

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO TERMINATE GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN
SCIENCE EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to terminate the Master of Arts in Science Teaching (MAT), Master of Science (MS), and Ph.D. Programs in Science Education in the College of Education.

Executive Summary: The request to terminate the Programs is due to the 2005 reorganization of the College of Education resulting in four departments/degree majors – Educational Policy and Leadership Studies; Psychological and Quantitative Foundations; Rehabilitation and Counselor Education; and Teaching and Learning. The education degree majors were changed to reflect the department name which most closely reflected the student’s specialization of study. This request was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to pursue “educational excellence and impact.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of department.** The Department of Teaching and Learning is one of four departments in the College of Education at the University of Iowa. The department prepares students for certification as teachers in elementary and secondary education. It includes a number of graduate programs, including Art Education, Curriculum and Supervision, Mathematics Education, and Science Education.
- ◇ **Description of current graduate programs.** The MAT in Science Education is designed primarily for those who would like to become teachers and have already completed a B.S. or B.A. in an area of science. It features advanced work in science together with the courses required for certification. It is a means by which candidates can obtain a master’s degree and certification at the same time. This degree program assumes that the candidate has completed at least 56 semester hours of science as an undergraduate but has no previous coursework in education.

The MS and Ph.D. programs focus on science education as a field of study without extensive classroom practicum experiences. The MS program in science education assumes that candidates have completed an undergraduate major in a given science area or combination of science areas, science education, or elementary education with a science emphasis. It requires the students to complete a minimum of 34 semester hours of coursework in science education, including research hours; students can earn this degree with or without a thesis.

The Ph.D. requires a minimum of 85 semester hours of coursework and research, culminating in a doctoral dissertation. The Ph.D. program in Science Education is appropriate for students who aspire to become science educators at a college or university; to work in supervisory positions in national, state, and local systems; to work as research directors in science education; or to work in positions of medical and/or allied health education.

- ◇ Reason for proposed termination. Prior to 2005, all students in the College of Education were awarded a graduate degree either in Education (MAT, MA, Ed.S., or Ph.D.) or in Science Education (MAT, MS, Ph.D.). In 2005, the College of Education was reorganized into four departments and the Education degree majors were changed to reflect the department name which most closely reflected the student's specialization of study. Students have the opportunity to focus in specialty areas as official sub-tracks within each of the degree majors. For example, the Secondary Education Program is an official sub-track administered by the Department of Teaching and Learning.

The Science Education degree major was not changed at the time of the reorganization. However, the Science Education division was eventually moved into the Department of Teaching and Learning; the curriculum was recently approved as a new sub-track under the Teaching and Learning degree major. The proposed suspension of admissions and termination of the Science Education program as a separate degree major is necessary to align the graduate program offerings with the department re-organization. The proposed termination will become effective when all currently enrolled students graduate or they transfer to the Teaching and Learning sub-track in Science Education.

There is a movement across the country to combine smaller graduate programs with an emphasis on teacher education under a broader umbrella, most commonly either Teaching and Learning or Curriculum and Instruction.

- ◇ Impact on resources. There may be some administrative cost savings with the suspension of admissions and eventual closure of the graduate programs. However, no reductions in faculty, staff, facilities, or funding are anticipated. All reallocations of staff and faculty occurred when the Science Education division was incorporated into the Department of Teaching and Learning.
- ◇ Impact on workforce. The proposed program termination is not expected to affect the workforce needs of the state because the curriculum will not change and students will still be able to specialize in science education.
- ◇ Alternative programming. The University of Iowa and Iowa State University both offer graduate study in Science Education. ISU offers the MAT in Science Education and the M.Ed., MS, and Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis area in Science Education. However, the area of emphasis does not appear on the student's transcript at ISU whereas it will at the University of Iowa.
- ◇ Effect on current students. Current students or students who have already been admitted into a Science Education graduate program for Fall 2011 will have the option of continuing their MAT, MS, or Ph.D. degree in Science Education or switching to the MAT, MS, or Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning with a Science Education sub-track. The transcript of students in the Science Education sub-track will reflect the science education specialty area.
- ◇ Student data. Between 2006 and 2010, there was an average of 5.4 annual applications to the three graduate programs. The average annual enrollment in the graduate programs during that period was 11.6 students. There have been a total of 51 graduates from the three graduate programs during the past five years. The admissions and enrollments are expected to continue with the new sub-track.

- ◇ Effective date of termination. If the proposed program termination is approved by the Board, suspension of new admissions to the program will become effective immediately. No new students will be admitted under the Science Education degree major. Termination of the graduate programs will become effective upon the completion of their program by the remaining students. All coursework and resources will be available to those students to allow them to complete their program.

New students will be admitted to the MAT, MS, or Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning with a Science Education sub-track. The transcript of students in the Science Education sub-track will reflect the science education specialty area.