PROPOSAL FOR AN INSTITUTE IN EDUCATION

--INTRODUCTION--

It is proposed that an Institute in Education be created in an effort to establish a permanent vehicle for continuous innovation and curriculum development in teacher education. The initial program of the Institute will be an open, flexible one that will change and grow in format and substance as new ideas and practices are identified and attempted.

This proposal has emerged from three major sources and/or problems. These are: 1) the problem of the inflexibility of institutional forms, 2) the desire of students to be involved in the planning of their own program of studies; and 3) the realization of School of Education staff of the need to continuously seek better ways of educating teachers.

It appears clear to many, whether on an international, national or local level that contemporary democratic institutional forms are not coping adequately with modern problems. Two directions of movement are noticeable in response to this: one, a call for more authority or law and order; and two, an anarchistic revolt.

Neither of these alternatives appear to be desirable and thus survival of democratic forms as we know them may well rest on our ability to create flexible forms and maximal freedom within the present institutional structures. This proposed institute is a small attempt within the structure of an educational institution to provide an avenue for freedom and flexibility.

Both faculty and students were involved in the development of this proposal. The Students of Education organization this year has held a series of meetings open to all staff and students. Out of these student-student and student-staff interactions came a proposal which provides for much greater student choice and determination of university experiences. The proposal also provides a form in which staff and students can continuously try out
new program ideas and experiences.

The need for some innovation in student university programs should be obvious to persons familiar with the problem of student unrest today. The need for better teacher education experiences may not be so well known to staff outside the School of Education.

Although greater variety exists in types of teacher education programs, there at present is no evidence to suggest that over a given period of time one pattern of teacher education is better than another.¹ Research supporting one or another type of teacher education program over other types is inconclusive. What programs or experiences that will produce the best teachers is not clearly known. Indeed, whether teacher education programs contribute appreciably to the development of good teachers is not clearly documented. Observation of public school classroom teaching suggests that current programs do not produce noticeable differences, and that none of them is producing the kind of teacher that is so urgently needed today.

Thus, although there are variations in teacher education programs, the effects are not noticeably different. This, it is felt, suggests a need for innovative programs in teacher education.

¹C. E. Smith, Educational Research and the Preparation of Teachers (Report prepared under a grant from the British Columbia Teacher's Federation, 1963) P. 71.
THE INSTITUTE IN EDUCATION

The initial program of the Institute will be composed of two segments: a general education program and a professional education program. This will amount to a four-year program of general and professional educational experiences that is individually defined by each student in consultation with his adviser and other Institute participants. The professional experiences will be in the areas of early childhood, elementary, secondary, and exceptional education. This first program of the Institute will be comprised of fifty pre-education and fifty education students. Its major purpose will be to permit, develop, and extend student ability to become self-directed learners by encouraging individuality and uniqueness in each student's university experience, while providing opportunity for staff and student development and evaluation of new patterns.

The general education program

The general education program for each student will consist of those courses and experiences that the student identifies with the aid of his adviser and other Institute participants. The only requirements for graduation are the following:

1. A total of 128 credits.

2. A cumulative GPA of at least 2.0.

3. The last 30 credits must be earned at UWM.

4. Fulfillment of departmental requirements for non-professional majors or minors.

5. Fulfillment of state requirements for secondary teachers in science and social studies.

6. Completion of the professional education program of the Institute.

The professional education program

The professional education program will consist of two components: Pre-
professional year seminars and a professional year experience.

The pre-professional year seminar. The pre-professional year seminar is an elective, three credit, non-graded seminar offered each semester prior to the professional year. The purposes of the seminar are to:

1. Begin to familiarize the student with the field of education and his possible role in it at an early point in his university experience through field work, reading, discussion, observation, etc.

2. Provide a continuous contact with the School of Education.

3. Prepare the student for the professional year experience of the Institute.


5. Aid the student to better understand himself and his function in society.

The student's experiences and activities in the seminar will be similar to those of the professional year.

The professional year. The professional year is a 30-credit, non-graded, year-long experience which may be elected anytime after 60 credits have been acquired. The purpose of the professional year is to provide for each student individually an opportunity to develop and aid in developing:

1. A professionally useful and personally relevant knowledge of education--its crucial problems, its methods of seeking solutions, the status of present solutions.

2. Skills and competencies related to the study and practice of teaching.


The core of the professional program will be a one-to-one, professor-student tutorial and professional counseling experience. Each student's program--curriculum, experiences, materials--will be an evolving one. It will develop and grow through interaction with the faculty and other students in the institute. The student will become engaged in whatever he and his adviser-advisers
see as being relevant, of value and of interest. Some of the activities may
well include sensitivity training; community work; tutoring children; observing
in the field; teaching in the field; independent study and inquiry; workshops,
short courses, videotaped self-evaluations; and research. Although the tutori-
al relationship is the foundation of the program, many group experiences, such
as: seminars, workshops and committees will function for planning, evaluation,
and instructional purposes.

No later than the completion of 15 credits or the first half of the
professional year, each person will be evaluated as to his competence for be-
coming a teacher. If a person is judged not to be competent he is to be guided
into some other area; in no case is he to be graduated from the School of Ed-
ucation.

Evaluation of the professional education program and the student's success
in it will consist of: (1) student self-evaluation, (2) student-staff evalua-
tion, and (3) evaluations from field experiences.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Institute in Education will be the task of a
student-faculty policy committee to be appointed by the Dean. It will consist
of one faculty member from Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education,
one from Educational Psychology, three from Curriculum and Instruction (one from
each of the areas--Early Childhood, Elementary, Secondary), one member from
Exceptional Education, one faculty member from the College of Letters and Science,
and three students. The program will operate initially for a two-year period.
Within fifteen months after its initiation the ad hoc committee will present
to the faculty a formal evaluation as a basis for continuing the program.

UWM FAC. DOC. NO. 504, APRIL 17, 1969
CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

Students

Judy Hetts
Mark Hetts
Angela Holloway
Dennis Kolacinski
Ethel Peterson
Michael Rhodes
Mary Ann Ryback
Kristine Schmitt
Anne Louise Serafin
Sharon Ulrich
Paul Zakhar

Faculty

Carlton Beck
Normand Bernier
Dwight F. Clark
Ted Cooper
Richard Cummings
James B. Macdonald
Henry D. Snyder
John M. Stillman
Thomas W. Walton
Bernice Wolfson
John A. Zahorik