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# Creating an Alternative Route to Teaching Certification and Adding Teaching Endorsements for Community Members

Marcia Fetters

Western Michigan University, [marcia.fetters@wmich.edu](mailto:marcia.fetters@wmich.edu)

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Marcia Feters

## Project Goals

- ✧ Create a simplified, consistent path for practicing teachers add additional endorsements to their teaching certificates.
- ✧ Develop an alternative route to certification for community members who desire a career change into education.
- ✧ Streamline or formalize a simplified transcript evaluation process for these candidates
- ✧ Develop or work with other faculty to develop graduate courses for this population to meet the certification requirements in education and in the disciplines

## Project Focus

This project is developing an alternative route for community members who wish to come to WMU to earn secondary teaching certification. First focus will be for science and mathematics teachers, since this is an area of national shortage. The goal will be to expand to other disciplines in the future.

Currently community members wishing to do this must take the majority of their coursework with undergrads, and basically follow the same program as our undergrads. This project explores ways that this could be done in conjunction with graduate work, and explore ways that some of their work experiences might count for some of the coursework.

A second aspect of this project will be to develop streamlined ways for current teachers to add additional endorsement areas to their current certificates as part of their continuing education and graduate coursework.

Specifically this project explores ways for current science teachers to add the Integrated Science certification to their current state endorsements.

In the future routes for history teachers to add the Social Studies endorsement will be explored.

## Project Priorities - Stage One

1. Develop a way for current teachers and current science education students to earn the 6-12 Integrated Science endorsement that school districts in Michigan want and need.
2. Develop a way for current teachers and current science education students to earn the Physical Science endorsement that school districts in Michigan want and need.
  - A. Develop a state approved path for adding these endorsements
  - B. Develop a system for transcript evaluation to facilitate individual program development for candidates.
  - C. Develop or identify course options to meet requirements.
  - D. Coordinate efforts with Michigan Department of Education to facilitate process.

## Project Priorities - Stage Two

1. Develop a way for current elementary teachers earn the K- 8 Integrated Science endorsement that school districts in Michigan want and need.
  - A. Develop a state approved path for adding these endorsements
  - B. Develop a system for transcript evaluation to facilitate individual program development for candidates.
  - C. Develop or identify course options to meet requirements.
  - D. Coordinate efforts with Michigan Department of Education to facilitate process.

## Project Priorities - Stage Three

1. Develop an alternative route for community members who wish to come to WMU to earn secondary teaching certification in science or mathematics, for example, nurses and engineers who want to become science teachers.
  - A. Develop a state approved path for alternative certification.
  - B. Develop a system for transcript evaluation to facilitate individual program development for candidates.
  - C. Develop or identify course options to meet requirements.
  - D. Coordinate efforts with Michigan Department of Education to facilitate process.

## Project Priorities - Stage Four

1. Develop an alternative route for community members who wish to come to WMU to earn secondary teaching certification in other areas such as history, mathematics, literature, vocational education, etc.
  - A. Develop a state approved path for alternative certification.
  - B. Develop a system for transcript evaluation to facilitate individual program development for candidates.
  - C. Develop or identify course options to meet requirements.
  - D. Coordinate efforts with Michigan Department of Education to facilitate process.

## Project Partners and Roles

- Science and mathematics faculty (including advisors) Stage One, Two and Three. Support in transcript evaluation, offering evening or on-line courses for some requirements.
- Arts and Science faculty in all other areas (including advisors) Stage Four. Support in transcript evaluation, offering evening or on-line courses for some requirements.
- Education faculty (Including advisors) Support in transcript evaluation, offering evening or on-line courses for some requirements. Developing a track in current master's program for these initial candidates
- Michigan Department of Education Assistance in developing program Approval of program Assistance in advertising program
- Area principals and superintendants Support current teachers and facilitating schedules to allow teachers to gain additional endorsements.

## Project Status

Review of requirements for each science and mathematics major and minor to determine the courses needed to meet requirements of Integrated Science and Physical Science certification.

Verification of by science and mathematics faculty to verify match between state requirements and courses.

Draft Integrated Science and Physical Science programs developed and under current review by associated departments.

Consultation with Michigan Department of Education to determine how recent focus on alternative routes to certification may impact these proposed programs.

Started paperwork needed for curriculum changes.

Goal - submit programs for Integrated Science and Physical to Michigan Department of Education by June 1, 2009.

## Next Steps

Recruiting additional people to facilitate expanding and moving on to next stages of project.

Explore options for on-line program development for practicing teachers so that we are not limited to local teachers.

Review how these types of programs could benefit our graduates who are teaching in other states.

## Contact information

**Marcia Feters**

marcia.feters@wmich.edu

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