Concerning This Issue

Irvin L King

Since the establishment of the earliest schools in Hawai'i, educators have struggled with the challenge of finding better ways of training teachers.

Hilo Boarding School was the first school to train teachers in 1931. It, and other independent schools which followed, failed to produce an adequate number of teachers, and in 1896 the Territorial Legislature established the Honolulu Normal and Training School. Under the direction of Dean Benjamin Wist, it became a highly respected institution with more stringent admission requirements than those of the University of Hawai'i.

In 1931, the Territorial Legislature merged the Normal School with the University of Hawai'i and renamed it Teachers College (the name was changed to the College of Education following statehood in 1959).

The teacher education program was a five-year program: Students were admitted into the college in their freshman year, completed a semester of student teaching in their senior year and completed a semester of paid internship in their fifth year. Although many considered the intern program to be one of the finest in the nation, in the 1950s, competition with the Soviet Union created pressure to improve the teacher education programs of the nation.

In 1960, the College received a seven-year Ford Foundation grant to improve teacher education in Hawai'i. The grant funded an experimental program in which students took a heavy concentration of liberal arts courses in their first three years of study, postponing professional education courses until the fourth and fifth years.

To further strengthen its academic program, the College was reorganized in 1965. Faculty members without doctorates were placed in a new Division of Field Services, the elementary and secondary departments were combined to form the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and new doctorates were hired to assist with the MEd program.

In the same year the Legislature requested the University to conduct a review of teacher education at the University of Hawai'i. A Study Committee of politicians, professors and educators was created to conduct the review, and Lindley Stiles, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin, was retained as a consultant to the committee. Stiles submitted a 181-page committee report to the Board of Regents, the Board of Education and the State Legislature in 1966. The recommendations were similar to features already embedded in the experimental program financed by the Ford Foundation. One major difference was that Stiles recommended terminating the fifth-year intern program.

To compensate for the elimination of the intern program, several field-based programs were initiated, including the Teacher Corps (1966-1981), part of the national War on Poverty program, which placed graduates from colleges of arts and science in schools in poverty-stricken neighborhoods; The Honolulu Project (1969-1974) which placed students in schools two mornings a week and the Waianae Project (1972-1974) which placed students in schools for a full day in rural O'ahu. Each of these programs was terminated, due primarily to a lack of funding.

Pressure for making teacher education more relevant continued to mount. By legislative mandate, every five years the Hawai'i State Department of Education is required to review each teacher education program in Hawai'i for accreditation purposes. The review process is referred to as the State Accreditation of Teacher Education (SATE). The 1981 SATE Report expressed concerns about the teacher education program at the University of Hawai'i, citing among other things the need to provide students with a more realistic integration of theory and practice.

A major step towards integrating theory and practice was taken in 1985 with the creation of the Preservice Education for Teachers of Minorities (PETOM), a joint venture of the College, the State Department of Education and Kamehameha Schools, a private K-12 school endowed for children of Hawaiian ancestry. To prepare college students to teach Hawaiian children, cohorts of 40 students were placed at Kamehameha or public schools with a high percentage of Hawaiian children where they took most of their courses and engaged in extensive field experiences, including student teaching. Although the program ended in 1996, PETOM established a field-based model—a cohort of students placed at a partnership school site to address a specific problem—which would greatly influence the future direction of teacher education in Hawai'i.

In 1986, the College of Education, Kamehameha School, Bishop Estate, and the Hawai'i State Department of Education formed the Hawai'i School University Partnership (HSUP), one of fourteen national projects under the direction of John Goodlad, founder of the Center for Educational Renewal. The central theme of the Goodlad "Partnership" was that both teacher education programs and public schools could be simultaneously reformed through active involvement in partnership schools. HSUP became an active player in teacher education and consistently steered the College of Education program toward a field-based cohort model for teacher training.
At about the same time, the College of Education became affiliated with the Holmes Group, an alliance of universities working together to establish graduate level teacher education programs. In 1990, a group of College faculty members combined the features of the Goodlad Partnership and the Holmes group to create the Master of Education in Teaching (MET) program—a two-year full-time program for students with baccalaureate degrees which culminated in a master's degree and teacher certification. The final semester of this cohorted, field-based program is a paid internship; the pendulum swings.

The pressure to make significant improvements in the College's teacher education program continued to mount with the release of the 1989 and 1994 SATE Reports. Many of the deficiencies cited in the reports were due to the rigid departmental structure which hindered cooperation among the faculty delivering the core of the teacher education program; one group of faculty was responsible for methods courses and another for field experiences.

To better accommodate the emerging field-based cohort programs, in 1996, the Division of Field Services and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction were combined to form the Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies. This reorganization was accompanied also by the decision to change all, or most of the College's programs to field-based cohort models. Thus, the direction of the Stiles Report which advocated fewer field experiences was reversed.

The reorganization of the departmental structure of the College has also been accompanied by a willingness to experiment with emerging paradigms for training teachers. This issue of *Educational Perspectives* takes a look at some of the new approaches to teacher preparation in Hawai’i.

The first article is an assessment of the many new programs at the University of Hawai’i by educators affiliated with the Hawai’i State Department of Education. Donald Nugent, Albert Yoshii, Lillianne Noda and Clara Burrows provide their vision of the future and make an overall assessment of the new programs.

The remaining articles describe programs designed to meet specific needs. The article by Kathy Au and Margaret Maaka describes an elementary cohort which addresses the problem of "low rates of achievement of Hawaiian children."

Paul Deering describes a new masters degree program which addresses the need for special training for teachers of early adolescent students. Deering describes the middle level cohort program and outlines the educational approaches which have proven to be effective with early adolescents.

Approximately half of the students in the college seeking to become secondary teachers have baccalaureate degrees in subject areas other than education. In the past, there was no special program for such students, and as a result it was sometimes extremely difficult for them to obtain certification. Nancy Whitman reviews the newly-developed Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Secondary Education program (PBCSE) which greatly reduces the time required for such students to obtain certification.

William Geary describes an alternative certification program which enables temporary teachers without certification to become certified while remaining on the job.

In the article by Marilyn Colvin and Helen Masaki, the focus is on the College of Education’s efforts to deliver an Outreach Program on Maui and Kauai which provides residents of those islands an opportunity to obtain basic certification in elementary education.

In the final article, Marianne Au describes an alliance of more than 1,000 colleges and universities, including Chaminade University, which allows military personnel to transfer credits earned at one institution to any of the others in the alliance.

And so, the challenge of finding better ways of training teachers continues with a new generation of teacher preparation programs which are designed to meet highly specific needs. From a historical perspective, these programs are revisiting some familiar territory, but in newer and more expensive vehicles. It is too early to assess the impact of these new programs upon the schools, or whether they can survive the economic pressures which are sure to come.

Irvin L King, a guest editor for this issue, is a professor in the Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies and part-time associate in the Office of College Development and Alumni Relations, University of Hawai’i Manoa.