

April 28, 2004

To: Peg Sutton
From: Terry Mason
Re: Undergraduate Education and Planning Document

At its April 27, 2004 meeting, the Committee on Teacher Education discussed the implications of the Undergraduate Education and Planning Document (November 2003) prepared by a task force commissioned by the IU Chancellor's office to examine ways to enhance our undergraduate programs. The Committee believed that some of the task force recommendations will affect undergraduate programs in the School of Education, while others may not have a significant impact. For example, the Committee felt that direct admit policies for early identification and recruitment of high quality students would not significantly increase the number or quality of our undergraduate student population in the School. Furthermore, a new admissions policy approved by the Committee (4/27/04) requires that students complete a series of requirements including at least 26 credit hours of coursework. This would conflict with the direct admit concept and would require further revision of the School's undergraduate admission policy. It was suggested that the report offers a good general framework for enhancing the undergraduate programs at IU Bloomington, but how the reports recommendations will be implemented in the various Schools and Colleges will vary widely depending on specific conditions and circumstances.

The committee concurred with the spirit of the document in its focus on recruiting and retaining minority and other underrepresented student groups. The Committee, however, felt that it would be advisable to continue and to increase support for existing programs that have shown promise and success (e.g. GROUPS, Project TEAM). Other universities such as Howard University have included specific plans for action related to enhancing student performance in their university mission statements. Following examples such as this would help the university develop concrete, practical strategies rather than merely expressing good will or intentions for better serving a diverse student population. Also, recruitment efforts need to continue to attract and retain a diverse faculty as well as a diverse student population.

It was also noted that other current initiatives at IU may interact with some of the proposed policies in this document. For example, the "differentiated missions" for the regional campuses of the university proposed by President Herbert may result in differentiated admission policies and requirements. This would, no doubt, influence the characteristics of the student population that would enroll at IU Bloomington in the future. It might also have an effect on the requirements for transfer students coming from the regional campuses to IU. It would be important to consider the recommendations of this task force in light of other initiatives currently being discussed.

In general, the Committee endorsed the ideas proposed by the task force and agreed that their recommendations could enhance the undergraduate programs on our campus, but consideration needs to be given to the specific needs of the various units on campus in to render the recommendations feasible and useful.