REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Senate Committee: Academic Policies Committee

Brief History of Issue—why the issue is being considered:
1. Students complained of content heavy and methods light curriculum in the 36-degree Mathematics, Teaching major.
2. The National Research Council indicated improved student performance in courses that included teaching practices.
3. The proposed emphasis will save 15-16 credit hours by including the professional courses into the major (instead of supplemental to the math major), thereby facilitating a 4-year degree completion.

Points Discussed by Committee:
1. Comprehensive Math major with a math-teaching emphasis eliminates the need for a minor (with the existing standard major) and integrates the professional studies with the math content
2. Two highlights of this proposed emphasis are a) a decrease in credits to degree; b) an ability for students to take more pedagogy courses not currently offered in the standard degree.
3. The standard major appeals to students who need or want minors for their specific teaching career path. The four most popular minors are Spanish, learning disabilities, coaching, and psychology. School districts across the state want students to have 2-3 certifications.
4. Both the comprehensive math major with the math teaching emphasis and the standard math teaching major lead to same certification. The key is flexibility—a repackaging of the curriculum options for students. Students in both options take basically the same courses, only now they have the option to take more math and pursue a minor or a little less math and increase their teaching methods.
5. English also has both comprehensive and standard majors.
6. Currently 78 students are enrolled in the math teaching major. The lower numbers on the emphasis proposal were derived by dividing an estimated 50-100 students by 10 (because students take 5 years to earn their degree and teaching certifications) and then by 2 (for semesters). Approximately 12 students will be enrolled in a class (offered annually) to start. The Mathematics department foresees growth in this area.
7. Keeping the standard major and adding a math teaching emphasis to an existing comprehensive major in mathematics accomplishes the desired outcome without requiring UW System approval.
8. As with the standard Mathematics Teaching major, the comprehensive Mathematics major with a Mathematics Teaching emphasis will be open only to students in the College of Education and Human Sciences.

Pros of Recommendation:
1. The emphasis would address the needs highlighted in “Brief Issue of History” above while simultaneously providing students with the flexibility to choose the standard major and specific minor instead.
2. The emphasis provides more options (via the Education Studies courses and Special Education courses) to increase learning in special education, English as a second language, and classroom management.

Cons of Recommendation: None. All concerns were adequately addressed during discussion (please see above points of discussion). One concern focused on having essentially two math teaching majors—one as an emphasis of a comprehensive mathematics major and the second as a standard math teaching major. The second concern was the low number of estimated students per semester.

Technology/Human Resource Impact:
Staffing is not an issue—even with the new MATH 373 course. The math educators in the Department of Mathematics are flexible. Courses with lower enrollment can be offered less frequently (e.g., annually instead of each semester).

Committee Recommendation:
Establish a new emphasis titled Mathematics Teaching (Code 180-XXX) within the COMPREHENSIVE MAJOR: MATHEMATICS in the Department of Mathematics.
MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The Academic Policies Committee,

by a vote of ___9___ for to ___0___ against on September 23, 2014

recommends that a new emphasis titled Mathematics Teaching (Code 180-XXX) within the COMPREHENSIVE MAJOR: MATHEMATICS within the Department of Mathematics be established.

Implementation Date: 2015-2016 Catalog

Signed: ______Jean A. Pratt_____
Chair of the Committee

Send to: University Senate Office