

Department of Secondary Education

Department Report

May 2011-May 2012

Dr. Leslie S. Rush, Department Chair

Section 1. Introduction

The central work of the Department of Secondary Education is the preparation of middle school and high school teachers for the state of Wyoming and for the region. To that end, we saw the successful completion of 119 students, now beginning teachers, in our undergraduate and postbaccalaureate programs. As a result of our move to concurrent majors in content (with our partner departments in the Colleges of Arts & Sciences and Agriculture) our students receive two majors as a part of their programs in Secondary Education. Although our students are having to compete with increasingly larger pools of applicants for positions in Wyoming schools, we do see large numbers of our graduates successful in procuring employment, both in the state and the region.

This academic year brought three new faculty members to the Department of Secondary Education: Dr. Victoria Gillis, in Literacy Education; Dr. Andrea Burrows, in Science Education; and Dr. Chris Haynes, in Agricultural Education. Dr. Victoria Gillis is the Wyoming Excellence in Higher Education Endowed Chair in Literacy Education and joins Dr. Larry Hatfield and Dr. Tim Slater as the cadre of Endowed Chairs in the Department. Dr. Andrea Burrows received her Ed.D. in Curriculum & Instruction – Science from the University of Cincinnati. Her research includes secondary STEM school partnerships and the meanings, negotiations, and conceptual changes associated with those partnerships. Dr. Chris Haynes received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Education, Communications, and Leadership from Oklahoma State University. His research focuses on student achievement in science and math in career and technology education as well as STEM and agricultural competency and literacy. Faculty members are thrilled to have both of these excellent colleagues join the department and look forward to years of collaborative and collegial work with both of them.

The Department of Secondary Education piloted a new mentoring program for junior faculty members, which involved a mentoring committee made up of three senior faculty members for each junior faculty member. Mentoring committee members were chosen by each junior faculty member, and the committees met both collectively and individually with our junior faculty members throughout the academic year to provide feedback on their scholarship and teaching.

Faculty members in the Department of Secondary Education continue to exceed expectations in research and scholarship, with 5 books either published or in press; 7 book chapters either published or in press; 11 manuscripts currently under review with peer-reviewed journals; 12 manuscripts published or in press with

peer-reviewed journals; 28 peer-reviewed conference presentations, and several evaluation projects currently underway.

Faculty members and graduate assistants in the department continue our work with teachers and principals in our partner school districts, primarily for placement of our seniors for their practicum and student teaching experiences. The districts we work with include long-standing partnerships in Albany County School District #1 (Laramie), Laramie County School District #1 (Cheyenne) and Natrona County School District #1 (Casper). In addition, we piloted a new partnership with Campbell County School District #1 (Gillette) during this academic year. We expect to continue this fruitful work for years to come.

The University of Wyoming's College of Education joined the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium, out of Stanford University, in implementation of the Teacher Performance Assessment in the student teaching semester for four of our Secondary Education content areas: English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

Dr. Linda Hutchison chose to step down as Department Head after 10 years of excellent service and leadership in the Department of Secondary Education. Dr. Leslie Rush agreed to serve as Department Head for a three-year term and stepped up to this position in January of 2012.

The Department of Secondary Education celebrated the retirement of long-time faculty member in Social Studies Education, Dr. Carol Bryant, with a reception in her honor. Members of the Department gave Dr. Bryant a set of art and journaling materials so that she can pursue her interests in writing and drawing. At the end of Fall 2011, long-time Department of Secondary Education office staff member Marilyn MacDonald retired. A festive occasion was held, during which Marilyn's family members, friends, and co-workers celebrated her years of work for the university and her move into retirement.

Several members of the department received important awards:

- Dr. Linda Hutchison was honored with the College of Education's Outstanding Advisor award.
- Dr. Chris Haynes was awarded the Mary Ellbogen Garland Early Career Fellowship to support his research "Self Efficacy of Agricultural Education and Science Education Pre-service Teacher Knowledge with Regard to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics."
- Brian Eberhard, graduate assistant in the Department, was awarded the College of Education's Outstanding Graduate Student Award for Significant Accomplishments.

Section 2. Academic Planning Implementation

Action Item 1. Continue our work with Partner Schools to provide quality Residency experiences for both our students and their mentors as well as K-12 students, and

support content professional development with our district partners. Identify opportunities for field experiences with culturally diverse K-12 students.

Faculty members in the department continue to work extensively with existing partner districts: NCSD#1 (Casper), LCSD#1 (Cheyenne), and ACSD#1 (Laramie), as well as with new partner district CCSD#1 (Gillette). This work includes planning for and participating in mentor teacher workshops in all four school districts; supervising student teachers at least one day a week in schools during the spring semester; and visiting the classrooms of mentor teachers during the fall semester.

To further our work with partner districts, a pilot partnership has been formed with CCSD#1 (Gillette). A small contingent of Secondary Education undergraduate majors was placed in CCSD#1 (Gillette) during the Spring 2012 student teaching semester, with faculty members traveling to Gillette 4 times during the semester to supervise student teachers, work with mentor teachers, and support student teachers as they carried out the TPA. A larger group of students will be student teaching in CCSD#1 during the Spring 2013 semester; the placement meeting for those placements was carried out in collaboration with principals and teachers in all content areas, to the satisfaction of all concerned. In the upcoming academic year, Secondary Education faculty members will expand their partnership work to include teachers and administrators from CCSD#1.

Action Item 2. Explore the feasibility and use of technology for unique instructional purposes, such as one-to-one computing.

Movement on this action item has been slow in coming, due to the cancellation of the one-to-one laptop program, in which the department had volunteered to participate. However, faculty members will be transferring management of their courses to the Livetext course management system (CMS) for fall 2012 and spring 2013 courses, as this system will be integral in data collection for accreditation. Faculty and staff received initial training on Livetext during Spring 2012, as use of this system was rolled out during that semester for student submission of the Teacher Performance Assessment.

Action Item 3. Explore opportunities to expand our international work in secondary schools addressing learning and teaching in our content fields; and identify sources of (internal or external) funding.

Our international project in Bolivia has been halted due to changes in the governmental status in Bolivia. These changes have negatively impacted our ability to carry out the work, as did cessation of funding for the project.

Dr. Lydia Dambekalns was successful in pursuing and receiving a sabbatical year in Benin, West Africa; this yearlong experience led to the development and approval of a study-abroad course offering to be offered during the Winter session, "Arts and Culture of Benin, West Africa."

Action Item 4. Develop a professional development plan for content-specific in-service teachers. Our focus will center on content area learning and teaching. Using the development of a college-wide plan as a focus, our department will work together to identify a department plan that will supplement and support the college and SMTC efforts. The department plan will be responsive yet create a manageable set of contributions for each faculty member.

During Spring 2012, a college-wide task force charged by the Dean with developing a Professional Development plan for the college completed its work, resulting in a document for public release and a set of recommendations for the college and for departments. Now that this initial work at the college level is completed, Secondary Education faculty will take up the task of creating a set of guidelines that is aligned with the college plan and is unique to the department itself, beginning Fall 2012.

Action Item 5. Continue to align assessment systems for future NCATE and SPA accreditation through collaborations with our partner departments in Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Agriculture.

The 2011/2012 academic year saw a college-wide cessation of data collection for NCATE and SPA accreditation, as a result of a move to the Livetext online system for course operations and for data collection on common assessments. Data collection will begin anew in 2012-2013. In the meantime, the Department of Secondary Education continues to maintain connections with our partner departments in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Agriculture, implementing our revised Agricultural Education programs, and updating program sheets for all of our majors, as changes are made in the concurrent majors. Secondary Education faculty members are also making plans to implement minor changes to our programs, based on changes to the University Studies Program requirements, which are currently underway.

Action Item 6. Continue departmental collaborative faculty research efforts focusing on professions critical to the region.

Faculty members in the Department continue to work collaboratively on a variety of research efforts, including the following:

- Drs. Burrows, Hutchison, Gillis, and Rush wrote a grant proposal titled "Science and Math Inquiry through Literacy Engagement" for the Math/Science Partnership grant competition. The grant was not funded, but the group is continuing to work together and is collaborating with researchers from Florida State University to submit an NSF grant on the same topic in the fall of 2012.
- Drs. Burrows, Haynes, and Slater are collaborating on a Math/Science Partnership Grant entitled "Robotics for the 21st Century."
- Drs. Hutchison and Hatfield are collaborating on a \$225,000 Math Science Partnership grant titled "Ready to Learn Math, which involves professional development in the Hot Springs County School District.

Section 3. Teaching Activities

Faculty members in the Department of Secondary Education have worked in a collaborative manner to improve our teaching and our program delivery during this academic year. This work has largely focused on a) ensuring quality course delivery by supporting our two new junior faculty members, b) engaging all instructors in revamping the course structure of our junior and senior level courses, and c) providing support for students participating in the Teacher Performance Assessment.

Our first step was to establish mentoring committees for our two junior faculty members. Each junior faculty member chose three tenured faculty members in the department to serve as mentors in both teaching and scholarly endeavors. Members of the mentoring committees meet regularly with junior faculty members to assist them in providing quality teaching to students in their classes. In addition, both junior faculty members were active in soliciting observations and feedback on their teaching. Both Dr. Burrows and Dr. Hayes asked Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning Director, Dr. Meg Skinner in to observe their teaching. Multiple faculty members in the department also observed and gave feedback to Dr. Burrows and Dr. Hayes. After course evaluations were submitted by students in fall semester courses, both Dr. Hutchison (former department head) and Dr. Rush (current department head) met with our junior faculty members to help them think about how they might use student feedback to improve their course delivery.

Several department meetings during the academic year were devoted to discussion of the structure of our junior and senior level methods courses. Specifically, we determined that students in our Secondary Education undergraduate majors should be encouraged to take both methods courses in their senior year, as opposed to taking one during the junior year and another during the senior year. We also discussed appropriate content to be included in each of the methods classes.

During the spring semester, students in our Secondary Education undergraduate programs participate in their semester-long student teaching experience. A new requirement for the majority of these students, as of Spring 2012, is the completion of the Teacher Performance Assessment, a lengthy, complex assessment that is designed to explore preservice teachers' proficiency in planning and carrying out appropriate instruction for their students, as well as evaluating student work, providing feedback to students, and reflecting on their practice. In order to adequately prepare to support our students in this work, faculty members and graduate assistants met frequently to a) plan support seminars and communication with students, b) address questions raised by students as they completed the assessment, and c) assist each other and students with accessing student work through the newly implemented Livetext system (livetext.com). The process of supporting students through the process of completing the TPA has resulted in frequent conversations about appropriate assessments for students and appropriate expectations for student demonstration of understanding of theory and practice related to instruction.

Section 4. Research and/or Creative Activities

In order to mentor junior faculty members in their research, two established mentoring committees have been active throughout the year in providing advice and accountability for Dr. Andrea Burrows and Dr. Chris Haynes. In particular Dr. Burrows received substantial feedback on drafts of manuscripts to be sent out for publication; Dr. Haynes received feedback on his research agenda.

Publications for the academic year include 5 books either published or in press; 7 book chapters either published or in press; 11 manuscripts currently under review with peer-reviewed journals; 12 manuscripts published or in press with peer-reviewed journals; 28 conference presentations, and several evaluation projects currently underway. With these scholarly endeavors undergoing, faculty members in the Department of Secondary Education are exceeding the research requirements for their job descriptions. Following are the highlights of Secondary Education faculty members' successful publication efforts for May 2011-May 2012:

- Dr. Andrea Burrows published an article entitled "Riding the Wave: Student Researcher Reflection on the Action Research Process" in *Educational Action Research*, a peer-reviewed journal that publishes studies investigating educational issues using action research methods.
- Dr. Victoria Gillis completed the 7th edition of her book (co-authored with Dr. Donna Alvermann and Dr. Stephen Phelps) *Content Area Reading and Literacy: Succeeding in Today's Diverse Classrooms*. The book is due to be published in 2013 by Pearson.
- Dr. Larry Hatfield published a book chapter entitled "Wisdom^e: A Collaborative Research Institute for the Study and Development of Mathematical Education" in *New Perspectives and Directions for Collaborative Research in Mathematics Education: Papers from a Planning Conference for WISDOM^e*.
- Dr. Chris Haynes published "Values and Expectations of Supervised Agricultural Experiences as Expressed by Agriculture Instructors in Oklahoma Who Were Alternatively Certified" in the *Journal of Agricultural Education*, which is the top national journal in his field.
- Dr. Linda Hutchison published two chapters in the *Encyclopedia of Mathematics and Society* entitled "Billiards" and "Painting."
- Dr. Leslie Rush, in collaboration with Dr. Suzanne Young, published "Wyoming's Instructional Facilitator Program: Teachers' Beliefs about the Impact of Coaching on Practice" in *The Rural Educator*.
- Dr. Timothy Slater published a book, *Discipline-Based Science Education Research: A Scientists' Guide* and an article, "Teaching Scientific Inquiry with Galaxy Zoo" in *The Physics Teacher*.

In terms of grants, the Department of Secondary Education is pleased to report the following:

- Dr. Haynes was the recipient of the College of Education's Mary Ellbogen Garland Early Career Award for his project, "Self Efficacy of Agricultural Education and Science Education Pre-service Teacher Knowledge with Regard to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics."

- Drs. Burrows, Hutchison, Gillis, and Rush wrote a grant proposal titled “Science and Math Inquiry through Literacy Engagement” for the Math/Science Partnership grant competition. The grant was not funded, but the group is continuing to work together and is collaborating with researchers from Florida State University to submit an NSF grant in the fall of 2012.
- Dr. Katzman received a \$250,000 grant “Partnering to Improve Science Education” to provide professional development for NCSD#1 elementary and middle school teachers on teaching science as inquiry; he also received a \$500 grant from the Wyoming NASA Space Consortium to purchase a robot for competition for the First Lego League Teams.
- Drs. Hutchison and Hatfield received a \$225,000 grant titled “Ready to Learn Math.”
- Dr. Slater is Co-PI on a \$200,000 grant entitled “Engaging Non-Science Majors in through Backwards Faded Scaffolding Approach to Learning”; he also received a \$675,000 grant, “Faculty Institutes for Earth and Space Science Education”; and an \$80,000 grant, “SkyWatchers – Track 1 Planning Grant: Bringing New Students to GeoScience through Observing the Sky.”
- Drs. Haynes and Burrows are Co-PIs on a grant “Robotics for the 21st Century” through the Math Science Partnership program, for over \$200,000. Dr. Slater is the PI of that grant.

Section 5. Service, Extension, and Outreach Activities.

Faculty members in the Department of Secondary Education are actively doing service within their disciplines; some highlights of this service are the following:

- Dr. Burrows served as a reviewer for the American Society of Engineering Education and the American Education Research Association.
- Dr. Gillis continues her work with the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking International Committee to contact former volunteers to become International Trainers in Eastern European nations. She also serves as the Chair of the Special Interest Group “International Partnerships for Critical Thinking and Active Learning” for the International Reading Association;
- Dr. Hatfield serves on the Advisory Editorial Board for *Open Mathematical Education Notes*, is a Member of the National Advisory Board for a research project out of Texas State University called “Dynamic Geometry in Classrooms,” and is the Initiator of the pending International Educational Partnership Agreement with Kathmandu University in Nepal.
- Dr. Haynes served as a judge for poster sessions for the American Association for Agricultural Education;
- Dr. Hutchison serves as a representative for SMTI and reviewed proposals for the NCTM Annual Conference Research Pre-session;
- Dr. Katzman serves as the K-12 outreach coordinator for IDeA Networks for Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE);
- Dr. Rush is the Co-editor of the Conference on English Education journal, *English Education*;

- Dr. Slater serves on the Boards of the National Science Teachers Association and the American Astronomical Society.
- Mr. Thompson serves as the International TECA Director and sits on the Board of Directors for the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association;

Faculty members in Secondary Education are also active in service at the state, regional, and local levels, with highlights including the following:

- Dr. Dambekalns is the founding member of the Wyoming Art Educators Association and the Advisor for the UW Wyoming Student Art Education Association;
- Dr. Hatfield is a Member of the Wyoming Department of Education Steering Committee for Content and Performance Standards Review, and of the Mathematics Content Review Committee for Curriculum Standards;
- Dr. Haynes judged research poster sessions for the Western, Southern, and North Central Regions of the American Association for Agricultural Education;
- Dr. Katzman serves as an Advisory Board member for the Casper Mountain Science School; is providing professional development for NCSD#1 elementary and middle school teachers regarding inquiry in science instruction; serves as Coach/mentor for First Lego League Robotics team; developed, proctored, and scored the middle and high school level scientific investigation events for the Wyoming Science Olympiad; served as Judge for Central Wyoming Science Fair; is an Advisory Board member for the Werner Wildlife Museum at Casper College;
- Dr. Rush is Membership Officer of the Northern Rocky Mountains Educational Research Association; she also provided professional development for high school reading teachers in LCSD#1 (Cheyenne), in collaboration with faculty members from the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education;
- Dr. Slater is a member of the Wyoming State Performance and Assessment Steering Committee; and
- Mr. Thompson serves on the NCSD#1 Perkins Steering Committee; is a WACTE Board Member; and is a steering committee/representative for the NCSD#1 CAPS.
- In addition, the majority of faculty members in the Department of Secondary Education work with our partner school districts (ACSD#1, CCSD#1, LCSD#1, and NCSD#1) to collaboratively supervise and mentor student teachers in the classrooms of those school districts.

At the University level, faculty members are involved in the following areas of service:

- Dr. Burrows is the UW NSTA Club Co-Sponsor;
- Dr. Gillis is a member of the Literacy Research Center and Clinic Planning Committee.
- Drs. Gillis, Hatfield, Burrows, Rush, Hutchison, Haynes, Katzmann, and Slater are affiliated faculty members for the UW Science and Mathematics Teaching Center.

- Dr. Hatfield is the Senator from Secondary Education to the Faculty Senate; a member of the NCAR Task Force on Education and Outreach, and served as a Member of the T&P Committee for Michelle Chamberlin of the Mathematics Department;
- Dr. Haynes is the Advisor for Alpha Tau Alpha and the Co-Advisor of Collegiate FFA; he is also a Committee Member for the UW Sullivan Plaza Planning Committee and for the Education Annex Canopy Connector Planning Committee;
- Dr. Katzman is a member of the USP committee and several subcommittees;
- Dr. Hutchison is Chair of the Academic Planning Committee and an ex-officio member of the Budget committee;
- Mr. Thompson is the Advisor for UW/CC TECA (student organization supporting technical education).
- In addition, faculty members in the Department of Secondary Education serve as committee chairs and co-chairs for 47 graduate (masters and doctoral) students.

At the college and department level, faculty members are of course quite active in service, including the following:

- Dr. Burrows served as Department representative to the Technology Committee;
- Dr. Gillis serves as the ACTE representative for the department;
- Dr. Gillis and Dr. Rush served as members of the CoE Professional Development Task Force;
- Dr. Hatfield served as the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator for Mathematics Education;
- Dr. Haynes was the facilitator for the UW ATA “Cowboy Classic” Wyoming Invitational FFA CDE contest;
- Dr. Hutchison serves on the UW Lab School Site Council, Admissions and Enrollment Management Task Force; Advising Task Force; co-chair Modern Language Search Committee; SMTC Director Search Committee; and served as Department Head through January 2012.
- Dr. Slater is a member of the C&I Admissions Committee; and
- Mr. Thompson is a Member of the CoE Dispositions Task Force and the committee chair of the Technical Education Advisory Committee.

Faculty members also attended and participated in a variety of Community College coordination meetings.

Section 6. Student Recruitment and Retention Activities and Enrollment Trends:

Total enrollment in Secondary Education undergraduate majors continues an upward trend, from 439 students in 2006 to 512 students in Fall of 2011. Some Secondary Education programs have increased in enrollment: for example, our Agricultural Education program has increased from 18 (2006) to 38 (Fall 2011) students. Similarly, the Art Education program has shown an increase in enrollment from 28 (2006) to 50 (Fall 2011) students and the English Education program has increased from 64 (2006) to 96 (Fall 2011) students enrolled. Our Technical

Education program, which is offered only through UW/CC, shows some growth, with enrollment ranging from 9 to 12 students enrolled between 2006 and Fall of 2011.

Other programs have remained steady in enrollment, including Technical Education, Biological Science Education, Chemistry Education, Earth Sciences Education, Physics Education, all Modern Languages Education (Spanish, German, French), Mathematics Education, and Social Studies Education.

Although none of our programs has shown dramatic reduction in numbers of students enrolled, we still see some problem areas in total numbers in specific programs. Programs with overall continuing low enrollment include the following: Earth Systems Science Education, Physics Education, French Education, German Education, and Technical Education.

The number of bachelor's degrees awarded to students in Secondary Education programs also continues to maintain at a strong level, increasing from 78 (2006) to 82 (2010).

In terms of credit hour production, the Department is moving strongly with the following figures for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012:

	Course Hours Offered	Number of Students Enrolled	Total Credit Hour Production
Fall 2011	183	394	2316
Spring 2012	184	364	2694
TOTAL	367	758	5010

During the 2011/2012 academic year, the Department of Secondary Education participated in several recruitment activities, some of them of long standing, including the following:

- Manning of tables by faculty members at Discovery Days;
- Complete revision of the Secondary Education department website;
- Development of a looping video for use in events such as Discovery Days and Summer Orientation Advising Sessions;
- Revision and printing of an improved brochure;
- Creation of a department Facebook page;
- Development of a Secondary Education Student Envoy group;
- Collection of contact information for content area teachers, to be used for contact with high school seniors who might be interested in pursuing teaching at the secondary level as a career.

More information about these activities and others that will begin in the Fall semester of 2012 can be found in the following section (Section 7).

In order to retain our undergraduate students in Secondary Education majors, we have focused some attention on advising, by piloting group advising sessions. In

addition, we expect to put into practice the work of the College of Education's Advising Task Force, as its work is completed and reported to the college. We have begun the process of collecting our students' personal email addresses, so that we can maintain communication with them after they graduate.

Section 7. Development Activities and Public Relations.

Development Activities:

Very little in the area of development has been undertaken by Secondary Education faculty, perhaps as a result of lack of time and expertise in this area. Our department would welcome such work, if it came along with support for the processes involved.

Public Relations Activities:

The Secondary Education website (www.uwyo.edu/seced) has been completely revised and rewritten, with substantial work on the part of faculty members, Graduate Assistants, and staff to ensure quality. This process is continuing, of course, with improvements including short videos of faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students planned for development in Fall 2012.

The Department of Secondary Education developed and/or purchased a variety of materials to use in events like Discovery Days and Summer Orientation sessions, including a completely rewritten brochure, a table banner, a looping video on undergraduate programs, a retractable sign standing 7 feet, and a variety of give-away items with the department logo, including lip balm, mints, pens, magnets, and ice scrapers. In addition, the development of group of student representatives, tentatively titled the Secondary Education Student Envoys, has been begun. A Facebook page for the Department of Secondary Education was created (<https://www.facebook.com/UWSecondaryEducation>) and links to that Facebook page have been included in our newly created materials. In addition, we created a QR code, which is also included in new materials.

Faculty members developed a variety of recruitment techniques to be instituted beginning Fall, 2012, including the following:

- Fall reception for newly admitted students in all Secondary Education majors, including freshmen and transfer students. This would allow all faculty members to connect with new students in their disciplines early on in their programs;
- School Improvement Conference sessions for Modern Language and Agricultural Education teachers, followed by a reception;
- Online recruitment, including the following
 - link on the Sec Ed website allowing potential students to ask for contacts, to put in information about their interests;
 - Develop a looping video, using photos of students and faculty, to use at events such as Discovery Days, Grad Fair, etc. (this is currently in progress).
 - Secondary Education Facebook page

- Targeted Facebook ads
- Development of posters that we can send to high school teachers in each content area, which will allow for recruitment in high school content areas classes.
- Department newsletter to be published beginning the Fall semester, 2012.

In addition, a targeted effort to recruit Modern Language Education majors will begin in the Fall semester of 2012, with the hiring of part-time staff person Carol Kirkwood (a former teacher of the year and long-time French teacher at Laramie High School) to spearhead this effort. Plans for recruitment of Modern Language Education majors include the following:

- Development and printing of Modern Language-specific posters, to be distributed to language teachers in Wyoming high schools; follow-up visits will be made to high-population areas to recruit high school seniors.
- Make personal contact with Modern Language students at UW, by inviting them to a free reception or dinner, where the Secondary Education program can be explained and the benefits of teaching described;
- Special session presented at the School Improvement Conferences aimed at Language teachers in Wyoming;
- And other similar ideas currently in development.

Section 8. Classified and Professional Staffing

At the end of Fall 2011, long-time office staff person Marilyn MacDonald retired. A festive occasion was held, during which Marilyn's family members, friends, and co-workers celebrated her years of work for the university and her move into retirement. Unfortunately, the position vacated by Marilyn was not renewed. As a result, Office Associate Judy Yates had to take on the bulk of Marilyn's work, as well as her own. However, Ms. Yates continues to do excellent work for the Department of Secondary Education.

Section 9. Diversity:

This academic year saw the beginning of a search for an Assistant Professor to teach Modern Language Methods courses and to supervise student teachers in French Education, German Education, and Spanish Education. Upon advice from the Dean, the search was tabled because of problems with student enrollment in the upper levels of those programs. This was unfortunate, as the search committee was engaged and excited about the search, the pool of candidates was both broad and deep, and the advertisement for the position had gone into a variety of publications. Once the search was tabled, applicants were notified and informed that the search would be taken up again in the 2012-2013 academic year. Plans are underway for two faculty searches for the upcoming academic year, including the existing position of a Modern Language Education faculty member, and the position we hope to receive in Social Studies Education.

Section 10. Assessment of Student Learning:

Tier 1 and Tier 2 Programs – Assessment Report

Department or program name: College of Education, Teacher Education (undergraduate) Program - The Wyoming Teacher Education Program (WTEP) is the undergraduate program for the college, so this report applies to the following departments - Secondary Education, Elementary and Early Childhood Education, and Educational Studies; the report also applies to the “Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Education Program,” as students in this program are required to meet the same learning outcomes as students in the traditional undergraduate program.

Degree/program assessed: Teacher Education Program

Submitted by: Allen Trent

Date submitted: June 1, 2012

What are your research questions about student learning?

How do our student teachers perform on the new national Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA)?

In what ways does preparation for, and completion of, the TPA support preservice teachers’ development of knowledge and skills associated with effective teaching?

How can we best integrate TPA related components (planning, instruction, academic language development, assessment, reflection) across the WTEP in ways that best prepare our students for success on this assessment, and subsequently, for successful K-12 classroom teaching?

What program or department-level student learning outcomes were assessed by this project?

At the program level, this summative assessment evaluates student teachers’ proficiency related to the following teacher education program Learner Outcomes:

- Demonstrate acquisition of discipline knowledge and the application of that knowledge to create meaningful learning experiences for students.

- Demonstrate knowledge of developmental theories and develop a perspective of development that is both socio-cultural and biological in order to form a responsive pedagogy.
- Demonstrate the ability to respond to diverse learners, employ differentiated instruction, and cultivate a mutually respectful learning community that values all students.
- Apply multiple instructional strategies and learning theories and use a wide range of instructional materials and technology in order to achieve learning goals for all students.
- Demonstrate the ability to foster and implement democratic learning environments which model principles of ethics, schooling for a democratic society, and social justice, especially in the development of mutual respect, support, and critical inquiry in the classroom.
- Model effective communication techniques (including writing, speaking, listening, and use of media/technology) that promote learner understanding and encourage convergent and divergent thinking.
- Demonstrate the ability to select and create appropriate learning experiences based upon principles of effective instruction, both as an individual and team member.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, select, construct, and use a variety of assessment methods and strategies to guide instruction, promote student growth, and to document student learning.
- Demonstrate the characteristics associated with reflective practice including self-assessment, individual and collective inquiry and life-long learning traits to support personal growth and professional development.

Additionally, all of our teacher education majors/program areas are accredited through either the state (Professional Teaching Standards Board/PTSB) or via state/PTSB approved “SPAs” - Specialized Program Associations (e.g., the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics). To attain and maintain accreditation, programs must meet the standards/learner outcomes designated by the state and/or the SPA organizations.

Describe your assessment project and provide pertinent background information.

The University of Wyoming College of Education is part of a 26 state consortium of colleges and universities field-testing the Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA), a summative assessment for student teachers at (or near) the end of their programs. Last spring (2011) we piloted draft versions of this assessment with one group of elementary student teachers (24) that completed select components of the assessment, and with a group of Social Studies Education majors (20) that completed the entire assessment. This spring (2012) approximately 10,000 student teachers across the U.S. completed the TPA as a part of a national field test. This assessment is designed to measure a set of core teaching skills that support student learning. For the TPA, teacher candidates plan and teach a learning segment of 3-5 connected lessons, videotape some of this teaching, assess their students' work, provide feedback to support continued student progress, and finally, reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching practices throughout. The student teachers submit documentation that includes lesson plans, video clips of instruction, student work samples, and self-assessment of their teaching practices used during the learning segment. Trained evaluators then score these assessments.

This spring (2012) all UW Elementary Education, and Secondary English, Math, Social Studies and Science student teachers completed this assessment (approximately 200 student teachers total). Additionally, we are introducing components of the assessment throughout the Wyoming Teacher Education Program to position our preservice teachers for success on this evaluation, and ultimately, to be successful classroom practitioners with the knowledge and skills to support all students' learning.

The TPA has been developed to be a nationally accessible teaching performance assessment that will allow states, school districts and teacher preparation programs to share a common framework for defining and measuring teacher competence. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the National Education Association (NEA) have all endorsed the TPA. The data from this field test will be used to establish a national standard for entry-level teachers. We are excited about participating in this consortium and believe the performance assessment will help us to continue to produce highly effective teachers.

Provide relevant data to answer your research question. What are the key findings?

We are still in the early stages of TPA implementation, but we do have some data that responds, in part, to our research questions. Over time, and as we complete subsequent cycles of the TPA, we will have more data that will inform our research questions, and ultimately, we will have much data to inform and guide adaptations to our courses and programs.

Spring 2011 TPA Pilot –

As noted above, 20 student teachers in Social Studies Education participated in the pilot of a draft TPA in spring 2011. At this time, the TPA was scored using 12, four point rubrics (4 being the highest score). We selected scorers (social studies teachers from around the state) and sent them through extensive scorer training. The consortium told us that, even though this was a pilot, that an average score of “2” across rubrics was “passing” or was the equivalent of the level of proficiency expected of preservice teachers at this stage. Our student teachers’ average score was 2.25, and only one of the 20 did not meet or exceed the “passing” score.

Spring 2012 Field Test-

200 student teachers in elementary education, and secondary: science, math, social studies and English completed the TPA. In addition to changing parts of the assessments between the pilot and field test years (based on feedback received on the pilot), the consortium also changed the rubrics from 4 to 5 point rubrics. This year (and going forward) the TPAs are scored by trained evaluators employed by Pearson, a national testing company. At the writing of this report, we have received the scores back for 109 of our student teachers. The average scores across all rubrics for each content area are as follows:

CONTENT AREA/LEVEL	AVERAGE SCORE OF TPAs
Elementary Literacy	2.73 (n=46)
Secondary Social Studies/History	3.12 (n=17)
Secondary Science	2.91 (n=25)
Secondary English	2.71 (n=11)
Secondary Math	2.32 (n=10)

In addition to these formal assessment scores, we are in the process of soliciting feedback from the student teachers that completed the TPA, and from their UW supervisors/instructors and mentor teachers. Thus far, the feedback has been mixed with more negative feedback/critique than positive. In all respondent groups there were both positive, and negative points of feedback. For example:

Student teacher comment: I did not like TPA. It took time away from my classes and my students, and it focused on items that I felt had no particular influence on my teaching. Completing the assignment did not help me become a better teacher.

Student teacher comment: I found the TPA requirements and assessments valuable and beneficial as a student in the student teaching experience. I felt I benefited from the before, during, and after planning and reflection within the assessment...

Mentor teacher comment: While I realize that I don't have a full scope of understanding of the TPA, what I do know is that it took away from the student teaching experience rather than enhancing it. The TPA seemed very much like a class, and as a class, it left the student teachers in the mind-set of being students, rather than teachers. The weeks spent in charge of a classroom are the only experience future teachers have of the varied and time-consuming responsibilities of a teacher. To ask them to be responsible for a classroom with multiple preps as well as taking a class seems unrealistic and counter-productive...

Mentor teacher comment: I had a positive experience with the TPA. What I liked most about the TPA was the process really gave me and my student teacher a lot of good talking points.

UW faculty member comment: I did not like it--it negatively changed the Student Teaching experience for students. It made it a single shot assessment that was not very valued by students--especially since they have their jobs or not previous to any scores being released. My evaluations were negatively impacted by the uncoordinated implementation of this assessment--but I didn't have the assessment previous to Student Teaching. I heard nothing but complaints from mentors and students about the TPA assessment. I used to feel happy when students were near the end of their student teaching because they had improved so much. Now I feel nothing but their anger at this assessment being required. As we all know a single shot assessment isn't valuable in improving a teacher's classroom practice. Our previous measures were more valuable at preparing teachers to be successful in classrooms. This may be politically expedient but it is not productive for our students to become better teachers. The lack of reflection required for success is one example. Another is that the scores come so removed from the experience. It is the PAWS problems all over again.

UW faculty member comment: TPA is one piece of evidence that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of our UW teaching candidates. I do not believe that it is the only evidence or should it be used to withhold graduation/certification for the teaching candidates. Now that I understand the TPA process more fully, I will be able to help my students navigate TPAs various and many rubrics/sections.

Describe the meaning of your results as they relate to program strengths and challenges. What changes to the program or curriculum have been made, are planned, or contemplated in the future as a result from this assessment project?

The consortium's goal is to determine a suggested cut score or acceptable level of proficiency for the TPA. They will do this using the data from this spring's field test, and so we expect to have this recommendation by late summer/early fall. At that point, we will have to decide the role this will play in our program (adopt the cut score? Use a cut score, but one that is lower or higher than suggested?). That said, it appears that our students are performing pretty well on the assessment averaging 2.74 (on a 5 point scale) across all TPA areas and all students (again based on scores received to date). We've also been told informally, that as preservice teachers, scoring a "5" in any rubric area is very difficult. The criteria in the rubric level 5s are more aligned with the expectations of professional, inservice teachers.

Interestingly, the content area faculty that participated in the pilot experience in 2011 (Social Studies/History) have students with the highest average scores thus far in the field test (3.12 avg). This may be due to the faculty members' greater familiarity with the assessment and their more comprehensively developed ways to prepare students for success on this assessment.

Each of the 12 TPA rubrics aligns with specific teaching skills/behaviors. When analyzing our student teachers' scores on specific rubrics/skill areas, our students performed best on rubric one, "planning" with an average score of 2.95. This is a positive finding, as comprehensive lesson planning, preparation, and differentiation are skills reinforced at multiple points across the WTEP. Our student teachers scored lowest on rubric nine, "analyzing teaching effectiveness" with an average score of 2.56. This rubric explores how candidates/student teachers "use evidence to evaluate and change teaching practice to meet the varied learning needs of students." This skill then involves reflecting on prior teaching and student

performance in order to utilize this information as formative feedback that guides future instruction. This is a higher level teaching skill, and so we are not particularly surprised that this was an area in which our students scored lower. If the data we continue to receive aligns with this data already received (and thus confirms “analyzing teaching effectiveness” as an area of weakness for our students) we will strategize ways to better integrate this content/skill set into our coursework leading up to the student teaching experience.

We have had several faculty conversations (beginning with a retreat late spring 2011) about integrating the knowledge, skills, concepts and vocabulary assessed in the TPA across the required program courses. For example, we are introducing the TPA in early (sophomore level) courses; we are requiring students to complete a condensed version of this assessment as a part of their junior level practicum experience; and then are addressing all TPA components in the fall senior methods courses (students take methods in fall, then student teach in spring of their senior year). The aim for the coming year will be to continue these conversations and develop a comprehensive plan for TPA integration across the WTTP. The data already received, and the data that will arrive soon, will inform this integration plan and the ways we address the TPA elements in our teacher education coursework.

Finally, the qualitative feedback noted earlier in this report will also inform this work. For example, some primary themes of this feedback include suggestions to: introduce the assessment early in the program; allow students opportunities to practice TPA elements and receive formative feedback prior to student teaching; make sure we are aligning the assessment with WTTP learner outcomes; minimize the time it takes student teachers to complete the assessment; provide clearer instructions for using LiveText (our data platform) to complete and upload the assessment; and generally help student teachers, faculty members, and mentor teachers to increasingly see the value of this assessment as it relates to teachers’ abilities to support student learning. We plan to address all this and more as we continue to have focused faculty conversations and create plans to support our students in their professional growth toward inservice teaching.