2005-06 Planning and Review Committee
Status Report

Submitted by:
Dr. Brian K. McAlister, Program Director
B. S. in Technology Education

I. Program Review: B.S. in Technology Education

Program Director: Dr. Brian K. McAlister

PRC Consultant: Jonna Gjevre

Date of Review: January 27, 2006 (Original report: April 6, 2004)

Purpose of the Status Report: The status report is being conducted to address the issues outlined in the Committee Findings section of the 2003-04 Program Review dated April 6, 2004.

II. 2004 Review Committee Findings:
The committee recommends continuation of this program through 2005-2006. The committee also recommends that the student, key instructor, and program advisory committee surveys be conducted in the Fall of 2005 with a subsequent status report by the program director addressing the concerns brought forth in this report, particularly advising issues (Section V.3.c), communication (Sections V.3.a, V.3.b, and V.3.d), and hiring (Section V.3.m). Contingent upon a satisfactory 2005 status report, continuation of this program is approved through 2008.

III. Background Information:
The B.S. in Technology Education program prepares students for teaching positions at K-12 schools in Wisconsin and the region. This program is designed to prepare graduates to teach young people about technology-oriented subjects related to design, manufacturing, construction, communications, energy, and transportation. In alignment with UW-Stout's mission, the Technology Education program emphasizes active learning and problem solving, promotes human and interpersonal development, and capitalizes on new teaching as well as learning strategies. Dr. Brian K. McAlister took on the role of program director in January 2005. A program change for this degree was recommended and subsequently put into place by the program director in August 2005. The degree now consists of 126 credits of general education, professional education, and technical coursework.
IV. Measures taken to address the 2004 Committee Findings

1. Advising issues (Section V.3.c). Address advisement concerns by raising the number of program advisors and/or increasing the availability of current advisors. One option of addressing this issue would be to extend advisement roles to faculty who are teaching technology-based courses. Prior to January 2005, the overwhelming majority of advisement was handled directly by the program director. One of the first actions taken by the new program director in January of 2005 was to distribute the BSTE advisement responsibilities equally by assigning students to technology education faculty alphabetically. This increased the number of program advisors from 1 to 4. This load was redistributed when a technology education faculty member chose to take a position elsewhere last fall. The following distribution is now in place until a new faculty member is hired for next fall.

A-G: Byron Anderson
K-R: Brian McAlister
H-J & S-Z: Ken Welty

It is also important to note that BSTE program enrollment peaked at 410 in 2002. Since that time it has leveled off at 255. This has increased the student to faculty advisor ratio taking a bit of stress off of the previous advisement load.

Other actions have been taken to address the advisement needs of technology education students. Our program has always held group meetings on advisement day. Now we have large group meetings held by the program director followed up by small breakout sessions where students meet in groups with their program advisor. All advisors hold regular office hours. In addition, please see the attached handout of “Frequently Asked Advisement Questions” that was emailed to all technology education students, distributed during advisement day and student orientations, and is available outside the program directors office with copies of programs plans, etc.

Many initiatives have been established to address the advisement needs of Technology Education Students. The program director will continue to solicit and try other ideas for improving student advisement.

2. Communication (Sections V.3.a) Create a new advisory committee with on-campus technical faculty and good representation of high-school teachers. This committee must meet every semester and be charged with setting goals and achieving results. The new program director established an advisory committee during the spring of 2005. Representatives from CTEM, CAS, SOE, middle and high school programs, and DPI were invited to participate. The committee was expanded to include an undergraduate Technology Education student last fall.

Both a Spring 05 and a Fall 05 meeting have been held to date. A program revision was recommended in the spring meeting and after university approval went in to effect Fall 2005. Further program revisions are slated to be addressed in our next meeting. The advisory committee also recommended expanding membership to include more representation from
practicing teachers. Unfortunately there have been a couple of no-shows meetings. Therefore other teachers will be contacted in the future to increase the voice of classroom practitioners.

3. Communication (V.3.b) Prompt the advisory committee to initiate dialogue that addresses uncertainties/conflicts regarding content priorities, high school based delivery methodologies and the philosophy of the field. The advisory committee was prompted to address this issue in both the spring and fall 2005 meetings. Most felt that conflict regarding the content and philosophy of Technology Education are inherent in the profession, and not limited to Stout students, classroom teachers or other professionals in the state of Wisconsin. One could argue that there has been a debate in Technology Education that predates the faction of professionals that split from the American Vocational Association's Industrial Arts Division to create the American Industrial Arts Association (now the International Technology Education Association) back in the 1940's. Acknowledging that not everyone in the field agrees on what should drive the content and methodologies used to deliver it, the advisory committee was asked "What guidelines should be used to drive program development?" The committee members expressed in a unanimous voice that the program should be driven by state and national content standards.

Of equal importance is the acknowledgement that teacher education programs must meet Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction guidelines in order to maintain the ability to license teachers. There is a current statute that requires students to pass an approved content test in their field prior to being eligible for a Wisconsin Teacher's license. Students in the School of Education are required to provide evidence of passing scores on this content test, known as the PRAXIS II, prior to being approved for student teaching. During 2004/05 44 of 45 (97.7%) technology education students from Stout passed the exam. This is the highest average of any education program at Stout. It is also important to note that Stout students' average scores surpassed national averages overall and in each of the five subcategories: Pedagogical & Professional Studies, Information and Communication Technology, Construction Tech., Manufacturing Tech., and Energy/Power/Transportation. While there may be some debate over appropriate content and methodologies, this data suggests that the Technology Education program at Stout addresses the content needed to pass the content tests currently required to get a Technology Education Teaching License in Wisconsin.

So keeping in mind that state and national standards, along with the guidelines set down by DPI and the state of Wisconsin can not be ignored, it is still important to value input from stakeholders represented on the advisory committee. For example, many voiced that increasing the Mathematics, Science and electronics requirements could enhance the program. The advisory committee will continue to provide valuable input as we consider programmatic changes that align with accreditation requirements in the future.
4. Communication (V.3.d) Continuously maintain open lines of communication with key internal instructors as well as those who are outside of the department. The program director should consider actively soliciting feedback on stakeholder concerns and respond to such concerns in a timely manner through public meetings and/or correspondence.

The new program director established weekly program meetings in January 2005 that include technology education faculty and the lab technician. Guests have been invited periodically to discuss important matters concerning the program. This has improved the communication between internal program faculty members.

The program has been working closely with technical faculty from the College of Technology Engineering and Management. For example, the program director, along with Dr. Ken Welty, has been working on a project funded by the National Science Foundation. It involves the creation of a National Center for Engineering and Technology Education. This project has resulted in collaborative efforts between Technology Education and Engineering faculty from the College of Technology Engineering and Management such as Danny Bee, Richard Rothaupt, Greg Slupe, John Dzissah, and Ton Lacksonen. Another example of SOE and CTEM collaboration is a recent initiative to establish a Project Lead The Way (PLTW), pre-engineering certification program here at Stout. This work is the result of an extensive collaborative effort by the program director and Dr. Robert Hendricks. Other CTEM faculty including Richard Rothaupt and Danny Bee have participated on PLTW at various levels.

The new program director has started to use email to communicate more effectively with Technical faculty. For example, last fall an email (please see the attachment) was sent to all technical faculty teaching any course that is part of the technical core of the program. The intent was to communicate good news regarding the performance of our students on standardized tests and to thank them for their work. An open invitation was also extended inviting anyone to meet for coffee at a time that was convenient.

The new program director plans to consult technical faculty as a program revision is considered this spring. In addition, the School of Education has sought funding to create a method of better communicating the role of content faculty in facilitating students' creation of electronic portfolios. Students are now required to document content competencies through a portfolio assessment system as part of the new teacher certification requirements set down by DPI.

The current program director has established a mechanism to communicate with classroom teachers by publishing the "Stout News" column in the Interface, the quarterly journal of the Wisconsin Technology Education Association. In addition, the program director is the conference coordinator for the Stout Technology Education conference that has been held on Stout's campus every Fall for over 50 years. The School of Education also sponsors a Breakfast at Wisconsin Technology Education Association's conference each Spring where the program director hosts and delivers a short update on the programs at Stout.

The current program director is involved in a myriad of activities that brings him in close contact with stakeholders both within and outside the university. New initiatives have been established to improve communication and new opportunities will continue to be sought as
important networks are maintained with the stakeholders in the Technology Education program.

5. Hiring (Section V.3.m) Prompt the department chair/faculty to continue the search and screen process for qualified staff, and as needed, provide resource support for staffing needs. The Technology Education faculty and program director were provided access to part time clerical help starting January 2005. An LTE was hired and now splits time between SOE faculty in McCalmont and the Communication Technologies Building.

The technology education program was granted the right to search for two faculty during the 2003-2004 academic year. A new faculty member was hired during that search and screen and started in the fall of 2004 bringing the technology education faculty to four. Rather than taking a chance within a shallow pool of applicants, and after receiving a promise from the Dean of the School of Education to make that position a priority during the next year, the second position was not filled during that search. The second position was eventually forfeited/reallocated during the 2004-2005 academic year due to drop in technology education enrollments.

Since that time, the faculty member hired during the 2003-04 search and screen elected to seek employment elsewhere. The Technology Education program is now in the middle of a search and screen and hopes to have a new faculty member on board starting in the Fall of 2006.

Overall the staffing situation has improved with the addition of clerical help. And once a new faculty member is hired to start next fall, the program should be in good shape. But it is recommended that a close eye be kept on enrollment trends so that we do not end up with the situation we had in 2002 when enrollments ballooned to over 400 at a time when we were already under staffed.
I. Degree: B.S. in Technology Education

Program Director: Dr. Brian K. McAlister

PRC Status Report Liaison: Jonna Gjevre

Date of Status Report: February 28, 2006

Date of Last Review: April 6, 2004

II. Previous Review:

Issue(s) of Concern

1. Advising: Students report dissatisfaction with availability and quality of advising.

2. Communication: Advisory committee and other stakeholders need to work effectively to initiate dialogue and maintain open lines of communication.

3. Hiring: Recruitment and retention of qualified staff is needed to meet program goals.

Response Summary

PRC program objectives that have been met:

1. Advising: The program director has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing this concern. The student surveys show a marked improvement in this area. The program director has provided students with an advising FAQ sheet, has distributed advising responsibilities across the faculty, and has communicated effectively with concerned parties.

2. Communication: The program director acknowledges that conflicts of opinion about priorities and objectives are endemic in this field. That being said, the program director has held advisory board meetings, solicited feedback from various stakeholders, and initiated dialogue regarding program goals, curriculum choices, DPI requirements, and national trends.

3. Hiring: Although clerical support has been obtained, recruiting qualified faculty and staff remains challenging, as a recent hire left the program for employment elsewhere. However, a search is ongoing for a new faculty member. If enrollments remain stable, the expected addition of a new faculty member in Fall 2006 will be sufficient to program needs.

III. Committee Findings:

The Planning and Review Committee recommends the continuation of this program until the next scheduled review in academic year 2009-10. It is recommended that the program director remain especially attentive to concerns about retention of qualified faculty and staff. The committee also notes that the recent student survey results exhibited a pattern of responses expressing continued student dissatisfaction with certain program faculty. It is recommended that the department chair and the dean monitor and address this concern, as a commitment to quality teaching is instrumental to the success of this program. In addition, concerns about DPI requirements, benchmarks and PPST exams, and the recent transition to e-portfolio need to be addressed.