



Group Meeting Notes

TEI Group: Early Childhood
Date/Time/Location: 6/5/2017, 10-12, Wyoming Hall 312
Members in Attendance: Mark Bittner, Tricia Johnson, Becca Steinhoff, Jennifer Zook, Lety Liera, Nick Whynott, Nicole Novotny Smith, Tim Shepard
Support in Attendance: David Yanoski

Information Reviewed: Tricia shared information about the current program offerings at UW, including EI Ed with a concentration in ECE, a Minor in ECE, a post baccalaureate certificate, and early childhood special education endorsement.

Mark discussed the Professional Child Development degree available through the Family and Consumer Sciences department. Students with this degree are not endorsed to teach in the public school system.

PTSB requirements and endorsements were also discussed. Along with professional development offered by the program around the state.

Discussion: The overview of the current program was appreciated by the entire RWG. For many in the group, the offerings at UWyo were unclear. It was discussed that marketing of the program and processes for working with the University were unclear. In addition, the lack of clear information on the website was discussed.

Additional discussion centered around the possibility of an undergraduate ECE degree. This degree could be a birth to 3rd grade focus or an ECE and ECE Sped dual major. Concerns raised about this possibility centered around the low salaries available in ECE jobs. There are plenty of jobs available, but they do not pay well enough to attract candidates. For this reason, many of the students at UWyo go into elementary k-3 jobs rather than other ECE positions. The only preschool jobs that pay well are the public-school jobs, and these are few in number. As the group continues its work, the importance of keeping the economic reality of ECE jobs as a major consideration is paramount.

The relationship between the ECE and Child development programs was also discussed. These programs have been well aligned to each other in the past, but have drifted apart over time. There are a few courses that cross programs.

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Head Start will start requiring certifications or endorsements in the near future. Although these requirements are not finalized, this has large implications for the ECE workforce.

A major concern brought out by the group is that EC educators are not treated as professionals, especially in terms of the salary. ECE is viewed as daycare or babysitting, rather than serving an educational function.

Another concern is the scattered nature of the oversight and funding of ECE programs. The Wyoming legislature is beginning to look at possibilities to bring these function under one roof, but these are very preliminary in nature.

Votes/Actions:

Through a brainstorming activity, the group identified 5 broad areas that they would like to look at. These are subject to change and will be further defined as the group gathers additional information. The broad categories will be used to inform the development of strategic goals for the RWG.

1. A degree program. This can include better coordination between the two existing programs, the development of an undergraduate ECE/ECE Sped degree, and accessibility/marketing of existing programs.
2. The profession, including PD for inservice teachers and efforts to better prepare future teachers
3. The system, including discussing ways to better coordinate all aspects of the EC system statewide. This also includes better coordination between the university and state. A diagram or flowchart of the various system components may be of help. Pushing up ECE expertise from EC educators into the public school system, rather than the public schools pushing down is desired.
4. Program quality, a desire to create the best possible programming resulting in the best possible outcomes for students and the create equal access across the system for all students,
5. Awareness of EC as a profession and what ECE is designed to do.

Deadlines / Tasks /

Responsibilities: None at this time

Next Meeting Details: Monday, June 19, 10am