

## CHAPTER 1

### STUDENTS

Let's start with what is most important—our students. During the 1991-2004 period, the Eastern Michigan University (EMU) College of Education (COE) produced students prepared for occupations other than licensed personnel for P-12 schools—as it had done before and as it has done since. This important, but relatively small, group will be discussed elsewhere. But EMU, and the COE, were known and respected for the large number of professional educators that it produced during that time.

In fact, during the 1991-2004 period, as had been the case for some years before, almost each year, **Eastern Michigan University produced the nation's largest number of educational personnel.**

#### Quantitative Measures of the COE Student Body

Student Semester Credit Hour Production. In 1991-92, the COE generated 85,960 student semester credit hours (SCH's). This number declined over the next four years to a low (for the 13-year period) of 73,522 in 1995-1996.

There were several reasons for the decline. One is that our COE SCH's often tracked national trends about going into teaching (or other elementary/secondary-related work) as a career, and those declined across the nation. Another is that we began rigorously to enforce the rules about admission to, retention in, and exit from our various programs of study. A university-determined reduction in the number of credits needed to satisfy the EMU physical education activity requirement contributed substantially to this decline as well.

After several years of coping with these declining enrollments, COE SCH production began to rise. It was also during this time that then-Provost Ronald Collins put much emphasis on course work offered through Continuing Education--a challenge that was appropriate for COE programming as well. The Department of Leadership and Counseling and the Department of Teacher Education were particularly responsive to the requests to offer more course work through Continuing Education (alternative times, places, and delivery systems) and the Continuing Education SCH's contributed more and more to the COE's total.

By 2003-2004, COE total SCH's set an all-time (at least to date) annual high for the College--101,684, an 18% growth over the 13-year period and a 38% growth over the final eight years of this period.

Headcounts. In the Fall of 1991, there were 3,129 students enrolled in the undergraduate programs credited to the COE by EMU central administration. This number declined to a low of

2,672 in 1996-1997 but rose to an all-time high (at least for the 13-year period) of 4,491 in the Fall of 2003. This reflects a growth of 44 percent over the 13-year period and a growth of 68 percent over the final seven years of this period.

However, this growth in undergraduate students was offset by generally steady declines (from 2,015 to 1,165) in numbers of students enrolled in the graduate programs of the COE during this 13-year period. Part of this was due to the university's disincentives in the financial structure for offering graduate programming. Another part was due to changes in the university's policies for classifying students as "graduate" students. State certification requirement changes also contributed to the decline.

Portions of EMU Totals. The COE's portion of the total university undergraduate enrollment rose from 19.95% in the Fall of 1991 to an all-time high (for the 13-year period) in 2003-2004 of 25.37%. In other words, one in four EMU undergraduate students in 2003-2004 was a COE student. At the graduate level, despite declining enrollments, the COE, during the entire 13-year period, had the largest number of graduate students of any EMU college. The COE was second in size (behind Arts and Sciences) among EMU academic colleges for the entire 1991-2004 period.

Near the end of this 13-year period, among 1,573 EMU FTIAC's (First Time in Any College) full-time students, 27.6% indicated some form of teaching as their "probable major." For all public universities in the country at the same time, the portion of comparable students indicating an interest in teaching was 5.1%.

Men. One of my (and other people's) goals during the entire 13-year period was to increase the number (and percentage) of men going into teaching and a few specific efforts were made toward this end. We made slow, but appreciable, progress toward that goal. For example, by 2003-2004, the number of men admitted that year to the initial teacher preparation program was 368, a 60% increase over the eight-year period that this statistic was tracked. (The number of men was 26% of all persons admitted to the initial teacher preparation program in 2003-2004, a record--for the 13-year period--portion of men.)

Minorities. Much stronger efforts were made to recruit racial minority persons into teaching, with modest successes. Some of these efforts pre-dated the 1991-2004 period, but continued into that period. An example was the Oakland Community College-EMU Minority Teacher Initiative (MIT), which had started in 1990. The MIT was a program designed to encourage and prepare African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American, and Native-American student for careers in education. In 2003-2004, the number of known, self-identified, minority persons admitted to our initial teacher preparation program was 164 (12% of all persons admitted that year), the second highest number for the period that we tracked this, and a 156% increase over the six-year period that this statistic was carefully tracked.

In the summer of 2000, it was reported by the Michigan Department of Education that EMU prepared 16% of all new teachers hired in Michigan, more than any other institution. We prepared 23% of the Hispanic American teachers and 17% of the Native American teachers hired in the state. However, we prepared only 14% of the men teachers, 14% of the African-American teachers, 12% of the Asian-American teachers, and 7% of the multiracial teachers.

Special Recognitions Related to Recruitment and Retention of Students. Two people deserve very special recognition for activities related to the recruitment, admission, and retention of minority students. Thomas Fleming, a COE alum who had been selected as the National Teacher of the year, was subsequently appointed as a special assistant to the Provost. Mr. Fleming's duties, as assigned and as he voluntarily took on, were especially related to the recruitment and retention of minorities, especially minority men, into the teaching profession. A particular contribution was his "starring" in and narration of "Slam Dunkin' Into Teaching," a video produced by Dale Rice and Nora Martin, designed to recruit African American men into the teaching profession. His contributions were much appreciated and will be long-remembered.

Extraordinary appreciation in this respect must also be extended to Associate Dean Robbie Johnson. Dr. Johnson's fine work as a leader for many years with the Young Educators Society (YES) in the state, composed largely of minority middle- and high-school students, brought numbers of minority students into our COE programs. At least equally important, but behind the scenes and thus largely unsung, was the considerable time that Dr. Johnson spent with groups of and individual minority students in the COE, helping them make their way through COE and university processes in order to remain in our programs. Dr. Carolyn Finch, who succeeded Dr. Johnson as Associate Dean, continued and expanded much of this fine work.

Post-Baccalaureate Students. The numbers of people who held at least a bachelor's degree (many with master's degrees and including a few with Ph.D.'s or professional degrees in law and medicine!) but who wanted to become certified as teachers increased rapidly during the 1991-2004 period, especially during the latter part of the time. By 2003-2004, more than 450 such people per year were being admitted to our initial teacher preparation program, which, at the time, made EMU one of the largest providers in the country for an "alternative" audience. These post-baccalaureate admissions to the initial teacher preparation program constituted nearly one-third of all those admitted each year during the latter part of the 13-year period. It is interesting to note that quite a few of these post-baccalaureate admissions held at least an undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan. From anecdotal information, it appeared that many of these people wanted the prestige of being a UM alum, but also the prestige of holding a teaching credential earned through EMU.

Several factors were associated with this increase in post-baccalaureate students during this time. In connection with, and after, the move of the "certification officer" function from the Office of Registration and Records to the COE, we formalized, published, and enforced the curricular requirements for these students. Essentially the requirement was "whatever EMU's

requirements are for the initial preparation of whatever kind of teacher you want to be, you must take whatever you don't already have on your academic record." Even more important, a staff member was assigned as the contact person and advisor for members of this group. The post-baccalaureate students were required to meet the same admission, retention, and requirements (GPA, test scores, etc.) as the undergraduate students seeking initial teacher certification.

Subject-Matter, Grade Level, and Ability Groups. Various efforts were made over time to increase enrollments in "high demand" fields. Special education enrollments remained strong through the entire 1991-2004 period, including the fact that we were the only, or one of very few, institutions in the state preparing teachers in the "low-incidence" fields. By the end of the 1991-2004 period, about a fifth of the prospective elementary teachers were also seeking an endorsement in early childhood education. The number of persons admitted to programs to prepare them to be teachers of mathematics or the natural sciences was at, or near, all-time highs for the 13-year period. The same was true for those admitted to technology education programs.

Advising. In the very early part of the 1991-2004 period, I found that the EMU catalog material was not in good order in terms of describing the requirements for completing a program to become a professional educator. This was true for both the undergraduate and graduate catalog material, but it was a particular problem at the undergraduate level. In essentially all instances, catalog material was out of date, or it was not what the relevant program faculty believed it should be or what they wanted it to be. Further, advising sheets used by advisers were often inconsistent with the catalog and sometimes, even for the same program, were inconsistent with each other. Information for prospective teachers was inconsistent between the COE section of the catalog and catalog material for other EMU colleges. Efforts to determine what had been officially approved by the appropriate faculty bodies were almost totally unsuccessful.

Faced with an NCATE accreditation visit in the near future, there was nothing to do but "start over." In an unusually short period of time, the appropriate faculty governance groups reviewed, often modified, and officially adopted the curriculum for all professional educator programs. Since the next official EMU catalog would not be issued until after the forthcoming NCATE visit, the COE put forth the *1992 Professional Education Supplement to the EMU Catalog*. This lengthy document put forth all the official curricular and other requirements for all professional education programs, with the notation that information in this document superseded the "regular" EMU catalog then in force.

The *Supplement* got us through the accreditation process successfully and, fortunately, it was never necessary to do this again. We were able to take curricular and other program changes through official processes and from there into the "regular" EMU catalogs for the remainder of the 1991-2004 period. It did take a while, however, to get all material about "becoming a teacher" that was included in catalog material for other EMU colleges consistent with what was in the COE section of the catalog.

As all this was falling into place, it became increasingly apparent that students were running into difficulties because of program description inconsistencies. For example, a student who was advised by a faculty member who was using an obsolete “advising sheet” might later be told by someone in authority that “you can’t graduate, you haven’t taken required course A.” Or “you aren’t eligible to take required course X because you haven’t taken prerequisite Y.” The effect of this was that students were taking extra semesters to complete a program—or worse, dropping out.

Much credit must be given to the leadership and faculty members in the Department of Teacher Education (especially during Dr. Alane Starko’s time as department head) who undertook to structure the advising process for prospective teachers, across the campus, such that all students similarly situated got identical information and advice. Neither faculty members nor students regularly used the catalog as an official source of information; advising sheets were the custom. New advising sheets for each program were created and distributed. Old advising sheets were hunted down and destroyed.

I took steps to make sure that the COE was the first of EMU’s colleges to have a web site and among the very first materials posted to the web site were the requirements—curricular and otherwise—for the various programs of study. Interestingly, those web sites were used with amazing rapidity by current and prospective students. As a result, authoritative self-advising increased considerably.

A major leap forward with respect to advising came about in 2000-2001. The COE Advising Office, under the direction of Dr. Olga Nelson, opened during that year and provided admirable, highly valuable service for the remainder of the 1991-2004 time period and thereafter. The office included a satellite location for EMU Career Services. More than 1,000 visitors were served the first year and much larger numbers afterwards. Under Dr. Nelson’s fine leadership, there was a revision and expansion of an advisor handbook, advisor training across campus involving anyone who came into contact with prospective teachers, creation of a newsletter and a Web page, expanded communications with community colleges concerning transfer students, creation of an advisory board, and creation of new transfer policies and procedures for prospective students. In addition, in the first year, more than 50 group advising sessions were held for prospective elementary students, about 25 for prospective secondary students, and several dozen for prospective post-baccalaureate students. These numbers became appreciably larger in subsequent years. In addition to all that, Dr. Nelson personally and individually advised a large number of students who had unusual issues or concerns.

Dr. Nelson received a number of recognitions—locally and nationally—for her work with advising, all extremely well deserved. Although I don’t have data to back it up, I can’t help but feel that the work of this Advising Office, and of Dr. Nelson in particular, contributed very heavily to our rapidly increasing admission, retention, and exit statistics during the latter part of the 1991-2004 period.

Service Courses and Non-Professional Educator Programs. During the 1991-2004 period, the COE, through the Department of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (HPERD), provided a wide range of courses that were used by EMU students to satisfy a university-wide “physical education” requirement. This generated a large number of student semester credit hours.

Although there were a few instances elsewhere in the COE (*e.g.*, community counseling in the Department of Leadership and Counseling), HPERD housed most of COE’s non-teaching programs. In addition to “teaching” programs in physical education and health education, HPERD housed very successful, and in some instances, large, programs in such areas as athletic training, sports medicine, recreation and parks, therapeutic recreation, and dance. As may be seen in Appendix A, students in these non-teaching programs were very active in research, professional activities, and presentations and they received numerous recognitions at the state and national levels.

### Issues Related to “Nation’s Largest Producer of Educational Personnel”

Mis-interpretations It was a constant battle for me, as dean, to deal with well-intentioned persons (generally) outside of the COE who publicly altered and/or misinterpreted the assertion that EMU was the nation’s largest producer of educational personnel—and with other persons and groups who then (often correctly) challenged the mis-stated assertion. No, it was not the COE, but EMU as a whole, who did this. No, we (EMU or COE) didn’t often, if ever, produce the largest number of new teachers in a given year—we’re talking about the total of all professional educators. It was always interesting, even if sometimes frustrating, to see how this statement was used by others.

Where Did the Assertion Come From? Each year, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) required each of its member institutions to submit an “annual report.” Inasmuch as AACTE membership included almost all institutions of any size (including EMU) that prepared educational personnel, aggregate information from the AACTE annual reports represented a rather complete quantitative picture of professional educator preparation around the country for any given year. Part of the annual report was statistical in nature.

AACTE asked its member institutions to report “productivity” in several categories. These categories included the numbers of persons prepared for a state credential as (a) an initial teacher, (b) an “advanced” teacher (previously certified teachers who completed requirements for a higher-level credential, and (c) administrator, school counselor, and other school personnel (*e.g.*, school psychologist, school librarian). The sum of these numbers was our total “productivity.”

The following year's AACTE *Directory* reported these statistics, alphabetically by state and alphabetically by institution within each state. When each year's new *Directory* arrived, it took only a short while to scan the totals that were reported for each institution to see if any other institution's total was larger than EMU's total. Thus, with rare exceptions, we could easily show each year that EMU was the nation's largest producer of educational personnel.

Preparing Our Annual Report for AACTE. Each year, preparing the statistical section of our annual report to AACTE was an enormous headache. Information from central administration was maintained by college, and thus largely useless for this purpose. We had to keep a "separate set of books." In the early years of the 1991-2004 period, the "certification officer" function was housed in the Office of Registration and Records and we in the COE had little control/influence over/information about the requirements for a recommendation for certification and who/how many people received this recommendation. Enforcement of curricular requirements and maintenance of appropriate records improved considerably after I was able to persuade then-Provost Collins to move the "certification officer" function from Registration and Records to the College of Education.

We had to take care that our COE program completers who were not prepared for some K-12 related occupation were not included in the AACTE annual report. Students who had completed a secondary or K-12 teacher preparation program (other than physical education) were considered, in institutional records, to be program completers in an EMU college other than COE. We had to rely on COE admission/student teaching/recommendation for certification records to include the secondary and K-12 initial teacher program completers. For the "advanced" teachers, we had to rely on recommendation for certification records, although at both the initial and advanced levels, we had to adjust for those who had completed a program of study, but who hadn't, for whatever reason, applied for the credential that went with that.

For a while, Michigan was the only state that didn't certify school principals, superintendents, and other central office administrative personnel. AACTE advised us—and presumably all Michigan institutions that prepared administrators—to include those who had completed an administrator preparation program, even if there was no state certificate for them to obtain—in order that data from Michigan would be comparable to that of the other 49 states that had such a certification in place.

For the decade of the 1990's, EMU's aggregate total "productivity" (as defined by AACTE) of new teachers, teachers receiving an advanced credential, administrators, counselors, and other school personnel was 19,257--considerably ahead of Central Michigan University (15,143), Wayne State University (14,811), Western Michigan University (13,335), University of South Florida (12,619), Nova Southeastern (10,933), Indiana University (10,740), University of Central Oklahoma (10,628), Northern Arizona University (10,613), and University of Georgia (10,455)—our major "competitors" at the time.

Other surveys. Surveys about the number of minority initial teachers prepared, etc., from the federal government and other national agencies/organizations, often went to and were completed and submitted by EMU offices outside of COE. As a result, the numbers for our institution were frequently under-reported, inasmuch as the other EMU offices often seemed to include only elementary/early childhood, special education, and physical education teachers, using just data about the COE in central administration records. On the positive side, information submitted to the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and then reported back on a national level typically revealed that EMU/COE prepared more special education teachers each year than any other institution.

Record-keeping and reporting about the institution's "productivity" of professional educators was a major problem for a long time.

### Qualitative Individual and Group Recognitions

Some of the major local/state/national/international recognitions received by COE students and student groups, as well as other students in the initial teacher preparation program, during the 1991-2004 period are given in Appendix A, not in any order within a given year. These lists are intended to be representative, rather than exhaustive.

As proud as I—and others—are of these accomplishments, I am equally proud of thousands of COE and teacher preparation students, not listed, who achieved their academic credential under difficult conditions. A substantial portion of the COE and teacher preparation student body at any time could be described as one or more of commuter, part-time student, first-generation college student, single parent, holding one or more jobs while attending school, responsible for caring for family members, financially strained, products of a poor educational background, years away from previous formal education, and even abused/homeless/hungry. I salute them!