

APPLICATION FOR PROMOTION
Elizabeth J. Sandell
Fall, 2010

CRITERION 1: TEACHING AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

PART 2: EEC DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON

Introduction

This section includes discussion of my assignment as department chairperson for AY07 and AY08. Specific documents for evidence were included in a collection of materials submitted with my annual Professional Development Reports. Some artifacts are included in appendixes to this report. The first part of this section includes a list of my professional activities that relate to work as department chairperson. The last part of this section includes a reflection about the experience and meaning behind some of the most significant among those activities.

Activities and Documentation

I accepted the appointment as Department Chairperson in my second year at MSU, without much experience in the department. I wanted to be of service to the Department and to the College. My assignments for AY 2007-2008 included approximately quarter-time teaching and $\frac{3}{4}$ -time with responsibilities as ES:EEC department chairperson and ECE coordinator. My assignments for AY 2008-2009 included approximately half-time teaching and half-time with responsibilities as ES:EEC department chairperson.

Following the IFO contract, activities in this assignment included:

1. Developed department budget and administer it according to university, college, and department policies. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
2. Directed student advising program, including improvements in procedures and assignments. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
3. Coordinated department interactions with student organizations, including the Early Childhood and Elementary Education Club. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
4. Coordinated department student recruitment activities, including establishing articulation agreements with South Central College. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
5. Ensured that student concerns and complaints are properly addressed, including use of the College procedure to record concerns and issues. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
6. Developed proposed department class schedule and long-term schedule for course offerings, during Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
7. Coordinated handling of curricular proposals and new program planning, including program revisions for the undergraduate program in Early Childhood Education and

- program planning for the new graduate program in Early Childhood Special Education. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
8. Chaired department meetings and coordinated department committee activity through strategies of shared leadership that included rotating assignments for facilitating meetings, recording minutes, keeping time, and providing snacks. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 9. Facilitated department planning activities, including goal-setting and integration with institutional goals and objectives, through a strategy of “program coordinators” who lead colleagues in areas of Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education/Middle School, Graduate Programs, and programming at Normandale Community College. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 10. Prepared reports and other information for college and university administrative officers, including the annual University Assessment Report and the College of Education (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 11. Prepared department correspondence, including information for the Office of the Registrar and acknowledgements to donors to the Foundation. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 12. Coordinated department grant and other externally supported activities, including grants from the International Programs Office and from the Faculty Improvement Grants program. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 13. Developed a proposed hiring plan for departmental action and recommended to Dean, such as position requests for Elementary Education/Middle School and for Reading. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 14. Coordinated department hiring activities, through the department’s Personnel-Search Committee. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 15. Oriented new faculty to department and assisted faculty with professional development planning, including one first-year tenure-track faculty member (ECSE), one first-year fixed-term faculty member (literacy), two second-year fixed-term faculty members, one fourth-year tenure-track faculty member, as well as more than one dozen adjunct faculty members. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 16. Directed non-unit employees (including one administrative assistant) and student workers (two or three each semester). (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)
 17. Supported department members in the conduct of other duties such as scholarly activity and community service, including guests at department meetings about research procedures and about publications possibilities. (see PDRs AY07 and AY08)

Documentation for activities is available in previous Professional Development Reports and in the EEC department files on MavDisk. The following documents are included electronically in my Application for Promotion:

1. Documentation from CETL about my participation in a Chairpersons' Community of Practice during AY07 and AY08.
2. Articulation agreement between MSU and South Central College for early childhood education (hard copy also included in Application for Promotion)
3. EEC Department Policies and Procedures for Admissions to Professional Education (hard copy also included in Application for Promotion)
4. MSU Assessment of Student Learning Annual Report 2007 – 2008: Early Childhood Education (hard copy also included in Application for Promotion)
5. AY07 EEC Department Goals Aligned with College of Education Goals
6. AY07 College of Education Goals
7. EEC Department Team Effectiveness Survey Report, August, 2006
8. Block I Schedules – Fall 2006
9. Chair's email to department faculty members (example) November 9, 2006
10. EEC Department Retreat, November 22, 2006 - Conversation about Clinical Experiences in EEC Teacher Preparation Programs: Toward a Coherent Approach to the ES:EEC Clinical and Field Experiences
11. Professional Education Advisory Council Agenda April 4, 2007
12. EEC Department Course Coordinator Role Description
13. EEC Department Team Effectiveness Survey Report, May, 2007

However, teaching took a second place in my schedule because of my position as department chairperson. This was not very satisfying for me, because I am, at heart, a teacher. I approach even an administrative or organizational position (such as chairperson) as if it were an opportunity to teach and lead. However, during the second year as chairperson, I realized this position was not a good match for me.

Here are some comments about my work as department chairperson:

From: Miller, Michael A
Sent: Wednesday, May 16, 2007 4:04 PM
To: Sandell, Elizabeth Jill
Subject: RE: Requests for ES:EEC Department time and projects

Thanks, I will read over and get back. Thanks for your energy and great leadership, Beth.

Michael A. Miller, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Office 507-389-5443; Fax 507-389-2566

From: Roberts, Valerie C
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2007 1:34 PM
To: Sandell, Elizabeth Jill
Subject: RE: UPD for ES:EEC Chair's Duty Days 2007-2008

You're doing a great job!!! It's lots of work and you have one year under your belt.....so at least you know the cycle.

Valerie Roberts
Minnesota State University, Mankato
College of Education - Dean's Office
118 Armstrong Hall, Mankato, MN 56001
507-389-2518
FAX: 507-389-2566
valerie.roberts@mnsu.edu

From: Robicheau, Jerry
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 8:56 AM
To: Sandell, Elizabeth Jill
Cc: Miller, Michael A
Subject: Wanted to say thanks

Beth- I wanted to thank you for initiating the chairs meetings with Mike. As a new chair I have found them to be of great value, very informative and time well spent. So thanks again, Beth.

Jerry W. Robicheau, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Department Chair
Department of Educational Leadership
Minnesota State University Mankato
507-389-5091
jerry.robicheau@mnsu.edu

Reflection on Significant Activities

Chairpersons' Community of Practice

During AY07 and AY08, I participated in one of the Communities of Practice for department chairpersons that were organized through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. These groups

From: Ross, Stewart
Sent: Tuesday, August 31, 2010 10:01 AM
To: Sandell, Elizabeth Jill
Subject: information

August 31, 2010

Beth:

This email documents that you participated in the CETL Community of Practice for department chairpersons during the Academic Year 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. The groups met once each month during the academic years to discuss strategies for successful service as department chairpersons.

Thank you for your dedication to quality service to your department and to MSU, Mankato.

Sincerely,

Stewart Ross, Ph.D
Director of Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Minnesota State Mankato
Morris Hall 267
Mankato MN 56003
507-389-1098 office
507-304-1624 cell

stewart.ross@mnsu.edu

www.mnsu.edu/cetl

“Volunteers are unpaid NOT because they are worthless, but because they are PRICELESS!” --

Anonymous

Department Faculty Meetings

At the beginning of my time as department chairperson, department faculty members requested and agreed to have full-department meetings about twice each month during my tenure as department chairperson. We wanted the meetings to address substantive topics, rather than become a list of announcements that could be conveyed through email messages. We also wanted to give faculty who teach in each program (Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Special Education, and Reading) adequate time in smaller groups of fewer faculty members to complete the work of the programs, instead of being diverted by those announcements and by small details of the other programs. At any time, faculty members could have voted for additional full department meetings.

During subsequent semesters, under the leadership of Chairperson Traynor, the idea of monthly department meetings was continued. The EEC department faculty minutes of January 14, 2009 announce, “Marsha distributed a schedule for EEC faculty meetings this semester: 9 full department meetings, 4 elementary education program meetings, 4 early childhood education program meetings, and 1 COE meeting.”

Faculty Quality

As chairperson, I worked to enhance the quality of faculty through adding graduate and undergraduate research assistants, fostering faculty development, and mentoring adjunct faculty members.

As chairperson, I advocated and was awarded two positions for full-time graduate assistants. This was the first time since AY 2004-2005 that the department has had a graduate assistant. One of these was designated for an ECE major and the other was designated for an international student, in this case, from Magadan, Russia, the region where MSU has an international partnership with North-Eastern State University. These two students brought a unique focus to several courses that they helped teach and also to several student events (such as student attendance at NAEYC conference in Chicago, IL). (See PDR section with Criterion 1 documentation)

Also, as chairperson, I advocated and was awarded financial support from the College of Graduate Studies and Research for an undergraduate research assistant for 60 hours during Fall semester. The URA did research work for me and for Dr. Duran.

During the academic year, I encouraged new faculty, adjunct faculty, and new graduate assistants to attend the seminars provided by the CETL. I also observed one adjunct faculty member as requested and provided feedback directly to the faculty member.

As part of this effort, I met with each adjunct faculty member at least once to discuss the department's plan and resources for the courses they were teaching. I facilitated two meetings for instructors of EEC 201, 200 and 222, so they could be oriented to using Criterion ® by Education Testing Service for doing writing assessment labs and grading written assignments. I also collected a box of materials for each Early Childhood Education course so that adjunct faculty would have a start when they were recruited to teach. The materials included course textbook, course syllabus, sample student assignments, and teaching materials.

Department Climate

At the beginning of Fall semester, 2007, I surveyed ES:EEC department faculty members to learn what they thought about elements of the department climate. The survey was based on material from the Academy for Leadership training and Development.¹ There were three elements that were ranked lowest on a list of 18 elements (where 1 = needs improvement; 3 = great). Based on their responses, they agreed that, together, we should work on these three elements of climate.

1. documenting team efforts (mean score 1.36)
2. evaluating team effectiveness (mean score 1.33)
3. rewarding accomplishments (mean score 1.25)

The desired outcome of rewards and recognition programs is to improve performance. As department chairperson, I did not control resources that may be seen as incentives to motivate

¹ Academy for Leadership Training and Development. (2000). Assessing team effectiveness. Leadership Development Program Participant Handbook, 7 – 16.

some colleagues. Throughout the year, I worked on rewarding accomplishments with non-monetary rewards, especially through documenting team efforts by generating two “Good News Reports” each month.

An American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)² report on employee retention research identified consistent employee recognition as a key factor in retaining top-performing workers. Research shows that some employees may see motivating others with money as vulgar, and are actually not incited by such offers. This group of employees is more likely to be motivated to improve their performance through the use of non-monetary rewards such as being thanked publicly at a departmental function or by having lunch with the head of the organization. Non-monetary recognition can be very motivating, helping to build feelings of confidence and satisfaction. In fact, 78% of employees indicated that it was very or extremely important to be recognized by their managers when they do good work (Nelson 2004).³ The number one choice for recognition is sincere praise given in a timely manner with specific examples. Allen and Helms' (2002)⁴ research confirmed the importance of regular expressions of appreciation by managers and leaders to encourage behavior of employees to reach strategic goals; and this was true for each of the strategies they examined.

Throughout the year, I used these ideas to recognize collegial efforts:

1. an increased role in decision-making at department meetings and through the program coordinator strategy of sharing release time for department chairperson duties
2. informal acknowledgement through announcements at department meetings, especially about activities that related to AY2006-2007 departmental goals
3. assignment of more enjoyable job duties, specifically as program coordinator and as course coordinators for multiple sections of the same course (both for enhanced empowerment for program improvement)
4. mention in monthly Good News Reports
5. encouragement to take advantage of opportunities for training
6. department-wide pizza-party to celebrate submission of PEPER materials
7. department-wide Christmas party at the chairperson's home

At the conclusion of Spring semester, 2007, I surveyed ES:EEC department faculty members to learn what they thought about improvements in the elements of the department climate. Their responses indicated a positive change in:

1. documenting team efforts
2. evaluating team effectiveness
3. rewarding accomplishments

Course Scheduling

² Trierweiler, C. & Rivera, R. (September, 2005). Online higher education and corporate learning. Training + Development.

³ Nelson, B. (January 2004). Everything you thought you knew about recognition is wrong. Workplace Management. Retrieved February 16, 2004 from <http://www.workforce.com>.

⁴ Allen, R. & Helms, M. (Fall 2002). Employee perceptions of relationships between strategy rewards and organizational performance. *Journal of Business Strategies*, 19 (2). 115-139.

As I carried out responsibilities as department chairperson, I followed typical EEC department practices for establishing course schedules. There is record of my efforts in November, 2007, a full 4 months before registration started for the next summer session. The EEC department faculty minutes of November 28, 2007 announce, “Beth called attention to recent emails in which she included faculty assignments for Summer courses, 2008. She asked faculty members to get back to her with their preferred dates and times for teaching their courses.”

As mentioned, I tried to be consistent with typical EEC department practices. Here is an example of minutes recording Chairperson Ballard’s effort in August, 2005, the week before Fall semester began. The EEC department faculty minutes of August 25, 2005 recorded, “Rooms being sought for fall classes; this should be resolved by the time classes start.” Dr. Ballard (long-time department chairperson) has told me that she genuinely enjoyed arranging the course schedules. However, it is my observation that she frequently had (and still has now) last-minute changes. Here is a more current example for Spring 2010: Dr. Ballard assigned me to two classes that met at the same time and had to change the schedule after the registration windows opened. And here is an example of Chairperson Traynor’s effort in January, 2009, only two months before the registration window opened for summer session. The EEC department faculty minutes of January 14, 2009 recorded, “Marsha showed the current plan for summer courses. She asked faculty members to send her revisions immediately so the plan can go to the course scheduler.”

There was one semester when the first half of two courses met in one room and then moved to another room for the remaining hour or two. However, this was definitely not a common occurrence for the EEC department during my leadership. I do not recall that the Dean’s office ever told me about the Registrar’s Office personnel being “*upset*.” In fact, I met with Marcius Brock (Acting Registrar) and with Bonnie Huebsch (Room Scheduling Coordinator) on January 15, 2010 to ask them about their memories of Registrar staff members being “*upset*” with my work as EEC department chairperson. Both of them noted that they would not have handled such a situation by complaining to the Dean’s office. Instead, they would have talked with the department chairperson directly, and none of us remembered that happening. Both of them noted that no faculty member is ever guaranteed remaining in their favorite or traditional classroom from semester to semester and that occasionally 3-hour courses must be divided among classrooms in order to keep to the faculty member’s preferred schedule. Also, Bonnie noted that changes in room scheduling are very common across MSU. She reported making more than 2,900 changes in the Fall 2009 course schedule after the course schedule was published on the web pages.

The EEC department faculty minutes of October 29, 2008 recorded,

“Ron and Beth presented the idea of scheduling the three sections of EEC 200 in one large room together each week. Instructors could team teach so that sections would all get the same material, same paperwork, same elements completed together. Then there could be 3 sections of field experiences, in separate schools, rather like a chemistry lab course experience. Maureen noted the importance of having a course where faculty members really get to know the students well, so that they can make recommendations about their

progress in the program. Beth suggested that we not do this for Spring 2009, while we explore the rooms that are available and the possibilities for creatively grouping the students. Faculty members who have taught this class (Ron, Beth, Marla, and Amy) will develop some ideas, considering what other universities have done for this introductory class and how to incorporate technology training ideas from EEC 225.”

I definitely did not have this idea to make it more convenient for the instructor who would receive full load for the four sections. I was trying to be creative on behalf of our department and move toward courses with higher enrollments in each section, so that we could be more productive in student credit hours. Within this idea (which was actually discussed at a department meeting and in more detail with at least four faculty members), the four sections of EEC 200 would meet once each week for large group lecture, presentation, demonstration, and discussion. Each section would have also had 30 hours of field experience, supervised by the same faculty member. This would foster consistency and coherency. Since the faculty member still had responsibility for grading assignments and for arranging and managing the field experiences, it seemed appropriate that he or she receive full load, although this was still being discussed.

As the faculty members continued the discussion, I thought the timing was right. However, in this case, I regret the timing of my actions. I made the mistake of thinking this would be acceptable to the department, and I made the mistake of changing the course schedule too late before registration windows opened. The timing was not right. It was too abrupt and I am sorry.

Field Experiences

Students in the 3-credit course, Intro to Elementary Education (EEC 200), had to spend hours in an elementary school classroom for field experience AND additional hours in another program, Chain Links. Joan Eisenreich, former Director of Chain Links and current Director of Community Education, told me that the Chain Links program was losing its funding and was re-organizing. Since EEC 200 students need to complete their field experiences early each semester and the Chain Links schedule would not be resolved in time, this field experience placement did not work out for Fall 2007. I am remembering this situation as more of an “on-hold” situation rather than a termination of the partnership. Because it was “on-hold,” I did not add it to the department faculty meeting agenda. Eventually, Chain Links did re-organize as a program called WalkAbout. During Spring 2008, I determined to not continue as department chairperson, so the actual connection should have been addressed by the department under the leadership of the next department chairperson, Dr. Traynor.

I was the advisor for a graduate student [name deleted]. I was looking for a quality program that would accept a graduate student intern. For Fall, 2008, the student and I explored several possibilities, including the Montessori Learning Center and the 5C’s Preschool in North Mankato. This student specifically asked to be assigned to the 5C’s Preschool. I was not looking for Christian settings. In the past, my understanding was that student teaching placements could not be made in faith-based settings. My understanding was that students in non-student teaching field experiences could be placed at their own request in faith-based

settings – if that worked in partnership with the university. I learned this information from previous Board of Teaching communications (Ken Peatross, director).

I believe that the interpretation of the words “public settings” and “public institutional placements” is problematic in early childhood education. There are very few programs that are actually financed and sponsored by public agencies. The Children’s House, Head Start, ECFE, and ECSE are the only ones that come to mind. Organizations (other than those four listed above) are licensed by a state agency and often receive public money (for food nutrition programs, for special education support, etc.). 5C’s in particular has publicly-funded ECSE assistants assigned to some children who attend the school. These programs are “open to the public” and cannot discriminate among their participants. The designation of “public settings” is ambiguous and open to interpretation.

In Fall, 2009, there was discussion and clarification with OFE staff members; I came to understand that there was more recent information that prohibited MSU from placing students in faith-based settings. I was not upset with the OFE staff members; I was upset with the process that did not give me all the relevant information so that I could understand the situation. To date, I still have not actually seen the letter from the MN Attorney General that rules that state universities should not place students in faith-based settings. I would welcome this information so I can apply it to situations in the future.

Undergraduate Programs

During AY2006-07, I personally contributed to the increase in the quality of the undergraduate programs, including new or revised courses and improved internal and external articulation among ES:EEC department programs. File documentation shows the following activities:

1. Maintained and clarified the Elementary Education program articulation agreement with Normandale Community College, Bloomington, Minnesota.
2. Completed the Early Childhood Education program articulation agreement with South Central College, North Mankato, Minnesota.

During my time as department chairperson, the EEC department discussed, drafted, and approved revised policies and procedures for the process of applying and admission of students to professional education. The intent was to coach students in their professional development and academic studies such that they were prepared and successful at entrance to COE Professional Education. (See Appendixes.)

In other program planning activities, he EEC Department Faculty Meeting of October 17, 2007, recorded these changes:

Beth moved and Marla seconded to change the current course EEC 412 Kindergarten Methods and Materials (3 Credits) and EEC 413 Kindergarten Methods and Materials: Lab (1 Credit) to EEC 412 Kindergarten Methods and Materials (3 Credits) and to include 15 hours of field experience.

Rationale for students seeking a preprimary specialization in Elementary Education: Currently, EEC 412 is required for Elementary Education majors with a preprimary specialization. However, this group of students would not have any field experience in a kindergarten setting. Kindergarten is an important transition and school readiness year for which licensed teachers should be prepared. By incorporating the “lab” or field experience into the EEC 412 course, students will gain this important experience. The field experience is integrated into EEC 412 without adding another credit to EEC 412 because students also need to complete the Primary Block field experience placement.

Rationale for students seeking degree in Early Childhood Education: Currently EEC 412 and EEC 413 are required for Early Childhood Education majors. However, this group of students is also required to complete two additional early education field experience courses and a primary field experience, and they do not need additional credits, just the kindergarten experience. Kindergarten is an important transition and school readiness year for which licensed teachers should be prepared. By incorporating the “lab” or field experience into the EEC 412 course, students will still gain this important experience. The field experience is integrated into EEC 412 without adding another credit to EEC 412 because students also need to complete the Primary Block field experience placement.

Motion passed.

Terry moved and Marsha seconded to combine current courses EEC 441 Primary Grade Literacy and Social Studies Lab (1 credit) and EEC 443 Primary Grade Mathematics and Science Lab (1 Credit) into one course EEC 441 Primary Grade Field Experience (1 credit).

Rationale: The College of Education is changing the terminology used for pre-service teacher practice and experience from “lab” or “clinical” to “field experience” in order to reflect a less medical or clinical aspect to the experiences and to emphasize the more practical, hands-on experience of teaching in primary classrooms. Also, this change reflects the integration of content and subject matter standards into a single field experience in an elementary classroom for this level of pre-service teacher practice, rather than the specific social studies and literacy. Furthermore, this change reflects a more common practice and number of credits for a field experience, similar to Block I and Block II for elementary education majors in which the field experiences are one credit rather than multiple credits.

Motion passed.

As department chairperson, I submitted proposals for these changes (and a number of others) all at the same time through the MSU curriculum change processes, including the COE curriculum committee and UCAP. The changes related to EEC 440, 441, 442, and 443 did go through UCAP and appeared for the first time in the 2008-2009 MSU Undergraduate Bulletin and on the 2008-2009 DARS reports. However, according to Dr. Ron Nickerson, current chairperson of UCAP, the EEC proposals related to EEC 412 and EEC 413 probably did not make it through the system before the deadlines for the undergraduate bulletin. If that was the case, the proposals would have “died” at whatever stage of the process they were at the time. UCAP did not keep proposals for consideration during the following academic year and UCAP did not notify departments of the proposals that are pending at the time they are dropped. The

department would have had to resubmit them the following year to be reconsidered. Dr. Traynor was the EEC department chairperson the next year.

It is a common practice (according to Dr. Ballard) to not withdraw the EEC course and number from the MSU bulletin but to keep the course and number “alive,” in case we ever need it again. Courses that were once required continue to appear on DARS reports for students enrolled prior to the implementation of any programmatic changes. These changes are handled through blanket substitutions and waivers with the Office of the Registrar. There is a list distributed each year from the EEC Department Chairperson that provides common and blanket course substitutions and waivers related to the EEC department academic majors.

Occasionally, these substitutions and waivers cause confusion among EEC faculty members. For example, although EEC 200 and EEC 201 are not included on this list, these two courses are commonly substituted for each other because occasionally a student will change from an Elementary Education major to an Early Childhood Education major or vice versa.

During Fall, 2009, I learned that Block I courses for the Elementary Education majors are considered by Dr. Ballard and Dr. Good as equivalent to the Primary Block courses for the Early Childhood Education majors. This agreement has also never shown in EEC faculty department meeting minutes, nor has it been listed in any of the blanket substitutions or waivers that are followed by our department. Dr. Ballard thinks the Elementary Education courses are the broader and deeper courses. Dr. Good has endorsed this equivalency. Personally, I do not agree at all. A set of Elementary Education courses that cover grades 1 through 6 in one semester may possibly be broader, but I do not think they can be deeper than a set of Early Childhood Education courses that cover grades 1 through 3 in one semester. However, if the department as a whole thinks they are substitutions, then that’s fine with me.