

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

PROPOSAL 6-98

ENGLISH EDUCATION OPTION IN THE BA IN LIBERAL ARTS DEGREE

Michigan Technological University will award the English Education Option in the BA in Liberal Arts Degree as described below.

Proposal Background

Although Michigan Tech has restricted its teachers' certification offerings to the sciences and mathematics, the emergence of the new Department of Education in the College of Sciences and Arts in 1996 has made it possible to expand MTU's role in teacher education, in particular by adding a program in English Education.

After consulting with the new Chair of the Department of Education, the Undergraduate Steering Committee of the Department of Humanities investigated creating a teacher education option within the Department of Humanities that would prepare teachers for state English Education certification. After reviewing requirements for teacher certification in English Education, the Undergraduate Steering Committee reviewed the existing English option of the Liberal Arts BA degree and determined that the resources to offer the new option were already in place (except for the addition of one course). The Committee prepared a proposal for the option and submitted it to the faculty of the Department of Humanities.

On October 29, 1997, the Department of Humanities faculty overwhelmingly approved (28 in favor, two opposed) adding an English Education Option to the existing BA in Liberal Arts Degree. Supporting documentation for the proposed option's curriculum, including proposed catalog copy and matrices relating to state and NCATE certification requirements, are attached.

Need and Justification

The new option in MTU's Liberal Arts Degree is justified for numerous reasons:

(1) The Department of Humanities existing graduate program in Rhetoric and Technical Communication offers both the MS and the PhD. The faculty and graduate students in this program will add unique strengths to a content based English Education program.

(2) Given the Department of Humanities position within MTU, the proposed option will offer its majors a special perspective on communication in technological contexts.

(3) The proposed option contributes to Michigan Tech's goals (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 English Education teachers in Michigan's public schools to be competent to use technology in the classroom. A special strength of the professional education curriculum in Michigan Tech's Department of Education is developing expertise in classroom technology.

(6) A number of MTU's Humanities faculty serve on national educational organizations--such as the National Council of Teachers of English and the Conference on College Composition and Communication--dedicated to the study and teaching of English (e.g., Carol Berkenkotter, Elizabeth Flynn, Nancy Grimm, and Cynthia Selfe). The substantial resources of these organizations, as well as access to the people who administrate them, would be available to the students in the English Education program.

Administration

The English Education option would be administered by the Department of Humanities, working in conjunction with MTU's Department of Education.

Budget Implications

All of the courses required for the new degree, save one, already exist in the Department of Humanities or in other units at Michigan Tech. The only new course needed is a state-mandated course in "English Language Teaching Methods" for public schools. The faculty needed to teach this course are already members of the Department of Humanities and the new course would be taught on a rotation basis as needed with other courses already offered. Thus, no new resources will be required except possibly some new books or journals for the library. The money for books could be from the present budget allocation. Journal acquisitions may require some additional funding but this would likely be on the order of a few hundred dollars.

Adopted by Senate: April 15, 1998

Approved by President: June 18, 1998