

**University Council on Teacher Education**  
**Minutes for January 13, 2025**  
**3:00-4:00**  
**Zoom**

**Members Present:** Mark Akubo, Steve Amendum, Suzanne Burton, Teresa Hickok, Sarah Mallory, Krissy Najera, Aimee Pearsall, Rosalyn Washington

**Members Not Present:** Rena Hallam, Trish Hermance

**Guests:** Nigel Caplan, Sarah Curtiss, Tory McHugh

**Announcements**

- Regarding UDTPA, as you know, we developed the UDTPA because the legislation removed the EDTPA performance assessment requirement but still required us to have some kind of assessment. We piloted the first iteration last spring; it showed us where we needed to improve. In December we received feedback from students and field instructors. The submissions were much improved, but the time it took field instructors to score these was quadrupled. Tory and I discussed the ability to establish reliability and validity, which is needed for CAEP, would be very difficult because of the revolving door of field instructors who would evaluate the tasks. When it was originally conceived, some faculty planned to score the tasks while other programs chose FIs to evaluate. We think that it is too big a lift for FIs to evaluate the tasks due to the time involved without remuneration for the extra work. Tory looked at legislation and it states that we need to replace the performance assessment with an assessment of student's pedagogical ability to teach the students they serve. So, it doesn't say "performance assessment". ETS offers an assessment called "Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT)". It is similar to praxis, and we would have to prep students, but there is no state passing score, and it costs about half of the EDTPA. ETS can provide us with a suite of tools to analyze the data, which if we stayed with UDTPA, we would have to develop from the ground up because it doesn't exist. Tory is working with DDOE to assure this is viable. She will also discuss with CAEP. So, for now we are stopping any work on the UDTPA and Tory will provide an update to the council at a future UCTE meeting.

**New Business**

**1. SPED program changes (Sarah Curtiss)**

- **Name Change:** The new name, Teaching Students with Disabilities, will apply across all tracks and concentrations of the M.Ed. The new name is more direct and aligns with the State's teacher certification terminology. This helps to make the degree more recognizable to both general and special education teachers who are interested in pursuing additional certification, which is possible to accomplish via the coursework in this M.Ed. The new name will align with the proposed Graduate Certificate in Teaching Students with Disabilities that provides a pathway to the degree.

- **Concentrations:** The revised MEd degree-only track will have two concentrations (Autism/Severe Disabilities and K-12) instead of three (Autism/Severe Disabilities, Elementary Special Education, Secondary Special Education). The elementary and secondary special education concentrations will be combined into a K-12 concentration by revising the elementary concentration to include secondary and disestablishing the separate secondary concentration. The K-12 name aligns with the state's grade band scope and terminology for special education teachers of students with disabilities.
- **C. Concentration Electives.** Electives are specified to facilitate the degree audit process.
- **C.1. Autism/Severe Disabilities:** EDUC 624, EDUC 626, EDUC 669, EDUC 655, and one of the following - EDUC 673, EDUC 679
- **C.2. K-12:** EDUC 757, EDUC 653, EDUC 673, EDUC 679, and one of the following: EDUC 658, EDUC 624, or an intermediate method not taken to satisfy core course requirements- EDUC 754, EDUC 674, EDUC 625.
- **D. Program Policy Statement Changes:**
- **D.1. Admissions:** Added explanation that the Teaching Students with Disabilities Graduate Certificates is accepted as pathway to the M.Ed. Also added statement in degree requirements table for the M.Ed. degree only track that all 15 credits from the certificates will count toward the degree. Also updated application deadlines.
- **D.2. Removed Master's Thesis Option.** Overtime, the program has primarily served practicing teachers and state teacher education requirements versus developing student research skills. Only two students in the last 20 years requested a thesis option.
- **D.3. Added Assessment Plan Section.** Added section that is now included in graduate program policy templates. The Program Education Goals (PEGs) are now described and included in Appendix B. The separate M.Ed. degree-only track secondary special education PEGs have been dropped. The M.Ed. degree-only track elementary special education PEGs have been revised to use the terminology of K-12.
- **D.4. Updated / Removed Outdated Language:** Deleted references to program options that no longer exist (e.g., educational technology specialist focus area; online version of the master's option). Corrected names of centers/units. Revised language to reflect more current procedures.
- **D.5. Revised Language about M.Ed. Non-registered Requirements.** Referenced state requirements generally rather than specific external exams and performance assessments. This alerts students to the existence of state teaching certification requirements but avoids the need to edit the policy document when the state makes changes such as which specific Praxis exam will be accepted or the name of a final performance assessment.
- **ACTION: Council members are to take proposed changes to their units and provide feedback.**
- **Changes approved via electronic vote.**

## 2. TESL Program Changes (Nigel Caplan)

- **Revise outdated language, update references to State of Delaware regulations, and make editorial corrections to the policy statement:**
  - Remove obsolete references (e.g. the name of the former director; the Office of Graduate Studies; paper-based TOEFL tests)
  - Reduce redundancy (e.g. replication of university graduate admissions policies and procedures)
  - Correct names of courses and programs

- Update the requirement for Bilingual Teacher certification to align with state regulations (must be a language test, not credits in foreign language courses)
- Add reference to ELI Conditional Admissions Program, which has been an option for a long time but doesn't appear in the policy statement
- Include LING 699 as an approved alternative to LING 676. This substitution was actually approved in curriculum in the 2019 academic year and is reflected in the [program catalog](#), but somehow never made it into the published policy document.
- Add for clarity without changing policy or practice in reference to EDUC 742: "Students must enroll in a total of 6 credits of practicum, and these credits may be taken in one semester of 6 credits, or two semesters of 3 credits each."
- Revise admissions section to align with current Graduate College admissions procedures, without changing admissions requirements
- **New policy proposals:**
  - Remove the Praxis ESOL Subject Test requirement for *non-certification* candidates: Since this ETS test is only relevant to K-12 teachers in the US, it is an unnecessary burden of time and expense for non-certification candidates, who are almost always international students intending to teach English outside the US. This has no impact on our CAEP accreditation since we only submit data for certification candidates.
  - Align the Praxis (ESOL) requirement for teacher certification with the State of Delaware cut score (i.e., 149 not 150) for consistency.
  - Remove the requirement to demonstrate proficiency in a non-English language: This requirement is extraneous to the purpose of the degree. Although learning other languages is desirable, monolinguals are perfectly capable of teaching multilinguals.
  - Remove the English language *graduation* requirement: Under the current document, "non-native speakers of English who plan to use their MA TESL degree in the US or apply for certification" are required to take two tests of spoken English proficiency before graduating. This requirement is burdensome, discriminatory, unenforceable, and unnecessary. We already have a sufficient language proficiency requirement for matriculation (100 on the TOEFL iBT, or equivalent). We cannot stop a student from using their degree in the US or anywhere else after they graduate. We cannot define "non-native speakers of English" satisfactorily and fairly. Delaware certification and licensure do not require this test since the degree is taught entirely in English, thus satisfying the regulations. Therefore, we believe this requirement is redundant and can be removed without affecting the rigor of the program.
  - **Align the student teaching entry requirements with other SOE programs:** Only the MA TESL has retained [Praxis Core requirements](#) for EDUC 750 (student teaching), even though this is no longer a State of Delaware requirement. We propose to revert to the standard UCTE policies (<https://www.ocs.udel.edu/entry-into-student-teaching/>), i.e. Minimum GPA or College-Ready Scores (<http://www.ucte.udel.edu/policies/>). Given the admissions requirement for the MA TESL (3.0 minimum undergraduate GPA) and the rigor of the program, the standard university and state policies will ensure that candidates are fully prepared for their student teaching.
- An additional proposal is being submitted that details revisions to the 4+1 English BA / MA TESL program, which appear in both the red-line and clean documents attached here.
- **ACTION: Council members are to take proposed changes to their units and provide feedback to Krissy by noon on January 21<sup>st</sup>.**
- **Changes approved via electronic vote.**

## **Old Business**

### **1. KTE name change feedback and vote – (Krissy Najera)**

- Krissy explained that we changed the name of Elementary Teacher Education to K-8 Teacher Education last spring, not realizing students wouldn't be able to find the major. At Blue and Golden Days, students told us they could not find SOE majors on the Common App or Coalition App. We saw a significant drop in enrollment due to students' inability to find our programs.
- We are proposing the name be changed to "Elementary and Middle School Teacher Education".
- Each member took the proposed changes back to their unit to review and provide feedback. Krissy reviewed the feedback with the council.
- **Changes Approved.**

### **2. Student Teaching Accommodations – (Krissy)**

- The Student Accommodation document is out on google share for your review. We met with Sarah and Amy, and they provided a lot of feedback and resources. Krissy is going through websites and information. OCS is contacting districts to find out what their reasonable accommodations are for their current employees with a disability. There is a ton of information, and it seems a single blanket statement won't help as guidelines are individualized for each disability situation. So, Krissy will keep the council posted on the status of the student teaching accommodation document at future UCTE meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 3: 47 pm