populations (3 semester hours)
- EMEX040 – Introduction to Education Technologies (3 semester hours)

National Accreditation and State Review

A further important point to the deans and directors is the continued alignment of state program review conducted by the Division of K-12 Public Schools, the Division of Colleges and Universities, and national accreditation. At this point national accreditation and the higher education review now occur every 7 years. It is important to institutions that the Division of K-12 Public Schools review occur every 7 years as well. Chancellors James Warford and Debra Austin support this initiative. Currently the review occurs every five years, according to 6A-5.066(1)(a), Florida Administrative Code.

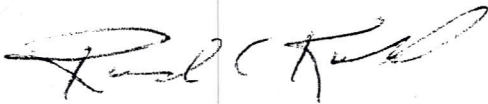
Commitment to the Future

Consistent with the request that deans and directors of teacher education programs consider ways to increase their supply of qualified teachers for Florida schools, we make the following commitment:

That Deans of SUS schools of education commit to working with their provosts and presidents through systematic goal setting as part of the Florida Board of Governors Strategic Plan through the Division of Colleges and Universities and Chancellor Austin's office. Through FACTE, the state association of all public and private colleges and departments of education (including all Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF)), we commit to increasing our number of graduates consistent with both the needs of the state and the resources that can be expended for this purpose. Further, we encourage all universities and colleges in the state, both public and private, to join with other institutions and districts in the state in mobilizing new Educator Preparation Institutes and other such initiatives, where through these partnerships, additional teachers can be found for the important task of educating the children of Florida.

We believe that the preceeding rule changes along with the commitment to produce more teachers for Florida schools should result in a serious effort to address some of the important supply and demand issues facing the future needs for quality teachers in Florida. Thanks for your attention to these important matters.

Sincerely,



Richard C. Kunkel, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor
College of Education and
President, Florida Association of Colleges of Teacher Education

cc: Jim Warford, Chancellor K-12 Public Schools
Debra Austin, Chancellor Colleges and Universities