

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

PROPOSAL 3-98

SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION OPTION IN THE BS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES DEGREE

Michigan Technological University will award the Social Studies Education Option in the BS in Social Sciences Degree as described below.

Proposal Background

For years, Michigan Tech has restricted its teacher certification offerings to the sciences and, even in those areas, has not aggressively sought to expand its programs. The transformation of MTU's teacher certification program into an academic department (the Department of Education) in 1996 and the successful conclusion of a search for a chair for that department in the summer of 1997 have created the conditions needed to expand MTU's role in teacher education.

Within a month of the arrival of the new chair of the Department of Education's arrival on campus this summer, the chair of the Department of Social Sciences initiated conversations about creating a teacher education option within the Department of Social Sciences. The result of those conversations was the preparation of a curriculum to prepare teachers for state Social Studies (CX) certification [history, geography, economics, and political science]. This certification enables them to teach courses in any of those four areas.

After reviewing requirements for teacher certification in social studies at several Michigan universities, especially the University of Michigan at Dearborn and Northern Michigan University, the Chair of the Department of Social Sciences prepared a draft degree schedule, passed it by the chair of the Department of Education, and submitted it to the Department of Social Sciences' curriculum committee for review. On October 30, 1997, the Department of Social Sciences faculty unanimously approved adding a Social Studies Education Option to the existing B.S. in Social Sciences Degree. Documents relating to the proposed option's curriculum, including proposed catalog copy and matrices relating to state CX certification requirements, are attached.

Need and Justification

Expansion of Michigan Tech's teacher certification offerings into the social studies arena is justified by several factors:

- (1) The Department of Social Sciences in conjunction with the Department of Education is capable of carrying out the function at minimal expense. The Department of Social Sciences can absorb additional majors without undue pressure on departmental resources.
- (2) The proposed option contributes towards the university and departmental goals of increasing enrollment. In most fields of social science the bachelor's degree is a pre-professional degree. A teacher education option would give the department a four-year professional degree option potentially more attractive to undergraduates than its existing pre-professional degree options.
- (3) The proposed option contributes to Michigan Tech's goal [Goal 4.1.2 of "1998 and Beyond"] of recruiting and retaining a high quality, diverse student body by attracting students who would enhance the intellectual diversity of the student body.

(4) Northern Michigan University's requirements make it difficult for a student with a Michigan Tech degree to add on teaching certification with anything less than a year and a half of additional work.

(5) There is a real need for social studies teachers in Michigan's public schools competent to use technology in the classroom. One of the keystones of the professional education curriculum in Michigan Tech's Department of Education is developing expertise in classroom technology.

(6) The proposed social studies education program would produce a rather unique product. First, a number of the courses required by this program place an emphasis on the interaction of science and technology with society, unlike the teacher education programs in social studies at other institutions. Second, the proposed program would require that students take their state-mandated "minor" field in one of the sciences, in mathematics, in computer science, or in general science. This would enable the program's graduates to assist a district's science faculty in meeting science/math class needs on occasion.

Administration

The Teacher Education option would be administered by the Department of Social Sciences, working cooperatively with Michigan Tech's Department of Education.

Budget Implications

All of the courses required for the new degree, save one, already exist in the Department of Social Sciences or in other units at Michigan Tech. The one "hole" is a state-mandated course in "Social Studies Teaching Methods" for public schools. To handle this requirement we request a \$3000 annual addition to the base budget of the Department of Education or the Department of Social Sciences. These funds would be used to hire an adjunct faculty member with social studies teaching experience and the ability to teach a social studies methods section of the Department of Education's existing teaching methods course (ED463) on a once-a-year basis.

In addition, the Department requests a one-time grant of \$1000 to add materials related to high school social studies education to MTU library collections.

Adopted by Senate: February 18, 1998

Approved by President: March 25, 1998