

The most significant changes in the College of Education have occurred in the area of graduate study. New graduate programs in late afternoon and evening, as well as eight off-campus locations, have extended the program to serve the teachers of Kansas. In addition K-State is cooperating with a consortium of southern and midwestern colleges to strengthen programs and faculty for developing institutions. Graduate study in education is just one more example of the land-grant philosophy which brings the resources of the university to the people it serves.

graduate study in education at kansas state university

J. Harvey Littrell



Dr. J. Harvey Littrell joined the Kansas State University faculty in 1954 after a varied teaching career in public schools and other colleges. Dr. Littrell has been very active as a consultant and speaker in the areas of curriculum development and reading in secondary school subjects. Presently he holds the rank of Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and is the Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

Both tradition and innovation have characterized graduate study in the College of Education at Kansas State University. However, in recent years greater emphasis has been placed upon innovation. It is believed that a discussion of these innovations will be of interest to former students at Kansas State University, students contemplating further graduate study, and faculty members in institutions who are developing graduate programs. The innovations or major changes have been in three areas: administrative organization, students, and educational programs.

Organizational Changes

For students enrolled at Kansas State University prior to 1965, the greatest organizational change has been the development of a College of Education with three departments. Former students probably still think of us as the Department of Education in the College of Arts and Sciences. The College has had three Deans since its inception, the present one being Dr. Samuel Keys. Because of the growth of the College, an Associate Dean, Jordan Utsey, was appointed in 1974. The three departments and their heads are as follows: Adult and Occupational Education, Dr. Robert Meisner; Administration and Foundations, Dr. Alfred Wilson; and Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Norbert Maertens.

At the present time the College grants the Master's degree in Agricultural Education, Home Economics Education, and Education and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education.

To coordinate graduate study in the three departments since the degrees are college wide, the graduate faculty of the College of Education organized an Executive Committee on Graduate Study. After three years, the graduate faculty created the position of Coordinator of Graduate Studies. The Dean of the College was supportive of this position and allocated duties he formerly performed to the position.

The present coordinator, Dr. J. Harvey Littrell, serves as the intermediary for all problems and discussions between faculty members of the College and the Dean of the Graduate School. This function eliminates various interpretations which ensued previously in the communication process when several individual faculty members communicated separately with the Graduate School personnel.

The Coordinator reviews all programs of study to insure that policies established by both the University and the College Graduate Faculties are being fulfilled. The goal is to have consistent practices by faculty members in all three departments.

The Coordinator also serves as an information source for students and faculty concerning requirements, procedures, and dates for accomplishing various aspects of the program. He coordinates and executes policy decisions made by the Graduate Faculty or its Executive Committee. The fulfillment of these many duties by the Coordinator serves to facilitate total operation of a graduate program for both students and faculty.

Student Body Changes

The student body in the Graduate Programs is changing both in numbers of students and in their personal characteristics. In 1957 the first graduate classes in Education to be held on Saturday morning or in the late afternoon were established. Prior to that date graduate work in Education had been a summer school function. With the advent of the late afternoon and Saturday classes, teachers in nearby towns were able to make progress toward their master's degrees during the school year. However, even as late as 1967, the summer enrollment in graduate work was more than double the graduate enrollments during the fall and spring semesters. For example, the enrollment figures for the 1967-68 fall, spring, and summer session were 140, 264, and 419, respectively. By the 1973-74 school year there was a significant change; the comparable enrollment figures were 636, 527, and 708. In other words, the total number of graduate students not only increased significantly, but the number enrolled during the fall and spring semesters approached the number enrolled during the summer session. This increase can be accounted for by (1) the introduction of a Ph.D. program which brought students to the campus during the year, (2) an increase in the number of courses offered during the fall and spring semesters, and (3) the number of classes offered during the year at sites away from the campus; for example, faculty this past year have taught classes in Topeka, Kansas City, Shawnee Mission, Salina, Great Bend, Wichita, Clay Center, and Abilene.

In addition to increased numbers of graduate students there have been two other major changes. More students are continuing their graduate work sooner after receiving their bachelor degrees; therefore, a younger group of graduate students are on campus than in recent years. Perhaps the greatest change in terms of student characteristics has been the increase in the number of minority students enrolled in graduate education. Doctoral programs sponsored for developing colleges, particularly the Southern black colleges and universities account for this change.

Program Changes

The Master's degree in Education has been offered at Kansas State University for over 50 years. Until about 30 years ago the major areas were Agricultural Education, Home Economics, and Administration. Since then students in both elementary and secondary school teaching have been acquiring master's degrees under programs which for many years were quite traditional. The one exception was an experiment sponsored by the Ford Foundation in the early 1960s which provided for liberal arts graduates to serve internships in the public schools combined with the professional courses required for certification.

More recently the College of Education has developed innovative programs at the master's degree level for students enrolled in Teacher Corps programs at Junction City, Clay Center, Manhattan, and Kansas City. Field-based programs for teachers in Topeka and Salina have been developed.¹ An eight-county area near Salina has been the focus for a program developed for on-the-job teachers who wish to be certified as principals and a similar program for teachers or other college graduates who wish to become counselors has been developed for Topeka. A unique full-year program at four centers has been developed jointly with the Kansas State Director of Adult Education for directors, teachers, and counselors in Adult Basic Education programs.²

In 1968 the first students were enrolled in the new Ph.D. program in Education. Foremost in the minds of the faculty as they developed this program was an attempt to design a program (or programs) which had features other than those associated with the traditional Ph.D. program. To assist in this task the College of Education and the Graduate School sponsored a special conference on designing new doctoral programs in Education.³ From ideas gained from the conference and under the leadership of Dean James McComas, the College embarked on a doctoral program. Immediate changes from the traditional Ph.D. program were (1) having a statistics-research core replace the foreign language requirement, (2) requiring a related area of study outside the major field, and (3) encouraging field-related research. More recently the departments have been encouraging the experiential aspect of graduate education with internships and practica.

A joint program with Kansas State College at Pittsburg allows students to complete part of their course requirements at that institution beyond the master's degree. Grants have also been received to aid staff members from junior colleges in the State to work toward the doctor's degree.

Beginning in 1971 Kansas State University has cooperated with eight developing institutions in the South and Midwest in designing both master's and doctoral programs focused upon staff development for these institutions.⁴ Several grants from the United States Office of Education have supported students from these institutions while they attended Kansas State University. At the end of the 1971 school year, 30 of 31 master's candidates and 6 of 8 doctoral students had completed their degrees. In 1973-74 funds were made available to support 19 doctoral candidates, and in 1974-75, 38 candidates received support. The program has been of benefit not only to the colleges in the consortium and the individual candidates, but to the climate of the College of Education.

Summary

The purpose of this "history" has been to alert the readers to the progress which has been made in graduate education at Kansas State University. Former graduates will still find the main offices in Holton Hall, although we also have faculty offices for the expanded staff on three floors of Dickens Hall and the third floor of Fairchild Hall. We are proud of the changes in our administrative organization, students, and program and we look forward to being able to make even greater progress when new and better facilities are provided.

FOOTNOTES

1. See in this issue of *Educational Considerations*: Bailey, Gerald Douglass, "Taking the University to the Classroom: Field-Based Graduate Programs."
2. Parker, Barbara, and A.B. Campbell, "A New Approach to Graduate Education in Adult Basic and GED Education," *Adult Leadership*, Dec. 1973, p. 208.
3. McComas, James D., and John P. Noonan, *Designing Doctoral Programs in Education*, The College of Education, The University of Tennessee, Publication No. 5, 1968.
4. Epps, Willie James, and Jordan Utsey, "A Staff Development Program in Education." *American Education*, U.S. Dept. HEW, Education Division, Fall, 1974.

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swirling on the walls (an overhead projector, a pyrex tray full of water, oil, and food coloring were used to gain this effect); and "things" brushed past their feet. When they left the experimental area they were asked to record their immediate reactions by speaking into the tape recorder's microphone. The reactions were played back later. The major objective of the experiment was the heightening of awareness through manipulated activation of the senses.

At the present time, the fifteen teachers in the workshop are trying out the ideas they picked up from the three weeks of interaction. I prepared an evaluation form to determine the changes that have come about in their classrooms as a direct result of their involvement in the English curriculum workshop. I have talked with many of them informally. I learned that more worthwhile creative thinking and learning *did* take place in their classrooms. The students (and the teachers) improved their abilities to read, listen, speak, write and reason. Other experiments in interaction were tried as a result of the teachers' involvement in the workshop during the summer. The teachers became more aware of individuals within the classes. The curriculum became more student-centered. English was taught humanely.

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been greeted with considerable enthusiasm by participants and administrative personnel from the university and public schools. The reasons for this attitude are attributed to the following: (1) The faculty at Kansas State University have been careful not to wrap an old program in new paper and fancy ribbon. In essence, the experimental graduate program has a truly innovative substance. (2) Standards of graduate program quality have not been sacrificed by moving the program off campus. (3) The program has not been viewed a gimmick to garner greater numbers of graduate students.

Participants have been the best salespersons of the program. They have related their experiences to friends and school administrators. These activities have led Kansas State University to make plans for a Second Field-Based Master's Degree Program in Salina, Kansas.³ While field-based graduate programs warrant continued investigation and experimentation, it is clear that they have established themselves as a means to better serve the ever changing needs of a key person in the educational hierarchy—the classroom teacher.

FOOTNOTES

1. The author wishes to express his appreciation to Dean Samuel R. Keys, Dr. J. Harvey Littrell (Kansas State University), Dr. Arnold J. Moore (Youngstown State University), and Drs. Merle Bolton and Roy Browning (Topeka Public Schools). Without their support and encouragement, the cooperative effort would not have been possible.
2. Topeka, Kansas is located approximately sixty miles east of Kansas State University.
3. Salina, Kansas is located approximately seventy miles west of Kansas State University.