



PROPOSAL FOR AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Eastern Illinois University

Submitted by

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PART I: PROGRAM RATIONALE AND APPROACH

INTRODUCTION

The College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) at Eastern Illinois University (EIU) seeks to address the growing Illinois teacher shortage problem by providing an Alternative Route to Teacher Certification in accordance with Illinois statutory law created for this purpose (105 ILCS 5/21-5c). CEPS hopes to secure approval of the program during fall 2002, facilitating candidate recruitment for an initial cohort to begin in summer 2003.

RATIONALE

For some time, educational institutions, administrators and state and federal education agencies have recognized that teacher shortages place many of our nation's youth in the hands of understaffed schools (Darling-Hammond, 1994; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Strong evidence also documents the widespread practice of assigning educators to teach outside their areas of expertise, a phenomenon known as out-of-field teaching (Bandeira de Mello & Broughman, 1996; Bobbitt and McMillen 1995; Ingersoll, 2000; Smerdon, 1999). A scan of the Illinois educational landscape reveals a number of individuals longing to teach, but hindered by the time and money consumed along traditional long and winding post-baccalaureate paths to teacher certification. This proposal details a plan for paving a state-of-the-art route to teacher certification, minimizing potholes and maximizing preparation so that those committed to new careers as educators not only find an attractive route, but more importantly, arrive at their destinations invigorated by the journey and well equipped to join the ranks of teachers who possess the knowledge to succeed and the vigor to sustain that success for many years.

Teacher Supply and Demand

Nationwide, estimates indicate that by 2010, public schools will need to hire at least 2.2 million new teachers (Hirsch, et. al., 2001). Data specific to Illinois include the following (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000):

- In fall 2000, 145,000 full-time and more than 5,000 part-time teachers were employed in Illinois public schools.
- Student enrollments have risen since 1990, a trend expected to continue through 2008. Greatest increases are expected at the secondary level (87,256 students representing a 16% increase).
- The Illinois teaching force is getting older. In fall 2000, the average age was 44, with those 50 years and older comprising nearly 40% of the total.
- Age and experience of Illinois teachers will make 40% of the teaching force eligible for retirement by 2003. The actual number of full-time teachers who left the profession in

2000 was 7,859, a number which is expected to grow to 8,688 (an 11% increase) by 2003.

- In fall 2000, 11,352 new teachers (defined as “either first-time teachers or those re-entering the profession”) were hired, and in September 2000 districts reported a total of 2,637 unfilled positions, including 1,308 in the Chicago Public Schools, 761 in suburban districts (defined as Cook County and the surrounding collar counties), and 568 across the remainder of the state.
- From 1996 to September 2000, the number of unfilled positions has increased 90%, from 1,387 to 2,637. A continued trend would leave over 5,000 positions unfilled by 2004.

While the number of Illinois teachers certified annually exceeds that of vacancies, many who obtain certificates pursue other careers instead. State legislation (105 ILCS 5/21-5c) recognizes the potential source of high quality educators represented by professionals who hold bachelor’s degrees and have applied their formal education in the workforce. District administrators frequently describe encounters with knowledgeable individuals considering teaching careers who abandon such pursuits when they discover the time and money required to secure traditional post-baccalaureate certification. These programs often require candidates to drive long distances to attend on-campus classes during the workday for several academic terms, culminating in a student teaching experience requiring them to abandon their jobs—and accompanying income—for weeks. Many prospective teachers, then, feel incapable of giving up the income and committing the time required to learn theory, pedagogy and methodology critical to success in teaching.

Alternative Teacher Certification

By restructuring post-baccalaureate teacher preparation, alternative certification programs remove barriers that dissuade many individuals from bringing their expertise and desire to teach into Illinois classrooms, not only providing districts with candidates who may fill otherwise vacant teaching slots, but also providing students with teachers who have experience applying their content expertise in the work world.

Between January and December 2002, 195 individuals contacted the program coordinator to express an interest in EIU’s Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program. Selecting only those who have expressed a strong interest and seek certification in the six content areas to be included in the program—and at least upon initial review appear to meet program admission requirements, including a commitment from a school district for the internship—yields the following:

Initial Qualified Candidate Inquiries by Content Area

<u>Content Area</u>	<u>Number of Candidates</u>
Science	5
Business	4
Math	3
Technology	2
Family & Consumer Sciences	1
Foreign Languages	<u>3</u>
Total	18

During its pilot year, program developers hope to recruit 15 to 20 candidates into the program. And although it is possible that none of these candidates will actually participate in the program once it begins, the fact that word-of-mouth has generated at least 18 strong candidates shows promise. Formal recruitment on a state-wide level shall commence only after the program has been approved; still, these preliminary numbers support the viability of the program at EIU.

Alternative routes to teacher certification, then, represent an important avenue for reducing teacher shortages both in the long and short term. In fact, the Illinois State Board of Education lists as its primary recommendation for increasing the supply of Illinois teachers to “[i]ncrease the number and variety of alternate routes to certification or double the number of graduates from existing alternative programs by 2003....” (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000, p. xi). By developing and implementing an Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program, Eastern Illinois University will provide a critical service to the state, enhancing the educational community now and in the future by filling otherwise vacant teaching positions and providing additional faculty fully qualified to teach in their content areas, reducing school districts’ reliance on out-of-field teaching assignments.

HISTORY OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AT EIU

Work toward developing an alternative teacher certification program began in spring 2001 when an initial group of faculty, CEPS Associate Dean, and Director of School and University Partnerships began looking at potential approaches for building a program that would both respond to Illinois legislation authorizing the creation of alternative certification programs and maintain the quality of EIU teacher preparation programs. In December 2001 CEPS hired a full-time staff member to coordinate the development, implementation and evaluation of the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program. This individual interviewed and surveyed district administrators in and around the EIU area, interviewed department heads across the EIU campus, spoke with coordinators of approved alternative certification programs around the state, and conducted research on alternative certification and effective practices on a national level during spring 2002.

In summer 2002 the program coordinator recruited a program development team to include faculty representing six content departments (mathematics, science, foreign languages, family

and consumer sciences, business education and technology education) and six faculty providing expertise in secondary education methods, educational foundations, special education, language arts and reading, diversity and educational psychology. The team met in May and June 2002 to build an innovative Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program that would continue to uphold the EIU tradition of excellence in teacher preparation that has garnered respect and made the institution the second largest producer of teachers in the state.

The coordinator then assimilated individual and group efforts into a comprehensive program proposal and reconvened the team in August 2002 to ensure that the program proposal achieved the group's intentions. Once the proposal won approval of program development team and appropriate college level administrators, the proposal was presented to and passed by the College of Education and Professional Studies Curriculum Committee, the Council on Academic Affairs, and the Council on Teacher Education respectively. Approval by the Council on Teacher Education represented the final step required for campus approval and was secured in December 2002, paving the way for this proposal to come now before the Illinois State Teacher Certification Board.

APPROACH

State and national research and existing alternative certification programs have consistently served to guide plans for EIU's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program, resulting in several important features. This section details the CEPS approach by first presenting the text of the state legislation authorizing alternative certification, followed by a discussion of the relevant features of the CEPS Conceptual Framework, the role of Illinois Professional Teaching Standards, and the features that make EIU's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program unique.

Illinois Legislation

Legislation authorizing EIU's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program appears in the 2002 Illinois School Code and is reproduced here as a reference:

§ 105 ILCS 5/21-5c. Alternative route to teacher certification
Statute text

Sec. 21-5c. Alternative route to teacher certification. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board, shall establish and implement an alternative route to teacher certification program under which persons who meet the requirements of and successfully complete the program established by this Section shall be issued an initial teaching certificate for teaching in schools in this State. The State Board of Education shall approve a course of study that persons in the program must successfully complete in order to satisfy one criterion for issuance of a certificate under this Section. The Alternative Route to Teacher Certification program course of study must include the current content and skills contained in a university's current courses for State certification which have been approved by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board, as the requirement for State teacher certification.

The program established under this Section shall be known as the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification program. The program may be offered in conjunction with one or more not-for-profit organizations in the State. The program shall be comprised of the following 3 phases: (a) a course of study offered on an intensive basis in education theory, instructional methods, and practice teaching; (b) the person's assignment to a full-time teaching position for one school year, including the designation of a mentor teacher to advise and assist the person with that teaching assignment; and (c) a comprehensive assessment of the person's teaching performance by school officials and program participants and a recommendation by the institution of higher education to the State Board of Education that the person be issued an initial teaching certificate. Successful completion of the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification program shall be deemed to satisfy any other practice or student teaching and subject matter requirements established by law.

A provisional alternative teaching certificate, valid for one year of teaching in the common schools and not renewable, shall be issued under this Section 21-5c [105 ILCS 5/21-5c] to persons who at the time of applying for the provisional alternative teaching certificate under this Section:

- (1) have graduated from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree;
- (2) have been employed for a period of at least 5 years in an area requiring application of the individual's education;
- (3) have successfully completed the first phase of the Alternative Teacher Certification program as provided in this Section; and
- (4) have passed the tests of basic skills and subject matter knowledge required by Section 21-1a [105 ILCS 5/21-1a].

An initial teaching certificate, valid for teaching in the common schools, shall be issued under Section 21-3 or 21-5 [105 ILCS 5/21-3 or 105 ILCS 5/21-5] to persons who first complete the requirements for the provisional alternative teaching certificate and who at the time of applying for an initial teaching certificate have successfully completed the second and third phases of the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification program as provided in this Section.

A person possessing a provisional alternative certificate or an initial teaching certificate earned under this Section shall be treated as a regularly certified teacher for purposes of compensation, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment afforded teachers in the school who are members of a bargaining unit represented by an exclusive bargaining representative, if any. The State Board of Education may adopt rules and regulations that are consistent with this Section and that the State Board deems necessary to establish and implement the program.

History

(Source: P.A. 90-548, § 5-915.)

Annotations

Effective Date. Section 990-5 of P.A. 90-548 made this section effective January 1, 1998.
Illinois Association of School Boards. (2002). The Illinois School Code and Related Laws. Charlottesville, VA: Lexis Law Publishing, pp. 387-389.

CEPS Conceptual Framework

In addition to meeting legislative requirements, the EIU Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program adheres to principles of the CEPS Conceptual Framework for Professional Preparation Programs.

Institutional Mission Statement: EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY offers superior yet accessible undergraduate and graduate education. Students learn the methods and outcomes of free inquiry in the arts, sciences, humanities and professions guided by a faculty known for its commitment to teaching, research/creative activity, and service. The University community strives to create an educational and cultural environment in which students refine their abilities to reason and to communicate clearly so as to become responsible citizens in a diverse world.

Unit Mission and Vision Statement: The College of Education and Professional Studies at Eastern Illinois University has a tradition of providing an educational environment that is conducive to interaction, inquiry, and service. The goal of the College is to prepare professionals who will advance the intellectual, physical, psychological and social wellbeing of our pluralistic democracy and global society. Offering preparation in varied fields and on multiple levels of study, the College serves a diverse student body at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The College has a reputation for excellence in its programs, strives to hold students to even higher expectations for learning, and is accountable for quality of academic programs and the assessment of learning.

The College will sustain and create varied partnerships including faculty, students, community agencies, business, industry and P-12 schools. Administration, faculty and staff are committed to design and implement programs that reflect the changing community. All students participate in field-based experiences that bridge the gap between theory and practice. Students are prepared to be leaders in their professions. Graduates have the skills to integrate technology effectively and responsibly in their personal and professional lives. Graduates demonstrate respect for the dignity of individuals because they have seen it modeled and integrated in the College experience.

The Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program incorporates the following important principles from the CEPS Conceptual Framework:

- Educator as Creator of Effective Educational Environments: This theme stands at the foundation of all EIU professional teacher preparation programs, including the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program. The theme reflects eight belief statements:
 1. The educator who is a creator of effective educational environments has acquired a learned set of behaviors requiring extensive knowledge bases and preparation.
 2. The educator must be an effective decision-maker.
 3. The educator creates environments conducive to learning.
 4. The educator uses higher level thinking skills in order to create effective environments.
 5. The educator is committed to life-long learning.

6. The educator develops a personal approach to the profession keeping in mind individual identity and integrity while guided by tenets of pedagogy and concepts of diversity.
 7. The educator, as professional practitioner, must believe in the science and the art of the profession.
 8. The educator reflects, respects, and understands the diversity of students, subjects, strategies, and societies.
- Furthermore, candidates in CEPS professional teacher preparation programs master five knowledge and skill domains:
 - Diverse students
 - Designs instruction to promote healthy self-concept
 - Demonstrates sensitivity to students' feelings
 - Strives to develop students' moral and ethical behaviors
 - Provides for the uniqueness of the individuals
 - Develops a desire for lifelong learning
 - Diverse subjects and levels
 - Demonstrates good communication skills
 - Demonstrates a mastery of basic skills in language arts and mathematics
 - Demonstrates a knowledge of facts and understanding of relationships among the various knowledge domains
 - Demonstrates a mastery of the structure of the disciplines selected for specialization
 - Demonstrates knowledge of past and present issues in the field of education
 - Diverse strategies
 - Designs instruction to utilize the cognitive process
 - Achieves learning outcomes
 - Decides what will be learned
 - Emphasizes higher-order critical thinking
 - Optimizes academically engaged time
 - Utilizes concepts of measurement and assessment
 - Diverse societies
 - Performs successfully within contexts of schools and community
 - Models appropriate professional behavior
 - Diverse technologies
 - Utilizes technology to support teaching and learning

Illinois Professional Teaching Standards

Rising from the foundation of the CEPS Conceptual Framework and guided by the blueprint of state legislation, the EIU Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program has been framed upon the latest Illinois Professional Teaching Standards. Embracing the state's intention to move toward standards-based certification, the program development team chose to construct this new program from the ground up. The team began by examining each of the state standards, grouping them into three primary blocks:

Block 1: Foundations of education
Block 2: General methods and field experiences
Block 3: Content methods

These blocks became the basis for the first phase intensive course of study referenced in the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification legislation, ensuring that the entire program would be aligned with the latest state standards (see Program Sequence section of Part II for details on the components of the program; see Appendix for matrices that detail program components and assessments designed to meet all state standards).

Problem-Based Learning

A traditional EIU post-baccalaureate program for securing teacher certification might typically require three semesters of coursework prior to student teaching. A primary concern in shortening the time frame required to complete that coursework was maintaining the academic integrity that remains a critical element of the traditional program. Traditional instructional models rely to a certain extent upon the passage of time to provide program candidates with the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and assimilate it into cognitive frameworks to guide teacher planning, strategies and practice. EIU's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program responds to this concern by employing a problem-based learning (PBL) model.

Problem-based learning takes many shapes and forms, but is based upon the premise that “learning is a process in which the learner actively constructs knowledge” (Gijselaers, 1996, p. 13). The approach finds its origins among the McMaster University Faculty of Health Sciences in Ontario, Canada, which established an innovative approach to its three-year program for preparing medical students (Barrows, 1996). McMaster's first class of PBL-prepared students graduated in 1972, and within 15 years PBL spread to medical schools across the world. Today, PBL has spread beyond its medical roots, branching out to business (Stinson and Milter, 1996), science (Allen, Duch, and Groh, 1996), mathematics (Seltzer, et. al., 1996) and beyond. The approach stands strong among curriculum efforts promoting inquiry and reflective practice (Brubacher, Case, and Reagan, 1994), as well as a valuable component of professional development efforts (Pendergraft and Cooper, 2000).

Six characteristics of PBL reflect its value in teacher preparation programs (Barrows, 1996):

- Student-oriented learning—Rather than orient the curriculum exclusively around content, students' backgrounds and experiences become the point of origin. A PBL curriculum focuses not on what content is included, but instead upon what students are prepared to achieve.
- Small group learning—PBL recognizes that small groups of learners actively engaged in problem-solving scenarios enhance each other's retention and assimilation of information into their own cognitive frameworks, ultimately increasing each other's capacity to make practical use of new knowledge.

- Teacher as facilitator—The teacher is no longer the primary source of curriculum knowledge and instead takes the role of facilitator or coach, guiding students to develop and pursue their own strategies for acquiring knowledge and using that knowledge to solve problems.
- Problem-centered curriculum—The PBL curriculum is built around a series of problem scenarios that have been designed to imitate real-world demands of curriculum concepts. Students focus not on acquisition of knowledge at an abstract level, but instead upon application of knowledge in real-world applications.
- Clinical problem-solving skill development—Students develop the ability to generate their own questions and initiate their own inquiries into best practices, enhancing their abilities to apply curriculum knowledge to a wide variety of circumstances that may occur as they put their knowledge to use in a chosen field.
- Self-directed learning—Perhaps most important of all, students become self-directed learners, recognizing the importance of continually seeking new sources of knowledge and experience that enhance their capacity to perform as professionals. They become practiced in art and science of knowledge acquisition, prepared to seek their own paths to new knowledge. This skill is particularly valuable in a world of rapidly changing technology and expanding information access.

The EIU Alternative Route to Certification Program integrates PBL throughout, introducing it in the first web-based course that candidates take, using it as a curriculum approach throughout the initial summer session of on-campus coursework, and extending its application through the internship and beyond. Under traditional instructional models, candidates likely lack the capacity to acquire over the course of a summer the same amount of knowledge that they would gain through three semesters of coursework. However, PBL enhances candidates' capacity not only to retain knowledge, but more importantly to assimilate that knowledge into cognitive scaffolds that empower them to apply that knowledge as they perform the myriad duties they face as educators.

Using PBL, candidates in EIU's program will move beyond the level of accessing knowledge that guides subsequent practice. As they move through coursework, they will think like teachers in the morning, work like teachers throughout the day, and contemplate teacher perspectives in the evening. Our PBL-prepared candidates will begin their internships prepared for their roles as educators, possessing critical knowledge for success as teachers and acquainted with a method of learning that they can put to use in their own curriculum development efforts.

Key Program Features

EIU's Alternative Route to Certification Program includes other important distinguishing features, designed to increase its capacity to recruit and retain quality candidates while preparing them for success in the teaching profession. A description of seven important features follows:

- Responsive to school district needs—Content areas for the program have been selected based on surveys of and interviews with school district administrators and Regional Offices of Education (ROEs). The program intends to provide certified educators who can fill vacancies specifically identified as areas of concern by Illinois schools.
- School district candidate nomination—Although candidates may apply directly to the program, a prerequisite to admission is securing the commitment of a school district to be

hired for the internship. This approach minimizes the likelihood that candidates would complete the program coursework and find themselves unable to find a placement for the internship. It also encourages administrators to identify individuals who already live in their communities and whom they would feel comfortable employing as teachers in their districts.

- Linking districts with candidates—Candidates shall be responsible for securing their own commitments from districts for the internship. However, EIU shall maintain a database of candidates interested in alternative certification, as well as districts and their expressed areas of need. EIU shall share contact information among consenting districts and candidates to link prospective candidates with districts in need.
- Web-based course component—Providing a web-based course during the month of May permits candidates to explore their interest in a career shift to education without leaving their jobs or traveling to the EIU campus. Candidates who have secured a district commitment for the internship have the opportunity to get acquainted more closely with staff and students in that school while classes are in session. Candidates who find that the career change was not what they had in mind have the opportunity to change their minds prior to making the time and financial commitment required of the eight-week summer session, concurrently providing administrators with ample time to find alternative means of staffing classes that had been part of the candidates' internship responsibilities.
- Minimized commitment of time and financial resources—Providing all coursework prior to the internship in a single summer reduces the time that candidates must spend as students without the income of their present jobs. Candidates can elect to continue full-time employment until mid June, then begin drawing a first-year teacher's income as the academic year begins in August.
- District resource kits—Participating school districts will be required to provide candidates with district curriculum and assessment resources prior to candidates' arrival on campus. Candidates will use these resources to complete projects throughout their coursework, permitting them to complete assignments that actually prepare them for their responsibilities at the beginning of the internship.
- Mentor teams—Candidates will be supported by three mentors: one each from the school district, CEPS, and an EIU faculty member from their content area. Mentors will undergo specific training during the eight-week summer session, permitting them to interact with candidates prior to the beginning of the internship.
- Ongoing web-based support—A web site will provide support to candidates during their time on campus, throughout the internship, and after they complete the program. CEPS will continue to develop a web site that can promote candidates success throughout the educational careers.
- Comprehensive program evaluation and tracking system—From the time candidates are accepted into the program, CEPS will collect data that facilitates its ability to evaluate their success during the program, as well as track retention rates, and mobility and other data on a longitudinal basis. These efforts will provide EIU and alternative certification programs across the state and nation with valuable data sets for conducting research on alternative certification.

PART II: ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM AT EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The EIU Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program prepares teachers in accordance with the standards for professional preparation as approved by the Illinois State Board of Education within the NCATE approved Conceptual Framework for Professional Preparation Programs of the EIU College of Education and Professional Studies. The proposal includes a pilot program for the first year to begin enrolling candidates in summer 2003, followed by an evaluation of the pilot and implementation of a continuing program beginning in summer 2004.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Candidates will be required to complete a formal application and submit transcripts verifying that they have met program prerequisites. In addition, candidates will be required to submit to a criminal background check and provide evidence of physical health in accordance with state requirements.

Candidate Prerequisites

Candidates applying for program admission must have completed the following prerequisites:

- Graduated from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree (GPA 2.65 or higher on 4.0 scale) and a major or minor in the intended area of certification (candidates with degrees in engineering may be admitted as candidates for mathematics or science certification, depending upon their respective coursework in those areas)
- Employed for a period of at least five years in an area requiring application of the individual's education
- Passed the Illinois Basic Skills Test and applicable subject matter test required by the state for certification in the candidate's intended teaching endorsement area(s)
- Secured a commitment from a school district to be hired (and paid as a full-time teacher) for the internship

District Expectations

School districts that elect to participate in the program will be expected to agree to the following:

- Nominate candidates for admission to the program, making a commitment to hire that candidate as an intern (contractually, interns are treated as teachers, eligible to receive

- standard first-year salary and benefits) upon the candidate's successful completion of the 8-week summer program at EIU
- Select an individual to serve as a mentor for each candidate nominated (any remuneration required by contract and/or district policy would be the district's responsibility)
 - Provide release time for the candidate and mentor to meet on a regular basis
 - Provide a set of resources for each candidate to bring to EIU at the beginning of the eight-week summer program consisting of curriculum materials, relevant state and district standards and assessments, and other resources necessary for the candidate to prepare for teaching during the internship year
 - Grant each candidate permission to visit the school district during the web-based course to complete projects that include classroom observation, as well participation in a variety of activities typical of those required of teachers in the district (e.g., planning, teaching, supervision, record-keeping, assessment, and so on)

Approval and Appeals

Candidate applications shall be reviewed by an Alternative Certification Approvals and Appeals Committee (ACAAC), which shall be composed of representatives of CEPS, including the coordinator of the program and at least one faculty member from the candidate's intended area of certification. The Committee shall review all applications and make recommendations approving or denying admission of candidates into the program. The program coordinator shall take responsibility for informing candidates of their approval status.

Any candidate who is denied admission into the program shall have the right to appeal the decision of the ACAAC. Written requests for appeals shall be reviewed a second time by the ACAAC, whose membership shall be expanded specifically for appeals to include the associate dean of CEPS and an additional faculty member from the candidate's intended area of certification. The Committee shall review the appeal and render a decision either to approve or deny program admission to the candidate who filed the appeal. Decisions resulting from this appeals process shall be final.

CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT

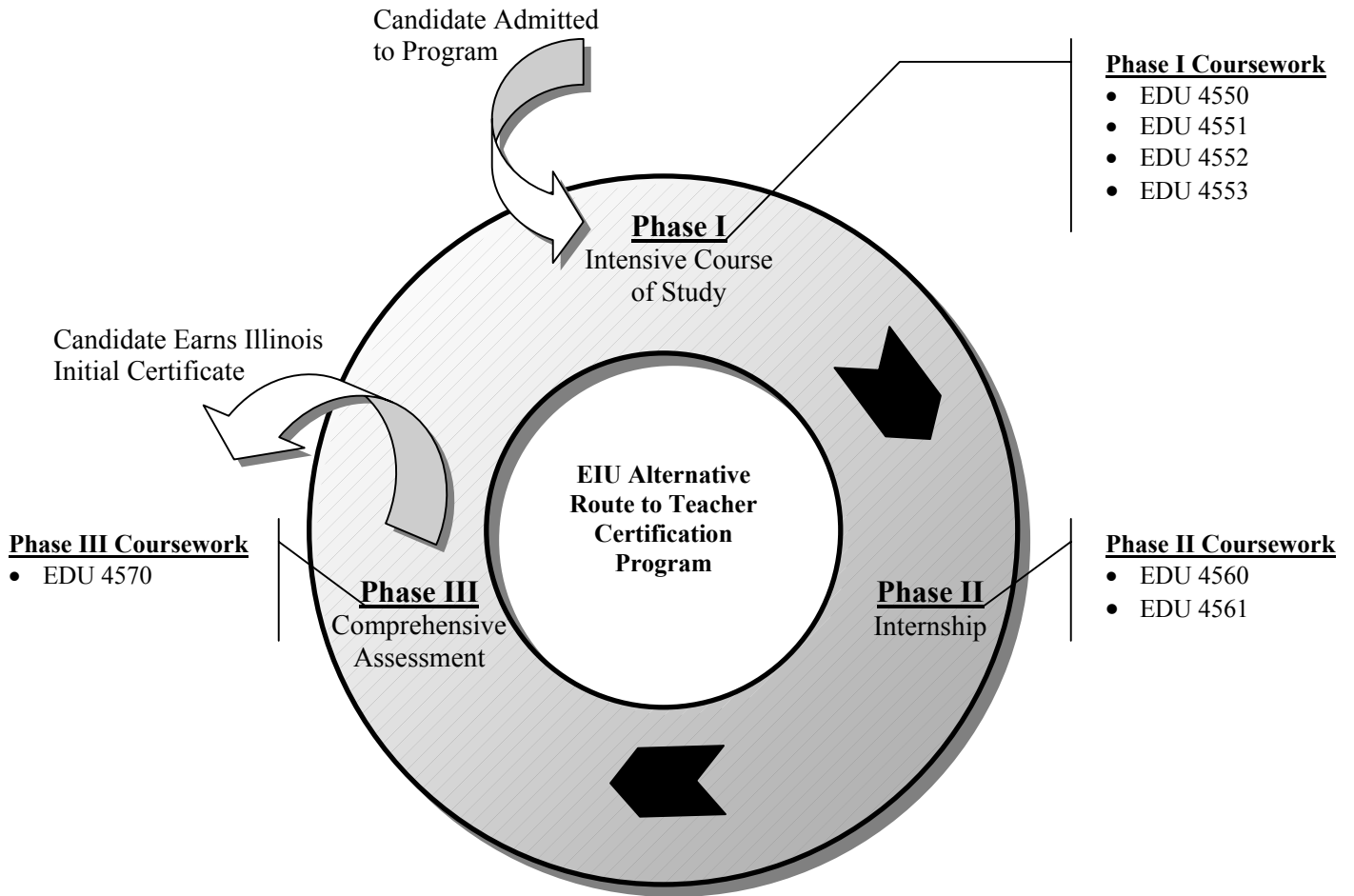
CEPS staff have been collecting names and contact information of individuals and school districts who have expressed an interest in participating in Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program, and these individuals will be specifically invited to apply for admission. Furthermore, CEPS is surveying school districts, Regional Offices of Education and Area Vocational Center Directors to identify program candidates. Finally, the program coordinator will make personal presentations at gatherings of school district administrators to talk about the program and invite administrators to nominate qualified candidates. A detailed marketing plan will be developed during fall 2002 to ensure that reasonable efforts are made to recruit a sufficient number of well-qualified candidates into the pilot year of the program. This plan will be evaluated and revised accordingly to meet needs on an ongoing basis.

The goal for the first year is to recruit 20 to 25 candidates. In subsequent years, the goal would be to expand the program in accordance with the need expressed by school districts who would provide internship opportunities.

PROGRAM SEQUENCE

Candidates in the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program will be admitted as a cohort to complete coursework and observe and participate in instructional activities that assist them in applying course concepts to their roles as teachers. The program sequence shall prepare candidates with the same knowledge and skills as traditional EIU certification sequences. Courses have been developed specifically for this program (only alternative certification candidates will be allowed to receive credit for the courses) and have been built around a problem-based learning (PBL) model (see Part I for an overview of PBL; see Appendix for specific course outlines). Figure 1 provides an overview of the program sequence.

Figure 1: Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program Sequence



Phase I: Intensive Course of Study

Phase I of the program consists of 16 semester hours of coursework that comprise an intensive course of study in education theory, instructional methods, and practice teaching. Throughout this phase, candidates shall work with secondary-age students in traditional and nontraditional classroom settings and shall spend time working with students from diverse backgrounds and ability levels, including individuals with exceptionalities and physical challenges. Candidates will enroll in 4 specific courses (see Appendix for detailed course outlines):

- EDU 4550—Alternative Certification: Introduction to Teaching
This web-based course addresses Illinois Professional Teaching Standards in collaborative relationships and reflection and personal growth.
- EDU 4551—Alternative Certification: Foundations of Teaching
This course addresses Illinois Professional Teaching Standards in the social, cultural, historical, and psychological foundations of teaching.
- EDU 4552—Alternative Certification: General Teaching Methods
This course addresses Illinois Professional Teaching Standards General Methods, including student diversity, language arts/reading, and technology.
- EDU 4553—Alternative Certification: Methods of Teaching in the Discipline
This course addresses Illinois Professional Teaching Standards in the content area of intended certification. Multiple sections of this course will be included in the program, each focusing on methods of teaching a specific discipline. The six disciplines to be included in the pilot year of the program include mathematics, science, foreign languages, family and consumer sciences, business education and technology education (note that a single section of EDU 4553 will address the disciplines of career and technical education, which include the three content areas of family and consumer sciences, business education and technology education).

Candidates will first enroll in EDU 4550, which is a web-based course offered during the month of May preceding the eight-week course of study on campus. Candidates must earn a grade of “B” or better in this course before they may enroll in the remaining courses.

The remaining courses will be offered during EIU’s eight-week summer session. EDU 4551 addresses foundations of education and will be scheduled during the first two weeks of the eight-week summer session. Candidates will enroll concurrently in EDU 4552 (which addresses general teaching methods, as well as Illinois core standards for language arts and technology) and EDU 4553 (which addresses methods of teaching in one of the six content disciplines of the program) for a period of six weeks, beginning immediately after the conclusion of EDU 4551.

Throughout the eight-week session, a 50-minute block of time in the evening will assist candidates in understanding and applying their knowledge of the PBL approach, providing an opportunity to tie together knowledge from all program coursework and projects as it leads candidates through a series of problem scenarios that require application of knowledge across the

program curriculum. During this session the instructor will serve as a facilitator or coach, guiding candidates through a self-directed path to addressing problem scenarios. These courses shall be taught by the same faculty who teach traditional courses in EIU teacher certification curricula.

During the eighth and final week of the session, candidates and their mentors will meet to pull together knowledge and projects completed during the previous seven weeks to focus on preparing for beginning to teach in the internship, which is Phase II of the program.

Figure 2 portrays the scheduling of coursework during the eight-week summer session:

Figure 2: Eight-Week Schedule of Coursework

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8
8 a.m.	PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL
9 a.m.	EDU 4551	EDU 4551	EDU 4552	EDU 4552	EDU 4552	EDU 4552	EDU 4552	EDU 4552
10 a.m.								
11 a.m.								
12 p.m.								
1 p.m.	Field Experience	Field Experience	Field Experience	Field Experience	EDU 4553	EDU 4553	EDU 4553	Mentor Sessions
2 p.m.								
3 p.m.	EDU 4551	EDU 4551	EDU 4552	EDU 4552	Field Experience	Field Experience	Field Experience	Field Experience
4 p.m.								
5 p.m.								
6 p.m.								
7 p.m.								
8 p.m.								
9 p.m.								

Notes:

- EDU 4551 meets weeks 1-2, MTWRF, 9-12 & 3-6.
- EDU 4552 meets weeks 3-4, MTWRF, 9-12 & 3-6; weeks 5-8, MTWRF, 9-12.
- EDU 4553 sections meet at different times:
 - Foreign Languages meets weeks 5-6, MTWR, 1-5; week 7, MTW, 1-5.
 - Mathematics meets weeks 5-6, MTWR, 1-6; week 7, MT, 1-6.
 - Science meets weeks 5-7, MTWRF, 1-4.
 - Career & Technical Education* meets weeks 5-6, MTWR, 1-6; week 7, MT, 1-6.
- PBL is a problem-based learning session that meets weeks 1-8, MTWRF, 8-8:50.
- Field Experience refers to time spent observing and practice teaching with diverse students on and off campus.
- After EDU 4553 sections end, candidates will meet individually with their mentors and prepare for Phase II, the internship.

*Career & Technical Education is a combination teaching methods course for Family & Consumer Sciences, Business Education, & Technology Education.

As Figure 2 indicates, candidates will spend their time throughout the eight-week session both attending class and engaging in practice teaching through field experiences. Programs both on and off campus provide candidates with the opportunity to observe and to practice teaching groups of high school students representing diverse cultures and abilities. These practice teaching experiences provide candidates with the opportunity to ground the theory and application from their coursework in actual experiences with students.

Phase II: Internship

Phase II of the program consists of a full year of teaching in a school district. Candidates will enroll for two semesters of internship (EDU 4560, Alternative Certification: Internship I, and EDU 4561, Alternative Certification: Internship II; see Appendix for detailed course outlines). Throughout the internship, candidates will have full responsibility for teaching, treated contractually as though they were first year teachers. They will be supported throughout the internship by three mentors, one from the school district where they are serving their internship, one from CEPS, and the third from the content department representing their field of certification.

Although candidates shall be fully prepared upon completion of the intensive course of study in Phase I, they shall participate in a series of seminars during Phase II (both web-based and on the EIU campus) that focus on special topics chosen to support them during the internship. Topics include

On-Campus Seminars (attended by candidates and their mentors)

- Building character (includes classroom management and student motivation)
- Engaging students in critical thinking
- Guiding students in positive, effective conflict resolution
- Creating and using effective student assessment tools

Web-Based Seminars (completed by candidates in consultation with their mentors)

- Serving special populations
- Communicating with parents
- Organizing, managing time and developing record-keeping systems
- Harnessing technology for curriculum development, implementation and evaluation
- Building and maintaining an electronic portfolio
- Developing and pursuing a professional development plan

Phase III: Comprehensive Assessment

Upon successful completion of the internship, candidates will enroll in EDU 4570, Alternative Certification: Program Assessment, an on-campus course completed during the first two weeks of the eight-week summer session. This one semester-hour course (see Appendix for detailed course outline) serves as the culminating experience of the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program and will require candidates to complete and submit electronic portfolios, design research and analyze data that is related to the ongoing longitudinal research that is an important part of the program. Candidates will also undergo interviews as part of the assessment

and will have responsibility for making presentations to the cohort of candidates who have begun Phase I of their own alternative certification program. The presentations serve both as a vehicle for assessing candidates' abilities to communicate effectively and as a means for providing each new cohort of candidates with qualitative feedback that might help them achieve the greatest success possible through their involvement in the program.

CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT

As discussed in the previous section, a comprehensive assessment is an important part of EIU's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program, as is the longitudinal study of candidates as they pursue their teaching careers. Another critical element of the program, however, is the assessment that takes place as candidates move into the program, then through each program phase.

Pre-Admission Assessment

Prior to being admitted to the program, candidates submit an application that leads them through a comprehensive assessment. Components of this assessment include

- Verify having met program prerequisites—Official transcripts will be required as evidence of having earned a bachelor's degree, a minimum 2.65 grade point average (on a 4 point scale), and a major or minor in the field of intended certification (note: candidates with degrees in engineering may be admitted as candidates for mathematics or science certification, depending upon their respective coursework in those areas). Letters of reference and a resume or curriculum vitae will verify required work experience, and results will be collected to verify passing the Illinois Basic Skills Test and appropriate content-area test. A letter from the school district administrator and appropriate hiring authority (i.e., district board of education) and/or copy of a signed contract shall be collected to verify that the candidate has secured a commitment from a school district to be hired for the internship.
- Submit to a criminal background check—CEPS shall conduct a criminal background check on each candidate to verify that the candidate has not been convicted of a felony as required by Illinois law.
- Provide evidence of physical health in accordance with state requirements—Candidates must submit evidence of physical health and freedom from diseases as required by law.
- Submit an essay—The essay shall be reviewed for two purposes. First, it shall provide further insight into the candidate's likelihood of succeeding in the teaching career. Second, it shall provide evidence of the candidate's ability to communicate clearly and concisely at a level appropriate for teachers.

Successful applications—those demonstrating that candidates meet program prerequisites—shall be subject to two additional forms of inquiry before being passed along to the ACAAC for review:

- Phone calls verifying letters of reference—The program coordinator shall follow up on reference letters provided by the candidate to (a) ensure their validity and (b) inquire into that the candidate is viewed by references as an individual likely to succeed as a teacher.
- Personal interview—The program coordinator shall conduct a personal interview (either telephone or in person) with the candidate to determine the individual’s likelihood of success as a teacher.

Applications and results of reference calls and candidate interviews that are deemed acceptable by the program coordinator shall be forwarded to the ACAAC for final review and recommendation for accepting or denying admission to the program.

Phase I Assessment

Candidates who are admitted to the program shall undergo further assessment as they complete the requirements of Phase I. First, all candidates shall be required to earn a grade of “B” or better in EDU 4550 before they may attend the eight-week summer session on campus. Second, candidates shall be required to earn a grade of “B” or better in all coursework during the eight-week summer session. Furthermore, their instructors for the eight-week summer session, the program coordinator and their assigned mentors shall submit documentation either recommending or not recommending that candidates be allowed to progress into Phase II of the program (the internship).

Phase II Assessment

Candidates shall be graded on a credit/no credit basis for the internship. To be approved for enrollment in Phase III (comprehensive assessment) of the program, candidates must

- Be awarded credit for both semesters of the internship
- Be recommended for enrollment in Phase III of the program by the appropriate administrator for the school district in which the candidate completed the internship
- Be recommended for enrollment in Phase III of the program by the faculty who taught the seminars in Phase II of the program

Phase III Assessment

Phase III represents the final comprehensive assessment of program candidates. During this Phase, candidates will complete and submit electronic portfolios, design research and analyze data that is related to the ongoing longitudinal research that is an important part of the program. Candidates will also undergo interviews as part of the assessment and will have responsibility for making presentations to the cohort of candidates who have begun Phase I of their own alternative certification program. The ACAAC shall review the results of this final assessment and either recommend or not recommend that candidates’ names be submitted by CEPS to receive an initial four-year teaching certificate from the state of Illinois.

Appeals

Any candidate who is not recommended to the state of Illinois for receiving the initial four-year teaching certificate shall have the right to appeal the decision of the ACAAC. Written requests for appeals shall be reviewed a second time by the ACAAC, whose membership shall be expanded specifically for appeals to include the associate dean of CEPS and an additional faculty member from the candidate's intended area of certification. The Committee shall review the appeal and render a decision either to recommend or not recommend that candidate's name be submitted by CEPS to receive an initial four-year teaching certificate from the state of Illinois. Decisions resulting from this appeals process shall be final.

CANDIDATE MENTORING

To improve the retention rates of program candidates, as well as to increase the quality of the educational experiences of their students, each candidate shall be assigned three mentors (although state law requires only one mentor, CEPS believes that an expanded corps of mentors shall enhance the candidates' likelihood of success during the internship, as well as long-term commitment to teaching as a profession). The mentors shall meet with and observe the participants throughout their internships and participate in seminars with the cohort group to provide support and suggestions for improvement throughout the internship.

Specific mentors and their responsibilities follow:

CEPS Mentor—A mentor shall be assigned from CEPS to maintain a link between the candidate and the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program. This mentor shall visit, observe and meet with the candidate at least once pre month throughout the internship and shall also attend on-campus seminars and consult with the candidate about web-based seminars.

Content Mentor—A mentor shall be assigned from the faculty representing the candidate's intended certification area to provide assistance and guidance as it relates to the candidate's teaching in the chosen field. This mentor shall provide special assistance in terms of methods of teaching in the discipline, attend on-campus seminars, and consult with the candidate about web-based seminars. This mentor shall visit the candidate at least twice per semester.

District Mentor—A mentor shall be assigned from the school district at which the participant is serving the internship. This mentor shall spend one hour per day with the candidate to serve as a resource and coach as the candidate faces the daily challenges of teaching in the school district. This mentor shall contact the other mentors for the candidate as necessary to inform them of important issues that might arise. This mentor shall also attend on-campus seminars and consult with the candidate about web-based seminars.

Mentor Recruitment, Training and Initial Work with Candidates

Mentors from the school district shall be assigned by the appropriate administrator on site. EIU mentors shall be recruited based on expertise, interest and recommendation from appropriate department head or other university administrator.

Mentors shall first undergo a two-day training consisting of the Illinois State Board of Education's Induction for the 21st Century Educator training, to take place during week six or seven of the eight-week summer session on the EIU campus. An additional day of training shall prepare mentors to build upon what they have learned from the initial training and apply it to the specific approach and instruments contained in the Alternative Teacher Certification Program. Topics of this training will include the following:

- Mentor roles and responsibilities
- Introspection—understanding self and its impacts upon the mentor role
- Strategies for building a strong mentor/protégé relationship (building trust)
- Principles of adult learning
- Effective interpersonal communication and facilitation
- Providing constructive feedback
- Conflict resolution
- Time management
- Technology tools for effective teaching and mentoring
- Current literature on teacher effectiveness
- Creating a vision for successful teaching
- Diversity
- Building character in students (includes classroom management and student motivation)
- Contingency planning

The PBL approach that is used throughout the program shall also be part of the mentor training program, resulting in mentors who both possess a knowledge base as a foundation for success and know how to put that knowledge to use as they meet both anticipated and unanticipated challenges throughout the internship.

Mentors shall be introduced to a web site designed to facilitate their success as they work with candidates. The web site shall serve as a tool for facilitating the flow of communication and information to guide best practices and feedback on an ongoing basis.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

A comprehensive approach to program evaluation shall provide not only the data required by the state of Illinois, but will also serve to (a) guide CEPS staff and faculty as they seek to revise the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program and (b) establish a longitudinal data set that may serve as a point of entry for research at the state and national level to guide alternative certification efforts in the future.

The initial year of the program is designed as a pilot and shall be examined carefully to determine what changes shall be desirable to promote steady growth in the program. From the time the program is approved, throughout all program phases, qualitative and quantitative data shall be collected to facilitate study of all aspects of the program. Data shall be collected from program candidates, their mentors, and from district administrators, and special efforts shall ensure that those who complete the program may be tracked, providing valuable data on mobility, instructional effectiveness, and teacher retention rates that might influence researchers, practitioners, and policy makers with an impact on alternative certification. A formal evaluation committee shall be convened during the program's first internship year, charged with a responsibility for overseeing the evaluation of the program, as well as identifying means of communicating evaluation findings with interested parties.

Specific evaluation instruments and methods shall be developed in fall 2002, facilitating data collection efforts from the moment applications are formally solicited.

PROGRAM STAFFING

Specific staffing needs shall be based to some extent upon candidate enrollment. If some content areas should enlist fewer than two candidates during the pilot year, for example, those areas might not be offered during that year. Following is a description of staff needs for the program:

Administration

- Program Coordinator
- Administrative Assistant (likely part time through the first year)
- Director of School and University Partnerships (directs the efforts of the program coordinator)
- CEPS Associate Dean (serves on the ACAAC in the case of an appeal)

Faculty

- Program coordinator shall recruit candidates and market the program, review applications and recommend candidates to admit to the program, train mentors, serve as the CEPS mentor for some candidates in the program, conduct ongoing candidate assessments and program evaluations, and teach EDU 4550, EDU 4560, EDU 4561, and EDU 4570.
- CEPS faculty shall teach EDU 4551 and EDU 4552. Each of these courses shall be team taught by two or more faculty.
- EIU faculty from appropriate content areas shall teach the required sections of EDU 4553, representing mathematics, science, foreign languages, family and consumer sciences, business education, and technology education.
- Those teaching in this program shall be the same faculty who teach regular teacher certification coursework.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Faculty, clinical and internship sites, and technology, library and curriculum materials shall be the same as those provided for traditional programs. Candidates shall have access to dedicated computer labs reserved specifically for their use and available during appropriate times in their schedules. Candidates in the program shall be recruited from across the state; therefore, housing and meal plans in university residence halls shall be made available to candidates throughout the eight-week summer session and during Phase III of the program. Candidates shall be responsible for paying their own room and board.

ANNUAL REPORT

The program coordinator shall be responsible for preparing and submitting an Annual Report as required by alternative teacher certification administrative rules. This report shall at a minimum include the following:

- Description of programs offered
- Application process
- Data on candidates, including number of applicants, number of candidates accepted into the program, number of candidates enrolled in the program, and number of program completers
- Follow-up study of graduates

APPENDICES

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**ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS
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