Writing A New Page
A Proposal for Reforming the English Education Program at Ball State University

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)
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Abstract for Honors Thesis

Writing A New Page:
A Proposal for Reforming the
English Education Program at Ball State University

"Writing A New Page" analyzes and evaluates the English Education Program at Ball State University. The project surveys students currently in the program, investigates what is being taught in actual English classrooms, and tells of the reform movements in teacher education. Using this research, the project then proposes how to restructure and improve the English Education Program.

The five major areas examined in the proposal are:
1. The sequencing of the English Education courses
2. The curriculum for the English teaching methods courses
3. The use of reinforcement through laboratory experiences
4. The quantity and quality of the English Education faculty
5. The use of advising and evaluation throughout the English Education Program

The purpose of this thesis project is to strongly encourage that the English Department seriously examine the program and make the necessary changes to improve the training of future English teachers. These changes would not only benefit the teaching in training, but also the thousands of young people who will eventually be their students.
Writing A New Page
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A Proposal for Reforming the English Education Program at Ball State University

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for
Honors 499
Thesis Project

The sun is rising on a new page for the Ball State University English Education Program
# Project Overview

# Project Research and Findings

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# Proposal

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My interest in teaching goes far beyond the school setting. I know I will begin my career working in the classroom, but I do not intend to end my career there. I have always had a very strong interest in curriculum reform and also the whole broad spectrum of educational reform. My goal is to someday effect the lives of thousands of young people in this nation by becoming a champion for better schools.

When a problem is set before me, it is my nature to pursue that problem, discover its source, and do what I can to resolve it. The summer of 1997, I took English 412 and was rather disappointed with the class. As I continued on into my special English teaching methods that fall, I realized the English department was either ignoring or unaware of the problems with these courses. I mentioned my dissatisfaction with the English Education program to a professor, and he suggested I concentrate my honors thesis on finding a solution to the problem.

The English Education Program at Ball State University is not adequately preparing future English teachers, especially at the secondary level. This lack of preparation not only affects these teachers in training, but also their future students and ultimately all of us. Teachers shape the minds of young people, and many of these children are the future leaders of America. If the mind-shapers do not know how to do their job properly, then this nation's future is at stake.
Project Research and Findings

Project Methodology

Literature Review

Survey of Undergraduate English Education Students

Case Study of Teaching Methods
Project Methodology

When I began this thesis project, my initial research was done by talking with my fellow classmates and listening to their complaints and suggestions about the English Education Program. I scheduled some meetings with the English education faculty members who were teaching the special methods courses. I met with the department chair to get his views and ideas about the program. I then tried to summarize the areas that needed evaluation and formulate some ideas of how the program could be improved.

Experts consulted

The next step for the project was to find out what the experts in the field of teacher education reform had to say. I received several books from a faculty member and then I proceeded to conduct some library research. I tried to get a fairly broad scope on the problems with teacher education as a whole. I looked at reform movements from the late 1980s to the present. I then narrowed my research to look specifically at the training of English and language arts teachers.

Surveying the program

Once I had an idea of the ideal program, I decided to investigate the realities of teacher education. I wanted some way to evaluate the Ball State University English Education Program, and so I chose to create a survey about the program and its courses. The survey questions were created by using the departmental curriculum guides and the Ball State University course catalogue descriptions for the methods courses. I originally planned to send the survey to recent alumni from the English Education Program but due to some difficulties getting the list of alumni, this never
became a reality. Instead of abandoning the whole idea, I chose to give the survey to undergraduate students currently in the program.

**Observing classroom teachers**

The final aspect of my research centered on methods actually being used in the school classrooms. During my student teaching, I had the opportunity to conduct a small case study of several English teachers at Southside High School in Muncie, Indiana. I observed their classes and looked for the various teaching methods and classroom management techniques that they used. Then I asked some follow-up questions about their specific philosophies about teaching methods.

Once my research was complete, I had a strong knowledge base to use in formulating the proposal on how to reform the English Education Program. I knew what the experts recommended; my fellow classmates had added their input; and I had investigated some real life teaching situations. I summarized my research results and wrote the proposal.
Literature Review

Better schools for the turn of the century

The Commission on the Education of Teachers into the 21st Century presented a report about the current condition of teacher preparation. The commission was made up of fourteen educators from across the United States. The report, "Restructuring the Education of Teachers," called for action on these five recommendations:

1) Improve recruitment and selection of potential teachers;
2) strengthen teacher preparation programs at the college and university level;
3) increase support for beginning teachers entering the profession;
4) increase the possibilities for current teachers to pursue continuing professional development;
5) increase the research base for the study of teacher education.

The commission made it clear that in order for change to occur, it must be done at all levels -- in college teacher education programs, in the government's education departments, and in the nation's schools.

Reformist gives postulates for change

John Goodlad is a well-known educator involved in the renewal and reform of teacher education. In Goodlad's Teachers for Our Nation's Schools, he takes an in-depth look at the condition of teacher preparation. Goodlad spent five years gathering information from teacher education programs across the nation and created nineteen postulates that were his recommendations on how to make the improvements in teacher education.
education. He even includes a fable of how the changes could be implemented at a typical university.

Goodlad then wrote a follow-up to Teachers. In Educational Renewal: Better Teachers, Better Schools, he gives a detailed analysis of teacher education and what needs to be done to improve it. Goodlad suggests that educational reform should occur simultaneously in the nation's teacher preparation programs and the nation's schools. Goodlad reacquaints the readers with his postulates from Teachers and takes them a step further. In this book, he pushes the concept of "centers of pedagogy," which means putting more focus on teaching how students learn.

**Using a knowledge base to prepare teachers**

With the help of many knowledgeable contributors, Frank Murray put together The Teacher Educator's Handbook: Building a Knowledge Base for the Preparation of Teachers. This handbook was meant to aid teacher education programs in determining what to teach future educators. The book is divided into five parts: the need for a knowledge base, subject matter knowledge, the discipline of education, program structures and design, and the teacher education faculty and their work. The focus of the book is on the need for a knowledge base in teacher education.

**Principles help redesign teacher education**

Alan Tom has examined the common criticisms and the popular reform proposals in the world of teacher education. He then formulated his own recommendations for teacher education reform in, Redesigning Teacher Education. Tom created eleven principles of conceptual and structural design for teacher education programs. He also gave some strategies on how to implement these principles successfully.
Survey of Undergraduate English Education Students

During the fall semester of 1997, I surveyed some current English Education majors about the quality of the program. (See appendix A on page 31 for sample survey.) The total number of students surveyed was small, but it gave me an idea of students' opinions and suggestions for the English Education Program.

Background questions

Of those surveyed, most students will graduate sometime during 1998, while the rest will either graduate in 1999 or 2000. (See appendix B on page 32 for survey results.) Although none of the students were currently teaching full-time, some had experience with substitute teaching and also with their participation classes from Teachers College. The English education majors had worked with students in both middle schools and high schools.

The purpose of the survey was to investigate how well the English Education Program was preparing its students to teach. The classes specifically evaluated were ENG 412 (Reading Printed Materials in English Classrooms), ENG 395 (Teaching English in Secondary Schools), and ENG 350 (Special Methods for Teaching Language Arts in Jr. High/Middle Schools). Questions ranged from whether the class focused on a particular age
group to how many lesson or unit plans were completed in the class. Out of the 30 students surveyed, 83% had taken ENG 412, 77% had taken ENG 395, and 90% had taken ENG 350.

The two methods courses, ENG 395 and ENG 350, were the main focus of the survey. ENG 412 was also evaluated because it is the third major course in the English education sequence. The basis for the questions came from the English department course curriculum guides and the Ball State University course catalogue.

Questions for high school methods course

The results for ENG 395 were rather mixed with a slight lean towards the positive side. The majority of students surveyed felt that ENG 395 focused on teaching methods for high school students. Fifty percent of the students felt the course was mainly theory instead of having a good balance of practical versus theoretical application of these methods.

Questions 9, 11, and 13 were a bit difficult for undergraduate students to answer because the answers required mere speculation. In the questions about the amount of lesson/unit plans and assessment tools, students consistently agreed that about 1-4 of each were completed for the class. Students predicted that they would use the teaching methods learned in the class less than once a week. On the other hand, 64% of the students said "yes" or "mostly likely" to their probable use of the lesson/unit plans created in the class. As for the assessment tools learned in the class, 89% of the students that answered the question said that they would use these tools less than once a week.

Questions for jr. high/middle school methods course

The results for ENG 350 were fairly similar to those for ENG 395. The majority of students surveyed felt that ENG 350 focused on teaching methods for jr. high/middle school students and that the methods were age specific. ENG 350 was perceived to have a balance of theoretical and practical application.

Despite this balance, 64% of the students felt they would use these teaching methods less than once a week in their future classrooms. Similar to ENG 395, students agreed that 1-4 lesson/unit plans and assessment tools were completed in ENG 350. The majority of students felt they might use the lesson/unit plans in their future classrooms, but they were doubtful about the use of the assessment tools.

Questions for general English methods course

The third class evaluated, ENG 412, could be considered a methods course because English specific teaching skills are supposed to be taught. There is a similar
class, EDRDS 320, offered by Teachers College that all Education majors are required to take. When students were asked if there was an overlap between ENG 412 and EDRDS 320, 80% agreed that there was. Other than that particular problem, most students responded positively about the class setup. Students felt they learned how to incorporate a variety of reading activities into their regular English curriculum.

**Overall satisfaction with program**

One of the final questions asked on the survey dealt with use of technology as a part of the English teaching methods. All three courses failed to receive positive marks in this area. The class selected most, ENG 395, received a 35% approval rating on how technology use was taught for incorporation in the English classroom.

As a way to discover the overall satisfaction with the English education sequence, I asked students to rate their preparedness for teaching in the English classroom. The results were not positive. Of the 29 students that answered the question, 93% felt they were "somewhat prepared" or "unprepared," leaving 7% saying they felt "very prepared" to teach in the English classroom. Students were then asked to add additional comments and suggestions for the program.
Case Study of Teaching Methods

The five teachers I observed for the case study teach at Southside High School in Muncie, Indiana. (See Appendix C on page 35 for further information.) All the teachers observed for the case study are certified to teach English in the state of Indiana. Southside has just under 1,000 students. Most students are from a lower socio-economic background and are not college bound.

Mr. Sheffield

Mr. Sheffield has taught for 14 years at Southside High School. He is a Ball State University graduate. Mr. Sheffield teaches mainly freshmen and sophomores. The class I observed was a freshman tech prep English class.

Mr. Sheffield began the class period with a journal entry assignment which is an established routine for the class. After allowing 10-15 minutes for this activity, Mr. Sheffield moved on to the next activity.

For the remainder of the class period, students were assigned to create a visual aid for their book report presentations that were to take place the next day. Students worked individually at their desks, occasionally getting up for art supplies or to ask a question.

Mr. Sheffield uses somewhat traditional teaching methods and classroom management techniques. Because this class has a tech prep designation, he tries to implement a wider range of activities that cover visual and communication skills. His classroom management style varies with class size and composition, but he tends to be fairly strict. As for evaluation of students, Mr. Sheffield uses a standard points system.
Mrs. Tinder

Mrs. Tinder has been teaching at Southside for the last ten years and has a total of 11 years of teaching experience. She completed her undergraduate work at the University of Michigan. Mrs. Tinder teaches mainly freshmen and sophomores and also teaches German. The class I observed was a sophomore tech prep English class.

Mrs. Tinder uses a non-traditional classroom set-up where the students face each other in their seating arrangement. The students had previously been reading the play, *The Diary of Anne Frank*. They were to finish up the reading during that day's class period. To begin class, Mrs. Tinder sat in a chair at the front of the room and quickly reviewed the previous day's reading.

After the review, she assigned students to read parts in the play aloud. Mrs. Tinder would stop the reading occasionally to ask questions and make sure the students understood the material. This reading activity continued for the entire class period until the play was finished, and then Mrs. Tinder gave a brief summary.

Mrs. Tinder tries to take the traditional subjects of literature, composition, and grammar and present them in non-traditional ways. She likes to use activities that are interactive and require the students to participate. Her classroom management style is very relaxed and laid-back. For evaluating students’ progress, Mrs. Tinder uses a portfolio system.

Mrs. Cordray

Mrs. Cordray is completing her first year of teaching at Southside and has also taught at the Riley Alternative School for the past two years. She is a recent graduate of Ball State University. She teaches mainly freshmen at Southside. The class I observed was a freshmen remedial English class.

The first activity for the day was not a part of Mrs. Cordray's original plans. She had to administer a career interest survey for the guidance office. After this was completed, she gave a quick overview and review of the myths unit the class had been studying.

The next activity was reading a story about an African myth. Mrs. Cordray began with a couple of pre-reading activities on new vocabulary and some discussion about the story's title, "Superman."

She began reading the story to the students and then asked for volunteers to continue reading the story. A student would read a couple of paragraphs and then another student would volunteer. This process continued for the remainder of the class period. Mrs. Cordray circulated around the room and stopped the reading occasionally to ask questions and check comprehension.
Mrs. Cordray uses a variety of teaching methods that get the students engaged and involved in the learning process. She tries to find creative ways to cover the required subjects of literature, grammar, spelling and writing. Her classroom management is based on a set of classroom rules that are strictly adhered to. Discipline is administered on an individual basis which generally does not interfere with the other students' learning process. Mrs. Cordray's evaluative methods are based on a standard points system.

Mr. Bimber

Mr. Bimber has been teaching for a decade. He graduated from a small private college in Kent, Ohio called Malone University. Mr. Bimber works mainly with the more at-risk students in the upper grades. The class I observed was a senior remedial English class.

Mr. Bimber allowed the students about 5-10 minutes at the beginning of class to talk while he took attendance. He gradually wound the conversation around to the lesson for the day. He quickly reviewed the previous lesson and then introduced the literature for that class period by relating it to a current issue in the students' lives.

After about 15 minutes of introduction, Mr. Bimber read the story to the class. He then used the questions from the book at the end of the story to facilitate a short discussion. This discussion was fairly in-depth because Mr. Bimber asked additional questions to keep things going.

The last activity was a writing response to the story that took the remainder of the period. Some students finished early, and Mr. Bimber allowed them to talk quietly at their desks.

Mr. Bimber has a very casual and personal relationship with his classes. He believes that in order for students to be able to learn, they must first deal with what is happening in their daily lives. Mr. Bimber uses a variety of teaching methods and tries to match the methods with the students. His classroom management philosophy is centered on respecting one another. For evaluating his students, Mr. Bimber uses a standard points system.

Mrs. Marcus

Mrs. Marcus is in her 19th year of teaching at Southside. She completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Ball State University. She has taught a variety of grades and student ability levels. The class I observed was a sophomore honors English class.

The class began with a Daily Language Usage activity which is an established routine for the class. Students were given the first couple of minutes to complete the activity, and then Mrs. Marcus went over the answers.
She then asked students if they had any questions about the reading from the homework assignment. Several students asked for some clarification. Mrs. Marcus provided the answers and proceeded to give some background on the story. Mrs. Marcus then asked questions about the story that led to a fairly in-depth and lengthy discussion.

After the discussion wound down, Mrs. Marcus introduced the journal writing assignment for the story. Reader’s response is also an established routine for the class. Students were given the remainder of the period to write in their journals.

Mrs. Marcus tries to use creative teaching methods in her classes. She uses visual and oral activities just as frequently as the traditional reading and writing activities. Her classroom management is typically very relaxed, but it depends on the class size and make-up. She tries to give students the freedom to find their own way. Mrs. Marcus uses a mixture of portfolio evaluation and a standard points system for student assessment.
Proposal

Purpose Statement

Sequencing of the English Education Courses
Curriculum for the English Teaching Methods Courses
Reinforcement through Laboratory Experiences
Quantity and Quality of English Education Faculty
Advising and Evaluation Throughout the English Education Program

Conclusion
Purpose Statement

The English education program at Ball State University needs to be evaluated and restructured to better facilitate the education of future English teachers. Currently, the program requires 42 hours of English subject matter studies and only nine hours of English education classes. In the field of teacher education, there is a call for stronger programs that will produce better teachers for our nation's schools.

There are five major areas of the program that are examined in this proposal:

* The sequencing of the English education courses
* The curriculum for the English teaching methods courses
* The use of reinforcement through laboratory experiences
* The quantity and quality of the English education faculty
* The use of advising and evaluation throughout the English Education Program

I propose that the English department take a serious look at the English Education Program and make the necessary changes to benefit not only the teachers in training, but also the thousands of young people who will eventually be their students.
Sequencing of the English Education Courses

The first area in need of re-evaluation is the actual structure and sequencing of the English education classes. The English department and Teachers college need to coordinate their efforts for educating English teachers. The English department should rearrange the order that ENG 350, ENG 395, and ENG 412 are required. In the Ball State University catalogue of courses, the current sequence requires EDJHM 285 to be taken before ENG 350, and then ENG 350 is a prerequisite for ENG 395, and ENG 412 has no prerequisites. A commissioned report from the Association of Teacher Educators says pre-service teacher education programs should demonstrate that “the scope and sequence of activities in a program are systematically structured so that experiences of students build developmentally, one upon the other.”

The English education sequence does not build upon itself. I propose that the sequence be restructured as follows:

1. EDJHM 285 and EDSEC 280 should be taken during the sophomore or junior year and should be a prerequisite for ENG 350 and ENG 395.
2. EDRDS 320 should be considered a prerequisite for ENG 412.
3. ENG 412 should be either a prerequisite or a parallel for ENG 350 and ENG 395.
4. ENG 350 and ENG 395 should be taken no sooner than two semesters before student teaching and the classes should be taken in the same semester.
In the world of educational reform, the big debate is whether special methods courses should come before or after teaching experience in the classroom. The two general methods classes that include classroom experience are EDJHM 285 and EDSEC 280. These classes and their course content are described in the Ball State course catalogue:

**EDJHM 285 Principles of Teaching, Curriculum and Classroom Management: Middle School.** Combines the theory and practice of teaching at the middle school level. Includes direct teaching experiences with early adolescents in public school settings; seminars concerned with such topics as curriculum, instructional strategies, legal concerns, discipline, and advanced micro-teaching.

(343)

**EDSEC 280 Secondary School.** Inducts students into the teaching act. Included development of specific technical skills, study of principles of teaching and evaluation, use of instructional media equipment, curriculum development and organization, and classroom management. Intensive in-school assignments, observation skills, participation, and direct contact with adolescents are required.

(345)

The participation classes (EDJHM 285 and EDSEC 280) are considered general methods courses and should be taken before any special methods courses.

The next step in the sequence would require EDRDS 320 to be taken before ENG 412. According to the survey results, 80% of the students felt there was considerable overlap between these two classes. If the curriculum for ENG 412 stayed specifically with English and language arts teaching methods, then the repetition between the two classes would decrease. According to the Ball State course catalogue description, EDRDS 320 is:

Practical procedures for developing effective reading skills to be applied by all secondary classroom teachers. Focuses on relationships between the process of reading and learning of content, on planning to meet the total range of student reading needs, and on methods and materials to enhance comprehension and study skills in all areas of secondary school curriculum.

(344)

EDRDS 320 focuses more on generalized reading instruction, while ENG 412 is more specialized to English teaching. EDRDS 320 should then be a prerequisite for ENG 412.

Careful consideration must be taken in deciding when English education courses are required during a students' college career. In order for teachers in training to be most benefited, it does not make sense for specialized English methods to be taken before less specific English methods courses. Since ENG 412 is generalized English methods, it should be taken before or as a parallel to ENG 350 and ENG.
It also would not be profitable for students to take these special English methods courses too early in the sequence. Once a student has applied for student teaching, then he or she should be eligible to take the special English methods courses (ENG 350 and ENG 395). If taken too soon, the student will not be able to transfer what he or she has learned from these classes into a school setting.

The final step in making the sequence more successful is to require ENG 350 and ENG 395 to be taken as parallels. This will enable the student to get the full spectrum of English education at the secondary level in one semester.

This new sequence for the English education classes would better benefit the students than the current sequence. Scheduling difficulties will arise and have to be worked out. If the English department were to go with this new sequence, they would be preparing better English teachers.
Curriculum for the English Teaching Methods Courses

The teaching methods courses in the English Education Program should accomplish the following four purposes for methods teaching:

1. Intellectual command of the concepts and schemata of teaching.
2. Demonstration of skillful teaching practice.
3. Interpretation of the complexities of content and context.
4. Socialization into self-understanding with respect to the professional role of a teacher. (Murray 596)

To improve this area of the English education program, the general curriculum for the English methods courses must be examined.

What exactly does methods mean? It generally means “topically oriented study of planning for, delivery of, management of, special problems regarding, and professional concerns implicit in instruction” (Murray 594). There are several factors that effect a teacher's decision on the type of methods he or she will use in the classroom; these areas include subject matter, student developmental levels, sociocultural setting, and the school environment. These factors need to be thoroughly investigated in the English methods courses.

Content and pedagogy need to be combined in methods teaching. The content would be the literature, grammar, and composition taught in schools, and the pedagogy would be creative and successful ways to teach these subjects. English methods courses need to transform the subject matter into lessons that can be taught. These courses need to teach appropriate ways to organize the knowledge so that students in school classrooms can comprehend and understand the materials being taught.
According to the report from the Commission on the Education of Teachers into the 21st Century, "Preservice teachers generally have confidence in their ability to demonstrate core teaching skills, but however they frequently express reservations about their ability to effectively teach at-risk students and students from cultures different than their own" (12). In the case study summaries, several teachers reinforce this dilemma when they reported that their teaching methods vary depending on the class size and composition.

According to the survey results, most students felt the English methods courses taught a variety of teaching methods and assessment tools that where age-specific, but the methods courses still need to focus more attention on teaching English in various cultural environments and teaching to students of different ability levels and learning styles.

As a way to further implement these changes needed for the English education methods courses, I have summarized what should be included in the course curriculum guides for ENG 350, ENG 395, and ENG 412. I've used the results of the survey, the observations from the case study, the information from the books read, and my own experiences with the courses to formulate the information that should be added to these guides. (See Appendix D on page 36 for the current curriculum guides.)

The guides for ENG 395 and 350 are very thorough and complete, but they need some refocusing. The guide for ENG 412 needs radical improvement. I am not qualified to actually rewrite the guides, but these are my suggestions for additions:

**ENG 395 and ENG 350**
- Focus on age specific techniques. (ENG 395 would be high school and ENG 350 would be jr. high/middle school.)
- Discuss current cultural school settings and environments.
- Talk about types of ability levels and learning styles.
- Focus on how school setting and types of students effect teaching methods.
- Look at the content that is currently being taught -- literature, grammar, writing.
- Prepare and teach lessons that are age specific.

**ENG 412**
- Teach general English teaching methods for reading, grammar, and writing.
- Go in-depth into creative ways to incorporate non-traditional literary materials (magazines, newspapers) into the English classroom.
- Focus on teaching how to implement technology in the English classroom.
- Investigate and evaluate the use of textbooks and other teaching resources for the English classroom.
Reinforcement Through Laboratory Experiences

The use of laboratory experiences in coordination with or as a part of English methods courses is a major deficit in the English Education Program. Currently, there is no clinical required except for an occasional classroom observation.

One of the best ways for teachers in training to learn teaching methods is by practicing them. This practice does not necessarily require going into an actual school classroom. Practice teaching can occur as a part of the English methods curriculum through micro-teaching, videotaping and analysis, and simulation exercises.

One professor has already put this to use in ENG 395. The professor required the students to prepare a lesson, and then teach it to one of his freshmen writing courses. This gave these future English teachers a chance to practice their teaching skills with students still near the high school age and maturity level.

Actual school teaching experience is not really probable, but it is a possibility that should at least be investigated. Laboratory experiences are feasible and should be implemented into the English teaching methods curriculum.
Quantity and Quality of the English Education Faculty

Another aspect of the English Education Program that needs evaluated is the faculty teaching the classes. When 231 out of 389 English majors are also teaching majors, there needs to be a strong faculty allocated to educating these English teachers. It would seem appropriate that the English department would have more than three full-time tenured English education professors to teach such a large number of students.

It is also true that quantity does not always bring quality. According to educational reformist John Goodlad, the responsibilities of teacher educators can range from selecting students for the program and tracking their progress to planning and updating the curriculum to helping graduates enter into their teaching careers (55). These are serious responsibilities that require a dedicated staff of professors.

In addition to being dedicated, the teacher educator must also be qualified. The faculty must be knowledgeable and current on the most successful teaching techniques. The faculty must also practice what they teach.

In Alan Tom's book, Redesigning Teacher Education, one of the principles he proposed was that “the program faculty and the curriculum of the teacher education program should model the image(s) and skills of teaching that the faculty desire to foster among students in the program” (97). The fact that most English methods courses are taught using lecture format seems illogical. Methods courses should be taught by example and by having students doing the activity they are learning about. For example, if you want to teach educators how to use the jigsaw reading activity in their future classrooms, then what better way to teach them than by using the jigsaw method. Tom says, “We teach as we have been taught, not necessarily as we have been taught to teach” (103).
Advising and Evaluation Throughout the English Education Program

One of the largest weaknesses of the English Education Program is the lack of cohesiveness amongst the students and faculty in the program. There is a need for a peer/faculty mentoring program, and an implementation of an evaluative process. Part of the educational journey is the open exchange of knowledge and expertise.

"Rather than being treated as individuals to be managed bureaucratically, prospective teachers should be grouped into a cohort that moves through a professional program as a unit" (Tom 98). The logistics required to keep students together as a class makes this suggestion nearly impossible, but it is feasible to offer peer support groups and mentoring opportunities with fellow classmates and also faculty. According to Goodlad, teacher education graduates should "have been socialized in college and university settings where there is extended time for interaction and reflection with peers and faculty on matters of professional practice, ethics and tradition" (197).

There also needs to be a way to evaluate students' progress throughout the program. When 27 of 29 students surveyed felt only somewhat prepared or not prepared for teaching English in the school classroom, then something needs to be done.
There are two ways to satisfy this shortcoming. One way is to increase the amount of academic advising between faculty and students. Faculty advisers should attempt to meet with their students at least once a semester to keep updated on the students’ progress through the program.

The second way to monitor students' progress is by using the senior seminar (ENG 444) as a capstone course for students finishing the English education sequence. Currently, there is no designation between English departmental majors and English education majors in respect to the senior seminar. The course typically focuses on a particular literary topic that students study for their own personal enlightenment. Senior seminar has the potential to be much more for English education majors.

I propose that a section of the senior seminar be dedicated to issues dealing with English education, and that this section be offered each semester. (Whether or not to make it a required course for English education majors is up for debate.) The course could include the completion of a professional portfolio, job search information, and possible research into a specific area of English education or education in general. As Goodlad writes, “programs for the education of educators must provide extensive opportunities for future teachers to move beyond being students of organized knowledge to become teachers who inquire into both knowledge and its teaching” (58). Implementing this type of senior seminar could increase a graduating student's sense of preparedness for the English education world.
Conclusion

Restructuring the English education sequence is the first step in reforming the education of English teachers at Ball State University. Evaluating and improving the curriculum for the English teaching methods courses is the second step. For the third step, it is necessary to allow English teachers in training a chance to practice these teaching methods in a non-pressure situation. The fourth step requires a focus on the quantity and quality of the English education faculty. The fifth step means implementing a system of support and evaluation for the English education students.

These five steps are only the sun rising on the horizon. Further research and evaluation would be needed to implement some of these steps, but other steps could start with tomorrow's sunrise. "Learning to teach is a continuum of learning, unlearning, and relearning" (Commission 16). The English department must realize that improving the English Education Program means writing a new page for English teacher education.
Supporting Documentation

References
Appendix A: Sample Survey
Appendix B: Survey Results
Appendix C: Case Study
Appendix D: Curriculum Guides
References

The Commission on the Education of Teachers into the 21st Century.


Appendix A: Sample Survey

1. When did you graduate from Ball State University?

2. Are you currently teaching in:
   - High School
   - Jr. High/ Middle School
   - Other
   - Not teaching

3. What grade levels have you taught?

4. Please check the courses you took at Ball State University
   - ENG 412, Reading Printed Materials in the English Classroom
   - ENG 395, Teaching English in Secondary Schools
   - ENG 350, Special Methods for Teaching Language Arts in Jr. High/Middle Schools

5. Did Eng 395 focus on teaching methods and philosophy for high school students?
   - YES
   - NO

6. Did Eng 350 focus on teaching methods and philosophy for Jr. High/Middle school students?
   - YES
   - NO

For questions 7-13, please fill in the blank for each course with the appropriate letter.

7. Were the methods courses:
   - A) Mainly theory
   - B) Mainly practical application
   - C) A balance of theory & application
   - ENG 395
   - ENG 350

8. Did you learn teaching methods that were age specific?
   - A) YES
   - B) NO
   - ENG 395
   - ENG 350

9. Do you or have you used these teaching methods in your classroom:
   - A) Everyday
   - B) 2-3 times a week
   - C) Less than once a week
   - ENG 395
   - ENG 350

10. How many lesson/unit plans and other classroom materials did you create in your methods courses?
    - A) 5-10 or more
    - B) 1-4
    - C) None
    - ENG 395
    - ENG 350

11. Have you or do you plan to use any of these lesson/unit plans in the classroom?
    - A) Yes
    - B) Most likely
    - C) Doubtful
    - D) No
    - ENG 395
    - ENG 350

12. Did you learn a variety of English specific assessment tools from your methods courses?
    - A) 5-10 or more
    - B) 1-4
    - C) None
    - ENG 395
    - ENG 350

13. Do you or have you used any of these assessment tools in your classroom experience?
    - A) Everyday
    - B) 2-3 times a week
    - C) Less than once a week
    - ENG 395
    - ENG 350

14. Did you learn how to incorporate non-traditional reading materials (newspapers, advertisements, etc.) in the English classroom?
    - YES
    - NO

15. Did you learn strategies for teaching language arts and reading in the English classroom?
    - YES
    - NO

16. Did you learn how to locate outside resources (i.e. the internet) to supplement your teaching of language arts?
    - YES
    - NO

17. Do you feel there is an overlap in materials taught in Eng 412 and Edrds 320 (Reading in Secondary Schools)?
    - YES
    - NO

18. Check the courses that taught how to use technology in the English classroom:
    - ENG 412
    - ENG 395
    - ENG 350

19. Do you feel the English Education curriculum at Ball State University prepared you for the classroom experience?
    - Very prepared
    - Somewhat prepared
    - Unprepared

20. Please feel free to add additional comments and suggestions.
Appendix B: Survey Results

Background

30 completed surveys returned

1. When did you graduate from Ball State University?
   - Spring 1998: 7
   - Summer 1988: 3
   - Fall 1998: 4
   - 1999: 8
   - 2000: 2
   - 6 did not answer

2. Are you currently teaching in:
   - High school: 5
   - Jr. high/ Middle school: 3
   - Other: 0
   - Not teaching: 19
   - 3 did not answer

3. What grade levels have you taught?
   - 6th: 5
   - 7th: 4
   - 8th: 4
   - 9th: 9
   - 10th: 6
   - 11th: 5
   - 12th: 6

4. Please check the course you took at Ball State University
   - Eng 412 Reading Printed Materials in the English Classroom
   - Eng 395 Teaching English in Secondary Schools
   - Eng 350 Special Methods for Teaching Language Arts Jr. High/Middle School
   - ENG 350: 27 of the 30 surveyed have taken Eng 350

6. Did Eng 350 focus on teaching methods for Jr. High/Middle school students?
   - YES: 26/27 96%
   - NO: 1/27 4%

7. Were the methods courses:
   - A. Mainly theory: 10/26 38.5%
   - B. Mainly practical application: 6/26 23%
   - C. A balance of theory and application: 10/26 38.5%
   - 1 did not answer

8. Did you learn teaching methods that were age specific?
   - YES: 23/26 88%
   - NO: 3/26 12%
   - 1 did not answer

9. Do you or have you used these teaching methods in your classroom:
   - A. Everyday: 0/11 0%
   - B. 2-3 times a week: 4/11 36%
   - C. Less than once a week: 7/11 64%
   - 16 did not answer

10. How many lesson/unit plans and other classroom materials did you create in your methods courses?
   - A. 5-10 or more: 2/26 8%
   - B. 1-4: 24/26 92%
   - C. None: 0/26 0%
   - 1 did not answer
11. Have you or do you plan to use any of these lesson/unit plans in the classroom?
   A. Yes 4/25 16%
   B. Most likely 12/25 48%
   C. Doubtful 7/25 28%
   D. No 2/25 8%
   2 did not answer

12. Did you learn a variety of English specific assessment tools from your methods courses?
   A. 5-10 or more 5/27 18%
   B. 1-4 18/27 67%
   C. None 4/27 15%
   15 did not answer

13. Do you or have you used any of these assessment tools in your classroom experience?
   A. Everyday 0/12 0%
   B. 2-3 times a week 4/12 33%
   C. Less than once a week 8/12 67%

18. Check the courses that taught how to use technology in the English classroom:
   Eng 395 7/27 26%

**ENG 395**
23 of 30 surveyed have taken Eng 395
5. Did Eng 395 focus on teaching methods for high school students?
   YES 16/22 73%
   NO 6/22 27%
   2 did not answer

7. Were the methods courses:
   A. Mainly theory 10/20 50%
   B. Mainly practical application 5/20 25%
   C. A balance of theory and application 5/20 25%
   3 did not answer

8. Did you learn teaching methods that were age specific?
   YES 11/21 52%
   NO 10/21 48%
   2 did not answer

9. Do you or have you used these teaching methods in your classroom:
   A. Everyday 0/11 0%
   B. 2-3 times a week 5/11 45%
   C. Less than once a week 6/11 55%
   12 did not answer

10. How many lesson/unit plans and other classroom materials did you create in your methods courses?
   A. 5-10 or more 2/21 10%
   B. 1-4 19/21 90%
   C. None 0/21 0%
   2 did not answer

11. Have you or do you plan to use any of these lesson/unit plans in the classroom?
   A. Yes 5/22 23%
   B. Most likely 9/22 41%
   C. Doubtful 6/22 27%
   D. No 2/22 9%
   1 did not answer

12. Did you learn a variety of English specific assessment tools from your methods courses?
   A. 5-10 or more 2/20 10%
   B. 1-4 12/20 60%
   C. None 6/20 30%
   3 did not answer

13. Do you or have you used any of these assessment tools in your classroom experience?
   A. Everyday 0/9 0%
   B. 2-3 times a week 1/9 11%
   C. Less than once a week 8/9 89%
   14 did not answer

18. Check the courses that taught how to use technology in the English classroom:
   Eng 395 8/23 35%
**ENG 412**

25 of the 30 surveyed have taken Eng 412

14. Did you learn how to incorporate non-traditional reading materials (newspapers, advertisements, etc.) in the English classroom?
   - YES 16/25 64%
   - NO 9/25 36%

15. Did you learn strategies for teaching language arts and reading in the English classroom?
   - YES 15/25 60%
   - NO 10/25 40%

16. Did you learn how to locate outside resources (i.e. the internet) to supplement your teaching of language arts?
   - YES 16/25 64%
   - NO 9/25 36%

17. Do you feel there is an overlap in materials in Eng 412 and Edrds 320 (Reading in Secondary Schools)?
   - YES 16/20 80%
   - NO 4/20 20%

18. Check the courses that taught how to use technology in the English classroom:
   - Eng 412 3/25 12%

**Overall Satisfaction**

19. Do you feel the English Education curriculum at Ball State University prepared you for the classroom experience?
   - Very prepared 2/29 7%
   - Somewhat prepared 20/29 69%
   - Unprepared 7/29 24%
   - 1 did not answer

20. Please feel free to add additional comments and suggestions
   - "More direct classroom experience, less theory"
   - "I do not feel adequately prepared to teach next year. I did not learn any information in 412 and I wish 350 and 395 would have had more practical application material. It would be great to have material to transfer directly to my future classes."
   - "Far too much repetition in coursework"
   - "Ball State needs to give more experiences in the classroom."
Appendix C: Case Study

Classroom Observation/Interviews with Muncie Southside High School English department faculty members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHER</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Sheffield</td>
<td>4-22-98</td>
<td>1st period</td>
<td>English 9th grade, tech prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Tinder</td>
<td>4-22-98</td>
<td>2nd period</td>
<td>English 10th grade, tech prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Cordray</td>
<td>4-23-98</td>
<td>1st period</td>
<td>English 9th grade, remedial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Bimber</td>
<td>4-23-98</td>
<td>2nd period</td>
<td>English 12th grade, remedial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Marcus</td>
<td>4-23-98</td>
<td>5th period</td>
<td>English 10th grade, honors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Curriculum Guides

**ENG 395**

Course Title: ENG 395: Teaching English in Secondary Schools (3 hours)

Prerequisites: Identification to pursue a teaching curriculum. Prerequisite recommended: ENG 350.

Catalogue Description: Materials, methods, and resources used in teaching composition, language, and literature. Required for teaching majors; may be elective for teaching minors; may not be applied toward any other departmental program.

Clinical Experiences and Clinical hours: None

Course Rationale: This course is required in the professional sequence of courses for teaching majors in English and may be selected by those having teaching minors in English. The course explores the various strategies in the teaching of language, literature, and composition at the high school level.

Components of the Knowledge Base Primarily Emphasized: Decision Makers, Professionally Knowledgeable, Socially Aware, and Human Relations Oriented

Course Content and Objectives:

A. Basics in planning an English course in the secondary school
   1. Developing a theoretical foundation to guide instructional decisions and practice.
   2. Articulation junior high/middle school course experiences with those at the senior high level.
   3. Sequencing and structuring of course activities, including the use of computers, media, and popular culture in the teaching of English.

   Students will:
   a. Develop a philosophy of language instruction based on the theoretical underpinnings of English pedagogy.
   b. Review the articulation problems faced by youngsters moving from the language arts classroom in the junior high/middle school to the English classroom at the high school level.
   c. Construct a teaching unit that is supported by current theory; develop an assignment tool that measures stated teaching aims.

B. Teaching composition
   1. Purposes, problems, and basic steps in teaching composition.
   2. Differentiating and sequencing writing assignments at the senior high and junior high/middle school levels.
   3. Writing workshop.
   4. Teaching informal writing and creative writing.
   5. Teaching mechanics.

   Students will:
   a. Identify the purposes, problems, and basic steps in teaching composition.
   b. Be aware of a variety of teaching techniques in producing effective writing. Some attention will be given to the use of the computer as an open-ended tool for word processing and editing programs (i.e. spelling and grammar checkers).
   c. Have experience in marking and evaluating student papers, using analytic, holistic, and primary trait scoring techniques.

C. Fostering Critical Reading
   1. Factors causing reading problems.
   2. Teaching basic reading skill appropriate for the various grade levels.
3. Teaching higher-level reading and thinking skills.

Students will:
   a. Be aware of typical reading problems at both the junior high/middle school and at the senior high levels.
   b. Review basic reading techniques.
   c. Organize and present activities fostering critical reading skills.

D. Teaching Literature

1. Differences in the roles of the reading teacher and the literature teacher at the various grade levels.
2. Purposes and problems of teaching literature.
3. Organization of the literature course.
4. Techniques for individualizing the literature selections.
5. Sources for selecting YA (young adult) and multicultural literature.
6. Case studies in censorship.
7. The teaching of fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry, folklore, and myths.
8. Development and sequence of literature discussions.
10. Alternative to book reports.
11. Evaluation and testing in the literature classroom.

Students will:
   a. Differentiate the roles of the reading teacher and literature teacher.
   b. Explore the purposes and the organizational structures in teaching literature.
   c. Be aware of the sources for selecting literature and the attendant problem of censorship.
   d. Discuss teaching techniques for the various literature genre.
   e. Organize and present ways of developing class discussion of literature.
   f. Compare ways of evaluating the literature class.

E. Professional Issues and Problems

1. Reintegrating language arts.
2. Professional responsibilities.

Students will:
   a. Construct secondary school activities designed to show the integration of English.
   b. Determine the professional responsibilities of an English teacher and begin to find a place within the profession.

Instructional strategies: Lecture, Discussion/Questioning, Viewing/Listening/Answering, Problem Solving, Discovery, Role Play/Simulation/Games, and Independent Learning/Self Instruction

Sources of Knowledge Upon Which This Course is Based:

A. Knowledge Base: The knowledge base for the course is multifaceted. Methods texts on the teaching of English and materials from the National Council of Teachers of English furnish much of the philosophy, theory, and appropriate teaching activities. In addition, the instructor and the students in the class bring their own personal experiences to bear on the knowledge base.

B. Resources:
   1. English Education Laboratory (RB 291)
   2. English Education Workshop (RB 284A)
   3. University Media Services (BL 101)

C. Texts

Methods of Student Evaluation:

1. Examinations over text and class materials. 25%
2. Major projects: 55%
   a. annotated bibliography created to reflect major issues in English education.
   b. unit plan: application of theory into practice
3. Reading: individual pursuit of an area in the profession. 10%
4. Journal: Student reflections on course content and its application to the high school classroom. 10%
Methods of Course Evaluation: University's Cafeteria Evaluation form.

Special Needs Learners: Student with disabilities or learning problems are expected to make their special needs known to the instructor. Referrals are made to Dr. Paul Schumacher, Department of English, liaison person for the Disabled Student Development Office.

Faculty Qualified to Teach the Course: Sharon A. Kingen, Carol P. Harrell

Programs in Which the Course is Required: Teaching major in senior high, junior high, and middle school education (standard license).

Revision Date: November 2, 1994

**ENG 350**

Course Title: ENG 350: Special Methods for Teaching Language Arts in Junior High/Middle Schools. (3 hours)

Prerequisites: Identification to pursue a teaching curriculum. Recommended: EDJHM 285

Catalogue Description: Concentrates on the selection and application of specialized materials and methods appropriate for teaching language arts in junior high/middle schools. Cannot be counted as an elective in other major or minor programs in English.

Clinical Experiences and Clinical Hours: None

Course Rationale: The course is included in the professional education requirements teaching majors in English and may be selected by those having teaching minors in English. The course explores the various strategies in the teaching of language, literature, and composition at the junior high/middle school level.

Components of the Knowledge Base Primarily Emphasized: Professionally Knowledgeable, Socially Aware, and Human Relations Oriented

Course Content and Objectives:

A. Basics in planning a language arts course in the junior high/middle school.
   1. Constructing course aims and objectives.
   2. Sequencing and structuring course activities.
   4. Comparison/contrast of planning at the junior high/middle school and at the high school level.

   Students will:
   a. Be aware of the complex nature of the decisions that go into planning a language arts course.
   b. Create a workable plan for an eighth-grade language arts course, using a computer simulation (including word processing, databases, and spreadsheets) to complete the plan.
   c. Show some insight into the problems of classroom management that differentiates the junior high/middle school level from the high school level.

B. Oral and listening activities in the language arts classroom.
   1. Purposes of oral-listening activities.
   2. Problems involved at the junior high/middle school level and at the high school level.
   3. Class demonstrations of appropriate activities.
   4. Evaluation of oral-listening activities.

   Students will:
   a. Suggest basic problems involving oral and listening skills.
   b. Engage in oral-listening activities such as choral reading, improvisations, role-playing, and creative dramatics.
   c. Develop criteria for assessing oral and listening skills.
C. The parameter of language study
   1. What "language study" encompasses at both the junior high/middle school and high school.
   2. Problems in teaching language skills.
   3. Using the popular culture to teach language skills.
   Students will:
      a. Be able to outline the components which are part of language study at both the junior high/middle school levels.
      b. Identify fundamental problems in teaching language skills.
      c. Discuss appropriate activities involving popular culture, computers and other electronic technology in promoting language skills.
D. Difference between traditional grammar and the modern grammars.
   1. Basic issues in the teaching of grammar.
   2. Traditional grammar and modern grammars (structural and transformational).
   3. Alternative methods in teaching grammar at the junior and senior high schools.
   4. Evaluation methods.
   Students will:
      a. Attempt to justify the teaching of grammar.
      b. Differentiate the basic characteristics of both traditional and modern grammars.
      c. Be aware of a variety of teaching methods and evaluation procedures in the teaching of grammar.
E. Usage: Traditional versus linguistics style
   1. The junior high/middle school as a multicultural institution.
   2. What constitutes "good English".
   3. Teaching of usage awareness.
   4. Teaching about dialects, idiolects, slang, jargon, idioms, cliches.
   Students will:
      a. Identify the linguistic styles of students in the multicultural environment of the junior high/middle school.
      b. Speculate on the problems and issues involved in teaching standard English.
      c. Engage in group learning packets emphasizing cultural varieties and usage awareness.
F. Semantics activities
   1. Language as a symbolic act.
   2. Referential and emotive language.
   3. Language and thinking.
   Students will:
      a. Understand the need to include semantics at the junior high/middle school level.
      b. Use PSI packets (personalized systems instruction) to explore basic semantics principles, especially those involving the teaching of judgment and discrimination.

Instructional Strategies: Lecture, Discussion/Questioning, Practice/Drill, Viewing/Listening/Answering, Problem Solving, Discovery, Role Play/Simulation/Games, and Independent Learning/Self Instruction

Sources of Knowledge Upon Which This Course is Based:
A. Knowledge Base: The knowledge base for the course is multifaceted. Methods texts on the teaching of English and materials for the National Council of teachers of English furnish much of the philosophy, theory, research, and appropriate teaching activities. In addition, the instructor and the students in the class bring their own personal experiences to bear on the knowledge base.
B. Resources:
   1. English Education Laboratory (RB 291)
   2. English Educating Workshop (RB 284A)
   3. University Media Services (BL L01)
   4. Burris Laboratory School
   5. Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities
C. Texts:
   Recent articles from periodicals such as *English Journal, Learning, Language Arts,* and *Reading Teacher.*
Methods of Student Evaluation:
- Chapter Quizzes. 25%
- Exam over class activities. 25%
- Major project (options: Computer-assisted instruction package; a comparison of recent adolescent literature novels, a camcorder project, or an analysis of three junior high/middle school language arts textbooks). 25%
- Participation in computer simulation involving classroom management (includes word processing, creating databases, and spreadsheets). 5%
- Critique of one professional book focusing on junior high/middle school. 10%
- Attendance and participation in discussions. 10%

Methods of Course Evaluation: University's Cafeteria Evaluation form.

Special Needs Learners: Students with disabilities or learning problems are expected to make their special needs known to the instructor. Referrals are made to Dr. Virginia White, Department of English, liaison person for the Disabled Student Development office.

Faculty Qualified to Teach the Course: Dr. Richard Whitworth.

Programs in Which the Course is required: Teaching major in senior high, junior high, and middle school education. Junior high/middle school for holders of the standard elementary license.

Revision Date: February 28, 1991.

ENG 412

Course Title: ENG 412 Reading Printed Materials in the English Classroom

Course Description: Provides an overview of the progress of reading printed materials with practical suggestions for developing analytic skills for reading and interpreting written communications, including literary materials and such media as newspapers, popular and informational journals, and advertising.

Relation of Course to Other Courses: English 412 is required of English teaching majors and minors, including those on the junior high/middle school program.

Objectives of the Course: At the completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. identify the skills of word recognition and comprehension and demonstrate an effective teaching strategy for each,
2. identify the problems specific to reading various types of printed materials and those applicable to all types and demonstrate effective teaching strategies for each,
3. identify the skills needed for critical reading and demonstrate activities for improving these skills,
4. select and evaluate the various teaching aids and materials useful in teaching interpretive reading,
5. describe the factors and subskills that influence appreciation of the printed word,
6. develop effective questioning strategies in order to evaluate comprehension and broaden the student's perspective of various readings.

Course Content:
1. Introduction to the process of reading printed materials.
2. Developing specific skills in reading
   A. Basic abilities
      1. Recognizing mood and author's intent
      2. Recognizing organizational patterns of various types of printed materials.
      3. Setting a purpose for reading
   B. Problems related to specific types of reading in the English classroom, relating literature to theatre, films, mass media, etc. i.e.: Poetry, Short stories, Novels, Drama, Expository prose, Newspapers and popular magazines, Journals, catalogs, and manuals, Advertising media, Reference Works, and Subject matter textbooks.
C. Problems related to all reading in the English classroom
   1. Vocabulary - general and technical
   2. Directed reading lessons
   3. Profunding scale
   4. Developing flexibility
   5. Recognizing plot, setting, characterization, etc.
   6. Study and library skills.

III. Evaluation
   A. Informal procedures for evaluating skills and growth in reading.
   B. Measuring student attitudes, interests, and appreciation.

IV. Instructional problems and issues
   A. Selecting and evaluating teaching aids and materials.
   B. Differentiating instruction according to needs and interests.


General Requirements:
1. Examinations, usually a mid-term and a final.
2. A practical project having application to classroom teaching.
3. Class participation, including practicum assignments designed to expand and extend text and lecture information.