

# Teacher Education Council-Special Meeting (Approval Pending)

## Meeting Minutes

July 27, 2022

Present:

- Dr. Mayers
- Dr. Stout
- Dr. Morrison
- Dr. Hardy
- Dr. Nottingham
- Dr. Heald
- Dr. Barker
- Dr. Daigle
- Kelli Norman
- Jennifer Arnold
- Jon Hazell
- Darla Ellett
- Kendra Gross

### **1. Purpose of Meeting**

Gov Stitt signed a new law removing the requirement that students pass the OGET in order to be admitted to teacher education programs. How will this affect SE? Also, SE Teacher Ed students are struggling to pass certification exams. This is affecting passing rates. What is the university doing to remedy this?

### **2. Discussion**

Dr. Mayers reminded attendees that Gov. Stitt signed a new law that removed the OGET as a requirement for teacher certification. In the June OACT meeting, Dr. Mayers spoke with several of his colleagues from other institutions who planned to use the OGAT as an option for admission to their teacher ed programs for at least the next year. Students who opted not to take the OGET could be admitted into teacher ed with a requisite GPA. Southeastern does not currently track general education GPAs. Could this work for Southeastern? Also, several students are struggling to pass certification exams, which is affecting passing rates for the university. Dr. Mayers shared data collected by Kelli Norman that showed numbers of students who had attempted certification exams three or more times without success. Dr. Mayers pointed out that multiple students have attempted exams 10 or more times without success,

and suggested that the university offer help for students struggling with certifications. Dr. Stout asked if SE currently has any programs available to help students. Dr. Mayers stated that remedial programs would have to be developed.

Some students are taking the test and failing multiple times in a two to three year timespan, which is affecting data for those years. Ms. Ellett discussed Project TEACH, a federally funded program that helps qualifying students study for certifications. Ms. Ellett's team has been working this summer to create a way to help students with the written component of the OSAT. This program will include practice and study sessions, and materials. This program should be available in the Fall and Spring semesters. Ms. Ellett also said that her department is having trouble filling the slots for the Project TEACH program. They are required to serve 140 students each year. They will be accepting applications from any qualified education major student. As well as test prep, they offer professional development workshops.

Dr. Hardy and Dr. Mayers discussed the need to implement a program to help students struggling with certification exams versus adding more work the existing faculty. Ms. Ellett suggests Dr. Nottingham shared her experiences with a program she put together for early childhood education students. Dr. Nottingham stated that her program involved working with a student who had already taken the OSAT. While they had to take steps to make sure the student didn't discuss any of the actual test questions, they were successful and scores seemed to go up. Dr. Nottingham believes that the university should take preventative steps to ensure student success. She suggested a course or professional development program students can take before they sit for certification exams.

Ms. Ellett emphasized that the biggest challenge her department is seeing for students is the written response portion of the OSAT. While students are well prepared for the content, how they structure their responses to meet requirements is an issue. Dr. Nottingham stated that she has found students' writing skills to be very weak. Dr. Hardy discussed using resources from vendors such as test books designed for various exams. Dr. Nottingham stated that Ms. Ellett has some study guides in her program, but Ms. Ellett clarified that those are only available to students in the program. Dr. Hardy suggested introducing a one or zero credit required seminar to familiarize students with testing strategies. He also emphasized intervening before a student attempts to take a test multiple times.

Mr. Hazell spoke to the high school offering an ACT test prep class to students and the huge difference they saw in test scores versus before the classes were offered. Dr. Hardy asked if students who'd attempted and failed exams multiple times should be counseled on different career paths. A discussion was then had by attendees about how many times a student could potentially take exams during a 12-month period. Ms. Ellett stated that it would be possible for a student to take an exam 12 times in a year. Because students schedule and pay for the tests themselves, the university cannot control how often they take the exams. However, agencies

only require universities to report one fail a year for a student, with an average being reported in sub-areas.

Dr. Hardy called for a vote to implement a procedure to intervene after a student had failed the same exam two times, and to continue discussing what resources the university could make available to these students. Dr. Stout seconded this motion. Discussion was held about how the program would benefit students who took the OSAT versus the OGET. Dr. Morrison and Dr. Daigle agreed that the Learning Center would be better prepared to help students with the OGET. Also, should the GPA requirement be changed from 2.5 to 2.75? After much discussion, a vote was tabled for a future meeting about changing GPA requirements. Dr. Daigle re-stated the original proposal by Dr. Hardy for a vote on intervention if a student should fail the same certification exam twice.

### **3. Action Item**

Dr. Hardy proposed that faculty should intervene if a student fails the same certification exam twice. Dr. Stout seconded the proposal. A vote was taken by a show of hands and was a unanimous affirmative decision.