

Youngstown State University  
Beeghly College of Education  
McKay Auditorium  
November 12, 2015, 3:30 p.m.

## **Professional Education Council Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance:** Jane Beese, Christine Bidwell, Leah Brown, Michael Crist, Mary Lou DiPillo, Charles Howell, Jane Kestner, Therese Kightlinger, Mike Leskosky, Robert Marino, Marcia Matanin, Pam McCurdy, Marissa Mraz, Jake Protivnak, Debbie Quinn

### **Call to Order**

Dr. Matanin called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m. and thanked everyone for coming. She noted that she would be chairing the meetings this year.

### **Minutes**

Dr. Beese motioned to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2015 meeting, and Dr. Protivnak seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

### **Announcement**

Dr. Howell announced that Beeghly College will be hosting a Holiday get-together with personnel from the Youngstown City Schools on December 9 from 4-7 p.m. Further details will be forthcoming.

### **Program Updates from Departments**

**Counseling, Special Education, and School Psychology** – Dr. Protivnak reported that the YSU Counseling Program was well represented at the 2015 AOCC Conference with the following professionals receiving Ohio Counseling Association awards:

- Dr. Matt Paylo (YSU Counseling Faculty) - Research & Writing Award
- Dr. Victoria Kress (YSU Counseling Faculty) - Past President Award
- Dr. Brandy Gilea (YSU Counseling Alumni) - Herman J. Peters Award
- Mr. Phillip Isco (YSU Counseling Alumni) - Susan J. Sears Counselor of the Year Award

Dr. Victoria Kress, Professor in the Counseling Program served as a panelist speaking on the topic of 'Suicide Awareness' at the National Press Club, Mental Health Symposium in Washington, DC on November 3. This is great work speaking about this critical topic and representing YSU/and the Department at the prestigious National Press Club in Washington!

The James & Coralie Centofanti Charitable Foundation has gifted the Department of Counseling, Special Education, & School Psychology \$14,000 to use to improve the Special Education Lab located on the second floor of the Beeghly College of Education. This gift will enable the Special Education Program to shift the primary focus of the Special Education Lab from simulations to Assistive Technology. Assistive technology is critical in helping individuals with exceptional learning needs to be more independent, productive, and active participants in many daily life and learning opportunities. The technology that will be purchased will not only enhance the learning of Special Education candidates to then utilize the applications upon graduation, but will also be used by a large number of teacher education and school psychology candidates who will utilize the lab.

Congratulations to Dr. Darlene Unger, Associate Professor of Special Education, and Director of the Center of Autism Studies, in the Department of Counseling, Special Education, & School Psychology. Darlene was awarded approximately \$150,000 over 5 years as a sub-recipient of the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grant. The grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education to the Ohio State University. Youngstown State University is one of four other sub-recipient institutions collaborating with OSU to receive a portion of the larger grant. The purpose of the grant is to enhance and expand post-secondary opportunities for students with Autism or Intellectual Disabilities in colleges and universities in Ohio.

Educational Foundations, Research, Technology and Leadership – Dr. Jane Beese reported that recruiting efforts for next year are taking place. They have actively recruited in Trumbull and Mahoning counties and are beginning to recruit in Stark County, Cuyahoga County, and Youngstown City Schools.

Teacher Education – Dr. Matanin reported that a clinical partnership with the Campbell School District has been established for the purpose of studying a partnership from the beginning and figuring out how to build it as we go. The first meeting will be held in December. The partnership will focus on P-12 classroom student learning through support of the teacher candidate and the classroom teacher to work together. Use of co-teaching and professional development and support for teachers is an important component.

An Ohio Dean's Council on Exceptional Children grant proposal was submitted by three faculty members that afternoon in the amount of \$225,000 for a two year project. The grant's purpose is to design a blended Early Childhood/Early Childhood Intervention Specialist combined licensure. It will also provide the TESOL endorsement and quality regular classroom teachers who know how to adapt instruction for special needs students in their classroom. Notification of grant approval will be made in early December.

### **New Business**

Ohio Assessment for Educators – Dr. Matanin recommended that faculty members take the exam to help students adequately prepare for it. The test results were reviewed in a four-page handout that covers test dates from September 15 through October 15, 2015. She added that 40-50 additional students will be taking the exam.

BCOE Program Improvement Process – Dr. DiPillo reviewed two handouts, Summary of PIPs: Graduate Programs and Summary of PIPs: Undergraduate Programs. For the graduate programs, she noted that she wanted the PEC members to get an idea of what the College looks at; our regulating body requires that we regularly and consistently review data and make decisions on that data. Target areas are where are we weaker and how can we get better? Changes to course content are recommended, assessments are reviewed, and SPA (Specialized Professional Association) reports are prepared.

The summary of recommended improvements to undergraduate programs is based on data from test scores, OAE data, edTPA surveys, and feedback from candidates. They listen to the feedback and seek ways to improve the programs and courses. Assessment information is used to plan from previous lesson plans to plan follow-up lessons. Dr. DiPillo requested that PEC members submit any suggestions for program improvement to her via email.

CAEP Standard 3 (Discussion) – Dr. DiPillo indicated that candidates must demonstrate more than just academic abilities. Leadership, perseverance, communication, and “grit” are important to a candidate’s success. Candidates are rated on coachability, “with-it-ness” (awareness of what’s happening in the classroom and the ability to anticipate), cultural competency, collaboration, and professionalism.

Research on Teacher Candidate Dispositions (Discussion) – Dr. Matanin reviewed what teacher candidates need in the classroom. Recommendations included:

- Take ownership: “It is my job to see that this child gets every opportunity to learn.”
- All students need advocacy from teachers (something I really value); it creates change (not just for special needs students).
- Look at each individual student, cognitive abilities vary from student to student, must differentiate.
- Have to look at gifted students too; challenge them.
- Important to build a relationship with the child from day one.

Dr. Matanin reported that three student teachers (volunteers) have been identified to participate in a research project. They will be doing journaling to present case studies and follow them by reviewing their dispositions from the beginning of the year. There is a need for direct observation, and there are a lot of variables, depending on the model in the school district. It is a good idea to collect data about the cooperating teacher/mentor who will look for advocacy in the teacher candidate.

YSU’s Requirement of Basic Academic Skills for Teacher Candidates: A Closer Look at the Data –

Dr. Howell reviewed the handout titled “Follow-up Analysis: Mathematics Competency.” He noted that we have “faced a crisis of conscience;” many of the students can’t demonstrate a competency in mathematics. The possibility of relaxing the requirement has been discussed. ACT scores have not been a good indicator of edTPA scores, our best indicator of teaching competence. However, accreditors want our students to be in the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in academic achievement, and ACT scores are the only readily available nationally-normed measure that can demonstrate that we have met this requirement. If this group of students is admitted to upper division, we risk slipping below an overall mean of 21, which is the national average and hence represents the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile; and we can’t afford risking the loss of accreditation.

Bobby Marino’s concern is that teacher candidates (who may be admitted to upper division with poor ACT scores) won’t be able to continue to pass ongoing exams. Dr. Briley indicated that mathematics competency is essential for Special Education teachers, and she strongly opposes admitting candidates who are underprepared in that area. Marissa Mraz, an undergraduate teacher education major, also opposed reducing admissions criteria, on the grounds that it would send the wrong message about the academic proficiency expected of future teachers. There was generally agreement with the Briley-Mraz-Marino contention that admissions criteria should not be relaxed, even though maintaining them entails a significant decrease in enrollment.

Several initiatives to support students on the exam were discussed. Dr. Howell stated that Dr. O’Mellan took the math competency test and then modified the curriculum of a special 1-credit remedial course to enhance student success. Marissa Mraz said that she has done volunteer work with struggling students in math in a peer tutoring program, and recommend that we publicize this opportunity to students who are having difficulty with the exam.

Dr. Howell thanked everyone for their valuable input and noted that we appreciate their guidance.

**Old Business**

No old business was brought before the Council.

**Adjournment**

Dr. Matanin thanked those in attendance for coming, adding that she appreciated them taking the time to be there. With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine Bidwell