

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

BOARD OF OVERSEERS VISITING COMMITTEE

For The

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

January 2001

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** See Top Schools of Education on Following Pages

THE TOP 50 SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION*

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Harvard | 36. U. of Arizona |
| 2. Stanford | 37. Cornell |
| 3. Columbia | 38. North Carolina at Greensboro |
| 4. U. of California at Berkeley | 39. Florida State |
| 5. U. of California at Los Angeles | 40. Rutgers |
| 6. Vanderbilt | 41. Utah State |
| 7. U. of Michigan at Ann Arbor | 42. SUNY at Albany |
| 8. Ohio State at Columbus | 43. Texas A&M |
| 9. U. of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana | 44. U. of Tennessee at Knoxville |
| 10. U. of Wisconsin at Madison | 45. U. of California at Santa Barbara |
| 11. U. of Pennsylvania | 46. Boston University |
| 12. New York University | 47. Purdue |
| 13. U. of Texas at Austin | 48. U. of Connecticut |
| 14. Michigan State | 49. William and Mary |
| 15. University of Minnesota at Twin Cities | 50. George Mason |
| 16. Indiana University at Bloomington | |
| 17. Arizona State | |
| 18. U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill | |
| 19. University of Virginia | |
| 20. Northwestern | |
| 21. Temple | |
| 22. U. of Oregon | |
| 23. Boston College | |
| 24. U. of Kansas | |
| 25. U. of Maryland at College Park | |
| 26. U. of Georgia | |
| 27. U. of Colorado at Boulder | |
| 28. U. of Washington | |
| 29. Penn State at University Park | |
| 30. George Washington University | |
| 31. U. of Iowa | |
| 32. U. of Florida | |
| 33. U. of Missouri at Columbia | |
| 34. U. of Pittsburgh | |
| 35. U. of Southern California | |

*Ranked as follows by U.S. News & World Report : Reputation = 40% (survey of school deans), Student Selectivity = 20% (GRE scores), Faculty Resources = 20% (faculty/student ratio, research fellowships)

TOP SCHOOLS CONT.

Top 10 Elementary Teacher Education

1. Michigan State
2. Ohio State
3. Columbia
4. U. of Illinois
5. U. of Wisconsin
6. Indiana University
7. U. of Georgia
8. U. of Michigan
9. Vanderbilt
10. U. of Virginia

Top 10 Secondary Teacher Education

1. Michigan State
2. U. of Wisconsin
3. Ohio State
4. U. of Georgia
5. Stanford
6. Columbia
7. U. of Illinois
8. Indiana University
9. U. of Washington
10. U. of Virginia

Top 10 Curriculum/Instruction

1. U. of Wisconsin
2. Michigan State
3. Columbia
4. Stanford
5. U. of Illinois
6. Indiana University
7. U. of Georgia
8. U. of Michigan
9. Ohio State
10. Vanderbilt

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the visiting committee fall into three major categories:

- 1. Develop a compelling vision for fulfilling the needs of a university with an urban mission while developing national prominence in select areas.**
- 2. Develop measurable goals with target data numbers that are updated annually to improve performance over a sustainable period of time. Make everyone aware of the goals and how results will be measured.**
- 3. Create an environment of high(er) expectations and accountability.**

Key Finding: There is concern that the School of Education will lose the support of the President and the Provost as the University strives to become a Tier I Research Institution.

Recommendation: Address the role of the School of Education in an urban institution that is striving to become a nationally known research institution.

- ***Recommendation:*** Establish a clear vision for the School of Education in 2020.
- ***Recommendation:*** Develop clear criteria for prioritizing resources.

Key Finding: Schools of education that aspire to be good must change.

- ***Recommendation:*** Use a blue-ribbon committee to assist the Dean in driving change.

Key Finding: The School of Education faces a huge transition if it is to successfully prepare students who will teach in classrooms that are increasingly more culturally and ethnically diverse..

- ***Recommendation:*** Embrace diversity and eliminate any unwelcoming attitudes.
- ***Recommendation:*** Adopt a new and exciting opportunity for minority students which includes scholarships, mentors, and counseling.
- ***Recommendation:*** Demonstrate a commitment to diversity by hiring more faculty of women and color.

Key Finding: There are some good faculty members and some excellent faculty members. The Dean must focus on upgrading the skills of other faculty members and/or hire new faculty to improve student outcomes. The faculty must be held accountable for student learning.

- ***Recommendation:*** Aggressively pursue a 100% pass rate on teacher certification exams (PRAXIS).
- ***Recommendation:*** Eliminate merit pay for applicable faculty and/or eliminate programs in the event of unacceptable PRAXIS scores.

Key Finding: The MAT program has fans and critics.

- ***Recommendation:*** Assess the need for and success of the MAT program.
- ***Recommendation:*** Develop alternative methods for teacher certification.

Key Finding: There is a need for greater collaboration with regional school systems.

- **Recommendation:** Provide assistance and increase collaboration with public and private schools (especially the Archdiocese of Louisville).

Key Finding: In-service professional development for teachers is one of the most critical issues in education.

- **Recommendation:** Partner with regional school districts to foster career-long learning through professional development for teachers.
- **Recommendation:** Be a leader in distance learning by collaborating with regional school districts on program design and on-going assessment.

Key Finding: Collaborative field-based research on specific educational problems can "make a difference".

- **Recommendation:** Become a center of excellence in one or more of the following areas..
 - Early childhood education
 - At-risk students
 - Adult education
- **Recommendation:** Take ownership of one or more of the following:
 - Reduce high school drop-out rates.
 - Close the gap in performance scores between African American and Caucasian students.
 - Develop the curriculum for an "Employability Certificate" in conjunction with Greater Louisville, Inc. and regional school districts.

I. INTRODUCTION

Technology is changing history. Fundamental bodies of knowledge like mathematics and physics are being redefined. New knowledge is being discovered with overwhelming speed. The human genome project is creating medical and commercial opportunities along with ethical and social challenges. Many school children will work in jobs that don't exist today.

At the same time, the United States is described as a nation at risk because of failing to provide students with the most essential components of education—-instruction that develops a foundation in “how to think” and “how to learn”.

This is a challenging environment for a School of Education charged with preparing teachers, counselors, and principals to educate students who might be more computer literate than their teachers, speak English as a second language, or be prone to violence. One thing is clear: *Schools of Education that aspire to be good must be willing to change.*

The Board of Overseers School of Education Visiting Committee was formed in order to review the following:

- The School of Education's status with regard to the University's Challenge for Excellence,
- The conflicts, if any, of placing an emphasis on research while still meeting the University's urban mission,
- The degree to which the School of Education is meeting the needs of its customers,

- Best practices that can be used to guide future directions, and
- The MAT program.

The Committee met four times then organized into three sub-committees charged with fact finding. The mission for and vision of the School of Education was debated and challenged. Research was conducted on governance, best practices, standards, and outcomes. More than 25 interviews were conducted with educational professionals, employers, and competitors. Findings and recommendations, based on our belief in the importance of education, were developed and strongly endorsed.

The School of Education faces significant challenges that are shared by similar organizations striving to be vital. Changes must be made, excellence must be expected. We found high professional regard for Dean Simpson in virtually every interview that was conducted. Dr. Shumaker and Dr. Garrison are to be commended for recruiting a respected professional to lead this effort.

II. A BIT OF HISTORY...

The Department of Education was established as a unit of the College of Arts and Sciences in 1907, and the Bachelors degree in Education was initiated in 1914. Programs leading to a masters degree began in 1947. The School of Education became a distinct unit of the University in 1968.

In 1996, Governor Patton established a goal for the year 2020--the average income in Kentucky is to be equal to the average income for the nation. In order to achieve this goal, he focused his attention on economic development and higher education.

The Kentucky General Assembly passed House Bill 1, which states that a goal for Kentucky's post-secondary education is to "make the University of Louisville a nationally-recognized metropolitan research university". As defined by the University of Louisville, "The Challenge for Excellence" includes growth and/or improvement in the following areas:

- Financial Strength (endowment, gifts, federal funding, grants)
- Doctoral Degrees
- Endowed Chairs
- Freshman ACT Scores
- Student Retention
- Graduation Rates
- African American Students
- Licenses and Patents
- Business Start-ups
- Royalty Income

In addition to meeting the reporting requirements to the council on post-secondary education, the University must develop measures and assessment techniques that support the University's commitments of (1) accountability to the public and (2) quality improvement.

The themes of “measurement” and “accountability” are considered critical to the future success of the School of Education and will appear frequently in the remainder of this report.

III. MISSION AND GOALS OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

As currently stated, the mission of the School of Education is to promote and strengthen the professional development of individuals concerned with education and human resource development in a variety of urban settings such as schools, colleges and universities, private and corporate organizations, and government agencies. This is done by conducting research, providing services, and preparing teachers, administrators, training and development specialists, as well as professionals in sport management, mental and physical health, and student affairs. As an urban institution, the School is particularly concerned with improving the education and quality of life for persons of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The strategic plan for the School of Education follows five primary themes that mirror the goals of the University.

- 1. Create a responsive and supportive educational environment characterized by high expectations, respect for diversity and intercultural understanding, and engaged and purposeful learning*

Sample Indicators of Progress

Criteria	Baseline – 1999	Goal 2008
Year-to-year first-time freshman retention rate	63%	66%
% of faculty teaching lower division courses	0%	35%
% of student credit hours produced by part-time faculty	25%	25%*
Past rate on licensure exams	85%	93%
Programs accredited	2	3

*Goal is to not exceed 25%, but this will be affected by the addition of weekend programs.

2. *Concentrate energy and resources to advance to national prominence in areas of programmatic strength identified in the Challenge for Excellence*

Sample Indicators of Progress

Criteria	Baseline – 1999	Goal 2008
Grants and Contracts	35	65
Federal funding awards	\$152,000	\$800,000
Total publications in refereed journals	114	150
Nationally recognized academic programs	1	2
Academic programs nationally ranked in first quartile	0	1
Number of faculty on sponsored research	33	50

3. *Develop a seamless system of access and create a culture that promotes and supports race and gender diversity, inclusiveness, equity, and open communication*

Sample Indicators of Progress

Criteria	Baseline – 1999	Goal 2008
Full-time tenured and tenure track women faculty	33	38
Full-time tenured and tenure track African American	5	9
Full-time African American professional and admin. staff	1	2
African American undergraduate students	116	135
African American graduate students	168	190

4. *Encourage inter-departmental and interunit collaboration in support of inter-disciplinary teaching, research, and service; cooperate with external agencies and other institutions of post-secondary education to leverage the resources of the university and its' partners for mutual benefit*

Sample Indicators of Progress

Criteria	Baseline – 1999	Goal 2008
Students in collaborative and joint educational programs	66	70
Inter-disciplinary research projects	36	42
Research projects that support economic development	9	11

5. *Improve the effectiveness and accountability of programs and services in fulfilling the mission and vision of the university.*

Criteria	Baseline – 1999	Goal 2008
Annual gifts and donations received	\$45,000	\$64,000
Department chairs or leaders participating in leadership training and skill development programs	0	10
Pass rate on licensure exams	85%	93%

IV. IF YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW YOU ARE DOING, ASK YOUR CUSTOMERS AND COMPETITORS

For purposes of this report, the following groups were deemed to be “customers” of the School of Education

- Students,
- School systems
- Businesses, and
- Government entities.

More than 25 interviews were conducted with customers, competitors, and other educational professionals. In addition to members of the visiting committee, students, and faculty members of the School of Education,

people in the following positions (or with the following organizations) were interviewed.

- School Superintendents
- School Administrators
- University Administrators
- Deans of Education
- Board of Education
- Pritchard Committee

A list of interview questions was used to provide focus to our approach.

- The interviews showed an impressive amount of consensus.
- Although the School of Education faces serious challenges, there are signs of excitement and optimism.

Conclusions from the interviews are shown below:

1. Mission

- There is concern that the School of Education will lose the support of the President and Provost as U of L strives to become a Tier 1 Research Institution.

- There is further concern that if the School of Education is to serve well the metropolitan area (families and school districts), resources will be spread thin.
- The School of Education faces a huge transition if it is to successfully prepare students who will teach in classrooms that are increasingly more culturally and ethnically diverse.

2. Dean and Faculty

- Dean Simpson is approachable and open to the new paradigm.
- There are some very good and some excellent faculty members
- The Dean must focus on upgrading the skills of other faculty members, and/ or hire new faculty in order to improve student outcomes.
- The Dean needs clear authority to make changes and to make them quickly.
- Many members of the faculty do not demand excellence from students.
- The faculty is not held accountable for student learning.
- When a student fails the certification exam, the faculty and administration has failed.
- Many members of the faculty are viewed as being an impediment to change.

3. Student Recruitment and Retention

- The School of Education has failed to recruit and retain an adequate number of students, especially minority students.

- There is a plan to increase the number of students from 110 to 200 (from a high of 325).

4. Diversity

- There needs to be significantly greater success at recruiting and graduating minority students.
- There is a perception of some students and graduates that diversity is not appreciated, and that some people of different ethnic or racial backgrounds are not welcome.
- There is a need for more counseling and academic support of minority students.

5. Teacher Preparation

- Students need to understand and be able to use differentiated learning methods that are relevant to and effective with children from diverse backgrounds or with different needs.
- Teaching methods at the SOE are sometimes viewed as inflexible, too much “stand up and talk”, and not a good role model for being learner centered.
- Regional school systems appreciate the fact that teachers who graduate from the School of Education understand the language and responsibilities of KERA, the Kentucky education reform.
- The SOE is doing a good job of preparing students to use technology in teaching.

- Subject matter preparation is sometimes inadequate.
- Certification rates for science and Spanish teachers are unacceptable.
- The College of Arts & Sciences (A & S) must participate in enriching the subject matter knowledge of new teachers.
 - A & S courses must be up to date, and they must incorporate the advances in knowledge occurring in those disciplines.
 - Much new knowledge is now multi-disciplinary, such as biology and sociology, or physics and chemistry. If departments are “protecting their turf”, course content might not be current.
 - The way in which content is taught must result in students who have learned how to learn.
- At the same time, education methodology courses must have content grounded in field-based, collaborative research.
- This mix of content and pedagogy is intended to help teachers deal with complexity, and to create teachers who know how to learn and know how to teach.
- The MAT program has fans and critics
 - The program is viewed as an obstacle for many college graduates who would like to become a teacher. The MAT program is not user friendly for people who need to work while going to school.
 - However, best practices in education require an increased emphasis on content. Consequently, some feel that it would be a mistake to eliminate the MAT program.

- There are important questions about the degree to which quality has risen as a result of the five-year program. Assuming there is a small, incremental improvement, it might not be worth the “cost” to society that results from producing a fewer number of teachers.
- Value-added assessments of MAT programs have caused many to disappear around the country.
- Students are making personal financial decisions that have lead to declining enrollment.
- Alternative methods of teacher certification need to be developed without sacrificing quality.
 - There is a growing need for programs that have many of the features of a MAT program, but are better suited for mature, successful people changing careers.
 - The MAT program serves as an excellent way to draw new students into teacher education.
 - Intellectual and professional seasoning can justify adapting requirements for a master's degree, or for the number of hours needed for the degree.
 - The goal should not be adherence to arbitrary rules, but instead, to have teachers who can develop work for students that is important and meaningful

6. Counselor Preparation

- An inadequate number of students graduate from the school counselor program. At the doctoral level, the department has had many accomplishments through increased publications and research.

7. Principal Preparation

- This program needs to become stronger, and it needs to do more to emphasize learning leadership.
- There is an inadequate number of principal candidates graduating from the School of Education.

8. Special Education Preparation

- This program is so weak that it is almost uniformly perceived to be inadequate
- Public and private schools need teachers who are able to work with students with very special learning needs.

9. Professional development/Continuing Education

- Learning has become a life-long career for teachers.
- In-service professional development for teachers is the most critical issue in education. Past practices were not effective.
- Professional development for teachers is changing radically and evolving into individual development plans. Advancement will depend on competencies and results.
- The School of Education can provide leading thinking on effective methods of professional development, and on finding the right blend between content and pedagogy.

- This involves partnerships between School of Education faculty, teachers, and administration.
- In order to be successful, partnering and collaboration must continue throughout planning, delivery, assessment, and revisions.
- Significant opportunities lie in the area of distance learning, especially if collaboration, program design and on-going assessment remain in place. This has the potential to be far superior to “canned” distance learning programs.

10. Collaboration with Regional School Systems and other Schools of Education

- There is little relationship with the Archdiocese of Louisville (67 schools). A more direct and regular communication with the Dean and leaders of the Teacher and Principal intern programs would be welcomed.
- Regional School Districts report receiving little attention or assistance from the School of Education. There is a desire for greater partnering.
- As a publicly financed institution with an urban mission, the School of Education has a perceived obligation to the community to provide a suitable number of candidates for teacher vacancies.
- There appears to be good collaboration with the Schools of Education at Bellarmine and Spalding.

11. Research

- At the best Schools of Education in the country, research focuses on “doing what is best for kids”.
 - This is collaborative, field-based research between teachers, principals, and faculty who work together to solve a problem.
 - Faculty members are very visible in school systems.
 - As opposed to traditional research with random or blind samples, faculty members are trying alternative methods and assuming joint ownership for results. “If the goal is for all children to read by the third grade, faculty members no longer say ‘experimental studies show this’. Instead, faculty members ‘own’ the problem and work with others in a school setting to achieve the desired result.”
- This type of research provides
 - knowledge that can be used in teacher preparation programs and professional development programs, and
 - community service in the form of better education and economic development.

12. Measurement and Assessment

- There must be measurements—meaningful measurements.
- One of the most effective goals is certification of 100% of all graduates. Anything less than 100% is not good enough.
- It might be necessary to advise some students out of the program.
- The goal of assessments is to discover how much students know and their readiness for continued learning. This is best accomplished through

- written examinations that combine multiple choice questions with essays requiring responses to more complex questions, and
- systematic responses from teachers and principals who observe teachers in classrooms.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The School of Education can be a progressive and thoughtful voice for education; at the same time, it can proactively assist in solving specific educational problems.

Recommendations and suggestions from the visiting committee fall into three major categories as shown below:

- Develop a compelling vision for fulfilling the needs of a university with an urban mission while developing national prominence in select areas.
- Develop measurable goals with target data numbers that are updated annually to improve performance over a sustainable period of time. Make everyone aware of the goals and how results will be measured.
- Create an environment of high(er) expectations and accountability

Additional recommendations include the following:

1. Mission:

- The Administration needs to acknowledge tension between the urban role of the School of Education and the plan to become a nationally known research institution.

2. Dean and Faculty:

- Provide to the Dean clear authority to make changes, and to make them quickly.
- Delegate decision making authority and accountability to Department Chairs
- Eliminate merit pay for applicable faculty and/or eliminate programs in the event of unacceptable PRAXIS scores.
- Establish and monitor School of Education databases to support program decisions and assure continuing accreditation.

3. Student Retention and Recruitment

- Hire a full-time staff person charged with the responsibility of recruiting and graduating minority students.
- Adopt a new and exciting opportunity for minority students which includes scholarships, mentors, counseling and study courses that can be a model for the state. This program should start with recruitment in high schools and follow a student through job placement.

4. Diversity

- Investigate the perception that diversity is not appreciated and that people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds are not welcome. If it is not true, work to understand and eliminate the perception.

- If the perception is true, the School must embrace diversity and eliminate any unwelcoming attitudes.

5. Teacher Preparation

- Aggressively pursue a 100% pass rate on teacher certification exams by collaborating with faculty and other university units to ensure curriculum alignment.
- Assess the need for and success of the MAT program. Evaluate data to determine whether this is a value added degree based on content expertise, certification pass rates, ability to provide minority teacher candidates, ability to provide an adequate number of teaching candidates, etc.
- If the MAT program is continued, develop alternative methods for teacher certification.
- Seek sources of funding scholarships for alternative teacher certification students.
- Become a center of excellence in early childhood education and research on at-risk students.
- Add leadership training to teacher preparation to develop skills for (1) curriculum development and (2) dealing with the complex assignments outside of the classroom that are often faced by teachers.

6. Counselor Preparation

- Strengthen the existing program increasing the number of students who graduate in a timely manner.

7. Principal Preparation

- Strengthen the program by emphasizing learning leadership.
- Increase the number of students in the program.

8. Special Education Preparation

- Strengthen the program as soon as possible.
- Explore a partnership with the Autism Center in the School of Medicine.

9. Professional Development/Continuing Education

- Partner with regional school districts on continuing education and professional development for teachers and faculty.
- Become an innovative leader in distance education.

10. Collaboration with Regional School Systems

- Build better partnerships and increase collaboration with private schools, especially the Archdiocese of Louisville.

11. Research

- Use collaborative, field-based research to assist the metropolitan area and the Commonwealth of Kentucky on specific educational problems.
- Make a difference. Take ownership of one or more of the following:
 - Reduce high school drop out rates (Kentucky is ranked 49th in the nation)

- Close the gap in performance scores between African American and Caucasian students
- Create career counseling and awareness programs for girls (71% of families in poverty in Jefferson County are headed by females —most of whom are in low paying, traditionally female careers)
- Partner with Greater Louisville Inc. to develop the requirements, curriculum, and assessment of an “Employability Certificate” for high school graduates.

