

Memo to: Graduate Studies Committee
From: Diana Lambdin (and Jesse Goodman)
 Co-Directors, ET2T-Masters Degree
Re: Request to add 1 credit to the ET2T Masters Degree Requirements
Date: April 17, 2010

We are writing to request GSC approval to add 1 credit to the Elementary Transition-to-Teaching (ET2T) masters program by changing the fall M501 requirement from 2 to 3 credits.

Background

Through a 3-semester, highly structured program, ET2T prepares students who already have an undergraduate college degree for teacher certification K-6. ET2T is offered on the IUB campus in two forms: as a certification-only program or as a certification+masters program. (See requirements as described in program brochure.)

Our request concerns the ET2T masters degree only. We are not proposing any change in credit hours for the certification-only program (its total credits are capped at 24 by state law).

ET2T students study for three semesters – fall, spring, and second-fall. Each semester they have a school-based field experience with an associated professional seminar. The seminars provide both a time when students and their field instructor can reflect together on what is happening in the school placements, and a time for discussions, workshops, and instruction about a wide variety of important topics that have no other place in the ET2T courses. During their first two semesters in ET2T, students currently enroll in M501 for 2 credits each term. This single course number covers their field work and associated seminar. (During their final semester in the program, ET2T students enroll in student teaching for 10 credits, and a 2-credit seminar numbered E594 – which meets for 2 hours each week.)

We propose changing the fall M501 to 3 instead of the current 2 credits. (M501 is already approved for variable credit so, if approved, this will be simple to change in the Schedule of Classes.) We are not proposing any change in credit hours for the M501 that ET2T students take in spring.

Rationale

The M501 field experience and seminar have evolved over the years. For example, the fall ET2T seminar – originally planned to focus primarily on classroom practices -- has come to include instruction in legal issues in education, classroom management and discipline, current events and licensing issues, strategies for adapting lessons for special needs students and gifted and talented students, etc. For a total of 2 credits, students are required to do 7 hours of field work each week plus attend 4 hours of seminar. (The students work in their school placement all day each Wednesday (8:30 am-3:30 pm), go directly to a Wednesday after-school seminar (3:30-5:30 pm), and also attend a seminar on campus each Tuesday from 1-3 pm. Originally the fall M501 seminar met only on Wednesday afternoons. The additional 2 hours of on-campus meeting time was added several years ago when it became apparent that more time was needed to deal with all the important seminar topics. (The after-school seminars generally focus more on what has been happening in the school, or on guest appearances by classroom teachers.) Student evaluations for fall M501 have been strong – but students often comment that they earn rather few credits for the amount of time they are expected to expend.

We propose to require M501 for 3 credits in the ET2T fall semester because 3 credits would more appropriately reflect expectations for students' work in the course as well as the time and effort that faculty expend in supervision and orchestrating the seminar. (Additionally, this change would help with the problem of faculty load that occurs when courses are not offered in multiples of 3 credits. A faculty member who teaches a 2-credit M501 needs to find another course of 1-credit or more to complete his/her load of four 3-credit courses per year.)