

**OFFICE OF STUDENT FIELD EXPERIENCES
STRATEGIC PLAN
1997-98**

December 1, 1998

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Introduction

This plan was drafted to be compatible with the College of Education Strategic Plan. The OSFE plan will have no "final" form. It should not be viewed as tentative because of uncertainty of purpose, commitment, or resolve, however. It should be viewed as deliberately flexible so as to make it possible to be responsive to evolving opportunities, emerging needs, and developing priorities within the college and university.

Six assumptions underlie this plan.

- (1) The main purpose of OSFE is to serve undergraduate students in their field experiences, primarily during the student teaching semester. Field experience is an important part of the University of Northern Iowa's teacher education program because it requires students to put into practice what they are learning and have learned about teaching. The actual practice of teaching and establishing productive relationships with learners is different from successful recitation and discussion of various theories, principles, and procedures. The University of Northern Iowa's field experience program is widely recognized for the quality of its students as well as for the effective and efficient supervision and support provided them and their supervising teachers by the university.
- (2) OSFE includes university faculty as well as a network of highly qualified practitioners who are involved in field experience clinical supervision in collaboration with OSFE faculty.
- (3) The fundamental structure of the field experiences network is a set of student teaching centers in various public school districts in Iowa as well as outside of Iowa, each being administered by an OSFE faculty coordinator. While each center delivers the five components of the University of Northern Iowa student teaching curriculum¹ and Human Relations², the operation of each off campus site is "center specific" in response to local conditions and norms.
- (4) OSFE faculty is responsible for establishing and maintaining a relationship with the local school personnel. This includes orientation and training of cooperating teachers who will supervise UNI students.
- (5) The OSFE network of school sites is one which enlarges the university's resources, especially for purposes of school-university collaboration and outreach in service to professional educators.

¹ The five components of the University of Northern Iowa student teaching program are: classroom teaching, supervision and evaluation of classroom teaching, seminar, reflection, and action research.

² Human Relations is required for teacher certification in the state of Iowa.

- (6) There is a tension created in OSFE since most faculty are working in centers far from campus and at the same time value their responsibility and participation in university governance and faculty activity on campus.
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Values

The work of OSFE is based on a set of values, which are congruent with those of our colleagues across the College of Education, who with us are committed to preparing educators who are able, in joint efforts with others, to shape a humane future in a rapidly changing world.

- (1) We value adherence to individual and institutional ethical practices—honesty, fairness, and respect for people as individuals and as members of diverse groups, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship.
 - (2) We value education for self and society—life-long learning for the development of knowledge, attitude, skills, abilities, and values necessary both for meeting individual goals and for living responsibly as active citizens of a democratic society.
 - (3) We value the educator/scholar—educators who intellectual vitality, critical reflection on their own professional practice, and commitment to educating/learning are manifested in quality teaching and scholarship.
 - (4) We value service as leadership to the College of Education the University of Northern Iowa, and its multiple state, national, and global communities, resulting in collaboration that leads to shared responsibility and decision making.
 - (5) We value recognition of the web of national and global interdependence—the inextricable and reciprocal link between the quality of educational efforts and the quality of our communities.
 - (6) We value an environment which fosters and supports high expectations and which promotes high levels of achievement, quality, and excellence in a diverse learning community along with high levels of collaboration, authentic communication, and a sense of community.
 - (7) We value systemic integration within and across curricular areas which promotes and sustains program coherence.
 - (8) We value individual and societal well-being which is characterized by the development and health of the body, mind, emotions, and spirit, and the development and maintenance of these conditions within the university community as well as within the population at large.
 - (9) Furthermore, while we recognize the necessity of striving for program quality in an efficient and cost-effective manner, we do not value compromises which put our program quality in jeopardy.
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Vision

UNI teacher education students will have teaching/learning opportunities with systematic support in diverse field based settings. (Faculty, 1996) Furthermore, OSFE faculty will be involved in collaborative school-university partnerships for the

improvement of educational practice and the professional development of educators as well as in collaborations across the University of Northern Iowa campus to improve service to teacher education students from its various colleges and departments.

Mission

OSFE's mission is to support the mission of the University of Northern Iowa College of Education as it relates to providing field experience opportunities for its teacher education students. First, in the area of teaching, OSFE exists primarily to provide quality supervision for the capstone experience in the preparation of teachers, Pre-K through high school, for a variety of direct service and leadership roles in diverse school settings. A secondary mission in the area of teaching is to contribute to the continuing professional education of practicing educators as they are involved in the supervision of our teacher education students and as they become involved programs of in-service and graduate study. Second, with regard to scholarship, faculty members conduct applied and basic research in the areas of supervision and field-based practices. Third, with regard to service, OSFE participates in service on the university, local, state, regional, national, and international levels. In all these ways, OSFE effectively serves the profession by assuming a leadership role for the improvement of education.

As it approaches the future, OSFE concurs with the assumptions in the College of Education mission statement.

- (1) The preparation of educators is a moral imperative. The future of our nation depends on the success of this effort. We must prepare teachers who will be able to provide reflective response and leadership in addressing and resolving national and international issues in the education of our future citizens.
- (2) The demonstrated quality of our graduating teacher education students is the true measure of the quality of the programs of the College.
- (3) Given the rapid nature of change in all aspects of society, educators must be prepared to reflect critically on their own professional practice and to learn from and modify behavior accordingly.
- (4) The responsible professional educator effects change in response to changing conditions in moral and ethical ways as well as in response to the changes made by others.
- (5) Not all education occurs in the school setting. Teachers need to be cognizant of learning opportunities their students have across their lives as well as of ways to connect their students to resources outside their own classroom programs.
- (6) OSFE will use its diverse strengths to contribute to effective change of the quality of life in the university community.

Goals

OSFE goals are congruent with and supportive of College of Education goals, with specific reference to the supervision of teacher education field experiences, maintenance of a network of off-campus school sites and relationships with personnel in those sites, and service to the profession, especially within its network of school-university partnerships. NOTE: Subgoals are intended as additional

areas of focus in support of the goal. They are not intended to narrow nor supersede the goal under which they are subsumed.

GOAL AREA 1: Intellectual Vitality: Maintain a high-quality academic environment.

1A. Increase collaborative efforts within and between departments and colleges to provide meaningful and nonredundant curricular content.

1B. Identify demonstration sites for exemplary educational practice.

1C. Contribute to strengthening the support offered to faculty and student research and scholarly efforts.

1D. Provide support to improve the quality of supervision offered by OSFE clinical personnel.

1E. Provide course and seminar work which reflects a learning-centered focus and which includes experiential learning opportunities with a concerted effort to provide field placements that provide experiences which allow students to observe effective practices in multicultural education, effective instructional and relationship building practices, and educationally valuable practices with regard to technology.

1E1. Increase experiential learning opportunities for students to serve the educational and health promotion needs of underserved and "at-risk" populations.

1E2. Provide equitable learning opportunities for undergraduate, and graduate students where there are opportunities to do so, in areas of research and experiential learning.

1F. Contribute to bridging theory and practice at the Masters level in the College of Education, and participate when appropriate as affiliate faculty in departments which offer educational specialist and doctoral programs.

1G. Collaborate with other College of Education and university faculty in providing an undergraduate program of teacher education that links liberal arts studies and clinical experiences to a strong educational core and reflects these studies in its field experiences.

1H. Participate in effective progress monitoring of students involved in undergraduate teacher education.

1I. Contribute to the development of new programs and licensure/endorsements that reflect the changing needs of Iowa and the nation.

GOAL AREA 2: Community: Create and nurture a diverse community and enhance the health and well being of the communities and their members in the department, the college, the university, and the community-at-large.

2A. Recruit, retain, and support a highly diverse, highly qualified faculty.

2B. Contribute to increasing the number and graduation rate of students from underrepresented groups.

2C. Contribute to increasing the number of undergraduate and graduate students from outside Iowa.

2D. Contribute to increasing the support and participation in various student organizations.

2E. Contribute to increasing faculty support and mentoring activities with preservice and in-service teachers.

2F. Contribute to increasing faculty, staff, and student participation in individual and community-oriented wellness-related activities.

2G. Increase faculty, staff, and student sensitivity to professional practices and patterns of interactions which enhance or inhibit individual and group well-being, i.e., stress management, conflict resolution, nondiscrimination with regard to racism, sexism, handicaps, ageism, etc.

GOAL AREA 3: Resources: Effectively manage internal resources and aggressively seek external resources to support OSFE programs and aspirations.

3A. Provide adequate support to enhance the quality of productivity of OSFE faculty and staff.

3A1. Enhance opportunities for faculty and student participation in statewide, national, and global partnerships in scholarship, teaching/learning, and service.

3B. Provide adequate resources to enhance and maintain the quality of the OSFE field experience program; support the provision of adequate resources to enhance and maintain quality early childhood and PK-12 teacher preparation programs.

3B1. Provide a tenure and tenure-track faculty/student ratio which supports the OSFE supervision model.

3C. Develop an equitable decentralized budgeting plan for OSFE which reflects the priorities as presented by this strategic plan.

3D. Provide physical environments which support OSFE programs on campus and in the regional centers.

3D1. Renovate, repair, and maintain facilities to meet safety standards, accessibility standards, and state-of-the-art technological applications appropriate in OSFE.

3E. Ensure that state-of-the-art technological applications in education are easily accessible by students, faculty, and staff.

3F. Support faculty, departmental, and college-wide initiatives to secure local, state, and national resources for the preparation of certified teachers.

3G. Support the strengthening of the resources available to graduate students in the College of Education.

3H. Support securing funding to establish a Center of Youth Development.

3I. Support the establishment and funding of a College of Education Lecture Series.

3J. Contribute to strengthening the College of Education support for programs that stand for accreditation.

3K. Contribute to strengthening the College of Education support for new programs and licensure/endorsements which reflect the changing needs of Iowa and the nation.

GOAL AREA 4: External Relations: Contribute meaningfully and effectively to educational reform and improvement efforts at the state, national, and global levels.

4A. Contribute to enhancing and coordinating efforts and outreach activities with school organizations and community agencies and institutions.

4B. Support Malcolm Price Laboratory School's mission of providing professional development to teachers and schools in Iowa and establishing a network of schools to contribute to this activity.

4C. Provide leadership at the state, national, and global levels for focused academic scholarship.

4C1. Support faculty and department participation in state, national, and global initiatives.

4C2. Support the development and dissemination of best practices in Early Childhood Education through the Regents Center for Early Childhood Education.

4D. Contribute to the development of curricular and field experience initiatives which link educational reform to the advancement of social justice and democratic ideas such as fairness, equity, nondiscrimination, and self and social responsibility.

4D1. Support the exploration of expansion of the College of Education's Office for Democratic Education to include development of active citizenship opportunities in PK-12 schools in the U.S.

4D2. Work collaboratively with school districts and other governmental and nongovernmental organizations in designing effective programming so that students' ethnic and economic backgrounds stop being predictors of educational attainment and health status.

4D3. Contribute to the preparation of teachers who will take a leadership role in advocacy for public policy development in education.

4E. Contribute to the development and evaluation of alternative delivery models to meet the needs of a wider range of constituencies.

4E1. Contribute to the development and implementation of models for using the ICN and other technologies to provide technical support, professional development, and community networking to PK-12 schools.

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