DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 221 601 TM 820 641

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TITLE Integrating Research and Professional Training: A Dialogue.
PUB DATE 20 Mar 82
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (66th, New York, NY, March 19-23, 1982).
AVAILABLE FROM The University of Texas at Austin, Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, Education Annex 3.203, Austin, TX 78712 ($1.25).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cooperative Planning; Higher Education; *Institutional Cooperation; *Preservice Teacher Education; *Research and Development Centers; Schools of Education; Teacher Educators

ABSTRACT

A dialogue describes the common mission of the College of Education and the Research and Development Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Their mission is away from segmentation towards inter-instructional cooperation, intra-institutional collaboration and the integration of research and practice. They are jointly committed to the development of a fully integrated system of pre-service teacher education; specifically, their focus has shifted from teacher preparation per se toward basic research contributions to the knowledge bases underlying teacher education. This shift has (1) lead to developing research interest for the teacher education faculty; (2) put individual faculty members in touch with national and international organizations; (3) promoted publications and writing activities; (4) led to new and revised course developments; (5) provided research topics for graduate students; (6) promoted student involvement in research and field experience; (7) helped in recruitment of excellent graduate students; and (8) promoted more specific relationships with practitioners. Other gains have been: joint faculty appointments, and recommendations for joint faculty members' promotion and salary increases. The planning and reporting conferences and the sharing of visiting lecturers and consultants have benefited college faculty. (Author/PN)

3-10-82

AERA Symposium

Integrating Research and Professional Training

A dialogue

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Bown

Dean Kennamer and I are keenly aware of the fact that virtues such as inter-institutional cooperation, intra-institutional collaboration and even the integration of research and practice are very easy to talk about and extremely difficult to do. In preparing for this symposium, we decided to do some collaboration as we talk about it. Our paper will be presented in dialogue form which will allow us to present our separate perceptions, concerns and ideas but restrain us from venturing forth into totally different realms of discourse.

Kennamer

These past years our challenge has been to relate activities of two separate institutions. The Research and Development Center for Teacher Education has had a focus, a focus that has changed at times, while the College of Education has had many functions. The R&D Center has focused particularly upon research in teacher education whereas the College has had a broader mission of undergraduate training in teacher education as well as graduate research and preparation of advanced professionals. As all realize, it is not easy to integrate two on-going operations.

In addition, the College of Education is part of a broader University operation and must relate with other colleges as well as a central administration. In fact, other colleges control and teach the general

education involved in the undergraduate teacher education program as well as the teaching specialties. In addition, other departments on the campus teach the supporting work in academic disciplines which undergird various types of research in education. So at all times, faculty in the College of Education must be relating to other faculties and depending upon them for much of the knowledge base the teacher-to-be brings to the teacher preparation program.

Another partner the College relates to is the local public school system which offers the opportunity for field experience in the undergraduate training program. In addition, the cooperating school offers the base for much of the research in teacher education by furnishing the research subjects.

A third partner of the College is the State Department of Education which administers minimum standards for teacher preparation. These minimum standards involve the professional preparation of not only teachers but other graduate level professionals. The issuance of certificates to practice is done by the State Department of Education upon the recommendation of the College. The last partner involved is the Coordinating Board for Higher Education for the state. This Board regulates funding by use of formulas based upon student credit hours which produce recommendations for legislative appropriations.

Therefore, at any moment in time a college of education is relating to a variety of institutions with each having a different role. One could suggest these other institutions are supporting the status quo for the College while the R&D Center is suggesting change and innovation.

Another possible hindrance to innovation is the College itself with its own traditions and administrative structure. There are five departments

within the College: Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Administration, Educational Psychology, Physical and Health Education, and Special Education. There are also many centers which were established for research, or service, or for training. The faculty are appointed within the departments but may have much of their professional activity involved in Center activities. Within these departments and centers is a faculty of 155 F.T.E. with a support staff of approximately 85.

The bottom line, as one says, is that a college of education has many constraints placed upon it while searching for ways to update and revise its teacher preparation programs.

Bown

Given that sketch of the College, a few words are in order to describe the organization and functions of the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education. The Center was established in 1965 as one of the national university-based Centers under the auspices of the U.S. Office of Education. The National Institute of Education became our principal funding agency after it came into being, and we are currently in our third year of a long-term special arrangement with the Institute.

The Center is an integral part of the University which serves as the contracting and fiscal agent for the Center. I report through Dean Kennamer to the Vice President for Research and other offices within our central administration. Since most of our funds are federal, I also report to NIE through our assigned Institutional Monitor and Program Officers.

The mission of the Center is the conduct of long-term programmatic research, development and dissemination in the field of teacher education and related areas which contribute to the knowledge bases underlying more effective teacher education practices. Our research initiatives are

distributed across the full career continuum from pre-service through induction to later stages of in-service/staff development training and support systems.

We are fortunate that our mission in teacher education overlaps in many ways with the mission of the College. The extent of that overlap fluctuated markedly through the years because of the Center's need to be responsive to emerging federal priorities and the recommendations of multiple national constituencies. The Center's role in providing some part of the national leadership in the field of teacher education has demanded this national perspective and the distribution of our research sites in schools and colleges across the country. In its teacher education program particularly, the College is principally concerned with State priorities, mandates and constraints. These and other factors have determined the degree of overlap in our respective responsibilities and functions and have strongly influenced the amount and kind of functional collaboration at different points in time.

Kennamer

There is no question that the College of Education and its programs have benefited greatly by relating with the R&D Center for Teacher Education these past years. There have been significant changes in the college programs because of contributions from the R&D Center. One change that is most critical involves the procedures and examinations used in evaluating candidates for admission to the teacher education program at the undergraduate level. Such admissions procedures that are now used are a direct result of research done by the R&D Center. Also, the development of a block program that has students and faculty working

jointly within the public schools has come from the research and experimentation of the R&D Center.

Other types of gains have been: joint faculty appointments, in both the College and the Center, recommendations for promotion and salary increases for faculty members who have been involved jointly with Center and College, and the various R&D national planning conferences and reporting conferences have been of benefit to the College faculty, and the sharing of visiting lecturers and consultants. Extremely important has been the Center's employment of graduate students of the College as research associates. This has not only helped the graduate student but it has helped the faculty member involved as well. The availability of the many publications and products of the Center to the faculty cannot be overlooked. In addition, R&D staff have offered seminars reviewing the development of research methods and models in teacher education that have been of major importance, not only to graduate students, but to faculty in the College. It has been valuable to have faculty work with the Center for a period of time on a part-time basis and then come back to the department with renewed research skills.

The R&D Center has aided and helped the College in the following ways: 1) has led to developing research interests for the teacher education faculty; 2) has put individual faculty members in touch with national and international organizations; 3) has promoted publications and writing activities; 4) has led to new and revised course developments; 5) has provided research topics for graduate students; 6) has promoted student involvement in research and field experience; 7) has helped in recruitment of excellent graduate students; and 8) has promoted more specific relationships with practitioners.

Bown

This sketch of the positive benefits of our cooperative functioning, could, in all honesty, be matched with an account of more difficult times when our respective organizations went pretty much their own ways. It would be easy to dwell on the many factors beyond our control or ingenuity which have limited our cooperative partnership to a point well short of an easily visualized-on-paper state of full actualization. Instead, I would like to focus briefly on a period of about ten years when the Center's major program of development, demonstration, research and evaluation coincided almost completely with the priorities and responsibilities of the Teacher Education Program in the College. In many ways, this represents a high point in our collaboration due in large part, to a common mission as a major component of the broader missions of both institutions.

Very briefly, we were jointly committed to the development of a fully integrated system of pre-service teacher education. We wanted it to be based on available relevant research and disciplined inquiry and development in the various educational disciplines including research on teaching, teacher education and adult learning. We wanted to cure the segmentation which was characteristic of many teacher education programs including our own. We wanted to overcome the disarticulation between campus-based instruction and the experiential training received as student teachers in the public schools. We wanted a delivery system attuned to the learning and developmental processes through which young people actually move in becoming teachers and responsible adults rather than on the extrapolated knowledge and skill end-products -- almost without number -- which every young teacher should know, integrate and practice. We wanted to conduct continuous research on the effects of the various components of this system

and to evaluate the overall effects of the full operational system against those resulting from our conventional program.

Kennamer

You notice that Dr. Bown has said that one of the goals of the research in teacher education in the Center was to find ways to cure the segmentation of teacher education programs and to have the programs be broader than just the individual parts. Admittedly this has been difficult to do. One needs only to recall the very basis of how faculty workloads are constituted in a college and how a faculty member lives course by course. In addition, the typical college bachelor's degree is based on a segmented approach where a student will put together approximately 40 different courses. Typically, student degree plans are based upon a collection of courses which one hopes have been interrelated properly to lead to a general education along with specialized knowledge and pedagogical practices. Involved are usually faculty and departments from two or three colleges. Underlying all of this is the hard fact that all funding is based upon semester hours taken. This fragmented approach to the baccalaureate degree in teacher education must be recognized by the R&D Center as it suggests change.

Another problem through the years has been the way faculty have been trained and recruited. It appears that the emphasis today is so heavily upon recruiting a highly specialized faculty member that it can be sometimes difficult to interest that faculty member in generic teacher education at the undergraduate level. For example, a department would seek a highly trained specialist while the dean and the director of the R&D Center would wish this new faculty member would have experience and interests in teacher preparation. To reduce this problem we have sought to have joint recruitment of faculty with the department and the R&D Center involved. Another

practice which has been helpful has been the assignment of graduate students and their supervising professor in research projects which are being pursued by the R&D Center. Seminars on research in teacher education taught by R&D for the graduate students and faculty have been an excellent step to wed together the research interests of individual faculty and the R&D Center.

Bown

In spite of these and other obstacles, the program was developed, successively tested out in increasingly refined operational forms over several years and exposed to continuous formative evaluation and eventually summative evaluation. Its particular nature is of less importance to the topic of this symposium than what we learned in building it.

First, I think it was important that we undertook a task sufficiently broad in scope that it demanded the contributions and sustained involvement of all the disciplines with a vested interest in our pre-service program and the combined research and development capability of the faculty and the Center. We were serious in our intent of building and operating an integrated system rather than a set of components however much they might have been subjected to more segmented improvement efforts.

Secondly, this initiative was focused entirely on our undergraduate teacher education program. As Dean Kennamer has noted, in our University setting, most faculty eligible for participation in our program were accustomed to teaching one, or occasionally two, courses in the undergraduate program with the rest of their time devoted to graduate instruction and supervision as well as scholarly and public service pursuits associated with their specialized interests. Professional identification with a wide array of specific substantive and methodological disciplines tended to run very deep. In forming our experimental teams, we had to recruit faculty

willing to undergo a substantial amount of role transformation. This entailed a willingness to move out of splendid autonomous isolation and into a closely knit team. It involved the redesign of previous and emerging program components into a well integrated and potent system. It demanded a willingness -- even an eagerness -- to expose the developing system to continuous research and evaluation.

Thirdly, the teams were multidisciplinary cutting across long established departmental lines, involving University-based and school-based teacher educators in the design, development and conduct of the program and, very importantly, combining the expertise of researchers, developers and practitioners in continuous, cyclical interaction. In this experience, as well as much subsequent work in both colleges and schools, we are convinced that research does not translate into practice in any automatic, magical or linear fashion. Research which is based, in part, on the pressing concerns and needs of the "practitioner in the trenches," carefully engineered into practical products and systems, adequately supported in the implementation stage and carefully followed in practice with systematic assessment of intended and unintended effects has a real chance of being used with fidelity and impact. It is also a process which often has catalytic effects in promoting other needed changes and continuing inquiry based renewal.

Kennamer

As Dr. Bown has mentioned, the R&D Center has focused greatly on undergraduate teacher education. I would note that this is undergraduate teacher education <u>in a university setting</u>. One of the problems we have had is at promotion time and merit pay time for a faculty member. Colleagues in his/her department must know clearly what have been the contributions of that individual faculty member. If one has spent considerable time in

team research, it may be difficult for that individual to show clearly to his colleagues what his singularly research contributions have been. The faculty member must have a research record which is visible and clearly his own contribution if his colleagues are to judge him. This is a problem for a faculty member who participates mainly in team teaching and in team research. It should be added, however, that with the use of a College-wide promotion committee reviewing all candidates from all departments, input from the R&D Center can be made upon the contributions of a faculty member and his/her full contributions can be described. This is why it is so important that the Director of the R&D Center share with the Dean's Committee, evaluations and information about the contributions faculty members have made.

In summary, it is important that the College and University devote resources to the R&D Center in addition to the external monies involved. This has been a practice through the many years. Also, it would appear that the single-most problem and challenge through the years has been that of communication between the Center and the College faculty. This is a never-ending problem and must be constantly addressed. This is the same problem a college of education has within its own operations.

Bown

This communication problem was compounded over several years when our funding agency's priorities shifted our focus from teacher preparation per se toward basic research contributions to the knowledge bases underlying teacher education. Our work over a good many years involved us in classroom research, studies of the educational change process, and more recently, exploration of the influences of the socio-cultural context on teaching and learning. These areas are hardly remote or tangential to our colleagues within the college, but our results required replication, synthesis and

and substantial translation to be practically useful in professional education. A number of our faculty joined us in these efforts, but more on an individual rather than a program or institutional basis. Our recently reviewed initiatives in teacher education R&D places us in a more promising position to work more programmatically with our colleagues in the college to incorporate the accumulating knowledge derived from our own and others basic studies into professional training and practice.

Kennamer

The benefits of the Center to the College of Education have been significant. There is no question that the R&D Center has offered research training for our faculty and students and has developed innovative ideas impacting our programs. The College has a responsibility to the R&D Center to offer access to College teacher education programs. Our most recent joint endeavor to re-study teacher education is to involve staff from the R&D Center with faculty in the College on an Executive Task Force on Teacher Education. As the College of Education looks to the future and re-examines its teacher education programs, we feel most fortunate that we can seek out the best thoughts for teacher education from R&D, examine our practices and seek new patterns for the years ahead.