

## INTRODUCTION

As the title indicates, the period of time covered in this document is 1991 through 2004, in particular July 1, 2004 through (generally) June 30, 2004. This is the period of time that I served as Dean of the College of Education (COE) of Eastern Michigan University (EMU), also holding the title of professor of educational leadership. As dean, I succeeded the late Dr. W. Scott Westerman, Jr., to whom I am much indebted in many ways, and I was immediately succeeded by, on an interim basis, Dr. Alane Starko.

The subject matter deals specifically with EMU's COE during that period of time and generally with the educator preparation programs that were distributed among most of EMU's academic colleges. As will be discussed in the chapter on accreditation and program approvals, for accreditation and program approval purposes, the College of Education was designated by the EMU Provost as the "unit" "in charge" of professional educator preparation for the entire campus (although "delivery" was widely dispersed across campus) and the Dean of the College of Education was similarly designated as the "officer" "in charge" of the "unit." As a result, I was nominally responsible for (a) the educator preparation programs of the campus and (b) a number of non-educator preparation programs that were housed in the COE (primarily in the Department of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance).

It is extremely important to note that this is a personal history of the time, activities, and recognitions included in this document. As a result, it differs in a number of ways from other "histories." Among those are:

1. First-person pronouns are used with some frequency. The "I" refers to me, of course, and the "we" includes various associate deans, department heads, staff members, faculty groups, and individual faculty members working under my general direction on some project/activity.
2. I have not hesitated to include my own opinion, sometimes in a negative way, about various matters and issues that confronted us. Undoubtedly, others would view these matters/issues differently and those views are to be respected. Nevertheless, the point is that what is presented is how I viewed the matter/issue at the time, and, to the extent that this is a sort of autobiographical document, I'm comfortable with sharing what my view was/is on the matter/issue.
3. The objectivity of this account is certainly open to question. I am reminded of the fable about the group of blind persons experiencing an elephant for the first time, with one feeling the tail, another an ear, another the trunk, another a leg, and the like. Each came away with quite a different view of what an elephant is like. If a reader considers the COE—or the educator preparation programs of EMU—as the "elephant," but has an association with some part of the whole, she/he will have a different story to tell about part or all of this time period. That's great—that's their story. This account is my story about my experience with the "elephant"!

4. As large and complex as this whole organizational structure was at the time, there are parts of the whole operation that I knew a good deal about, parts that I knew superficially, and parts that I knew little (or even nothing) about. I have chosen to include in this document those matters/items about which I knew something at the time. As a result, who knows what has been left out?

Almost every Monday during the entire period, I edited and distributed (first, in print and later, electronically) a two-to-four-page *Monday Report* to all COE faculty and staff members, as well as to a number of parties external to the COE. Prominent in the content of each issue was a reporting of all accomplishments, achievements, recognitions, and major activities that had come to my attention since the previous issue. Those back issues of *Monday Report* are the almost sole source of information included in this document. As a result, if I didn't know about a matter at about the time it occurred, it didn't get into *Monday Report* and, as a result, it isn't included in this document.

I welcome suggestions concerning significant omissions and I'm open to preparing an *Addendum* such as to make the history of this period more complete. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy sharing my experience with what I consider to be the "golden years"—before and since (at least to date) --of the EMU COE and the professional educator preparation programs of the university, 1991-2004.

#### Acknowledgements

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Spelling of names and name variations are generally given here as they originally appeared in the issues of *Monday Report*. I suspect there are many inconsistencies and errors and for these I apologize and take full responsibility.

Jerry Robbins