

CCET
Key to My Development as a Teacher Educator

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Almost 30 years with one institution (University of California, Davis) and one organization (California Council on the Education of Teachers or Cal Council) provided me with an incredibly positive and productive professional experience. My years with CCET were divided into four phases. I began as a neophyte teacher educator, moved on to become an involved member, advanced to become a board member and President, and later served as the Executive Secretary for the group.

Phase One

I arrived at UC Davis in 1970 straight out of graduate school with a limited background in teacher preparation and no background in California. My first year remains a bit of a blur of teaching, supervising fieldwork, and counseling students as I was truly learning on the job. Fortunately, at the beginning of my second year, the UC Davis Director of Teacher Education, Doug Minnis, invited me to attend a Cal Council meeting which was to be held at the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite National Park. I was aware of the beautiful hotel in the park, however, my knowledge of Cal Council was quite limited. I quickly learned of the importance of the

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Council as I was introduced to deans from the University of California, California State Universities, and private, independent colleges, along with politicians and other leaders from across the state. The focus of the speakers at the conference was on issues related to preparing quality teachers in our higher education system. The shift to the requirement of a bachelor degree prior to teacher preparation was well underway and was being highlighted in each session of the meeting.

I left that Fall Conference with my head full of new information and ideas for advancing the teaching profession. Clearly, the leaders of teacher education in California were progressive thinkers striving to create the best teacher force possible. My own commitment to Cal Council was cemented at this point and I ended up not missing any conferences for the next 29 years (1971-2000). Cal Council changed during the 1970s from a small group of deans and State Department of Education (SDE) personnel to an organization made up of delegates from several categories including: colleges and universities, professional teacher organizations, SDE personnel, and public school personnel. A much broader participation certainly changed and enriched the organization.

Phase Two

The second phase of my involvement was the regular attendance at the two yearly conferences, at that time being held in Monterey, Palm Springs, San Jose, or San Diego. My understanding of the teacher preparation process grew considerably during these beginning years for two reasons. First, the conference program always included current and relevant topics throughout the three days of meetings. The speeches by such notable educators as Anne Lieberman, Linda Darling-Hammond, or Gary Fenstermacher provided the attendees with much to think about in the work of improving teacher education. In addition, the small group presentations on a wide variety of topics became a rich part of my in-service training. We were also kept up to date on pending legislation related to our work. Several years later when the research presentations were included in the conference program, the chance to learn from the work of my peers was a special and very positive time. Secondly, the chance to meet with teacher educators from throughout California on a more informal basis between the regular sessions or in the evening was invaluable. This chance to share ideas, pose questions, and voice concerns with other teacher educators gave me much to consider at the close of each conference.

Phase Three

The chance to grow further came with my election to the CCET governing Board. I found the work particularly interesting as we grappled with the finances of CCTE, discussed ways to continue to improve the conferences, set conference sites, dates, and chairpersons, and sought to influence the legislation related to our work. The Board seemed to always have a balance of individuals and institutions that made for many productive discussions. An important consideration during my tenure on the Board was related to the *Teacher Education Quarterly*. We spent considerable time at our meetings ensuring that our journal would be of the highest quality in order to make an important contribution to the field. As you may know, the work of many people over several years allowed the *TEQ* to flourish.

Another area of interest during these times was the role CCET would play to affect the laws governing our work. The concerns centered on whether CCET should aggressively lobby the various political and governmental entities or serve to provide expert advice and consultation. A lively discussion at our Board and regular business meetings resulted in choosing a more consultative mode. Also, related to this issue was our work to strength our involvement with the Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing. We were eventually able to sponsor an individual to attend the CTPL meetings to represent our views and communicate the actions of the Commission to the membership.

My time as a Board member was quite involving but nothing quite like being the President. Again, the strength of CCET has always been in the membership involvement. I worked hard to be certain that all voices were heard since we had such a diverse institutional and individual membership. Hopefully, this could be seen in the focus of the two yearly conferences, themes in the *TEQ*, and the inclusion of more individuals in the inner workings of the Council. As President, I worried about maintaining a sound fiscal situation, producing conferences that were meaningful, and having CCET voices heard by the appropriate state people. I truly came to appreciate the quality of our membership during my time as President.

Phase Four

My final role with CCET was due to the sudden, unexpected death of our Executive Secretary, Jim Hoffner. Since I had finished my term as President with a working knowledge of the organization and the role of Executive Secretary, I agreed to fill the role on an interim ba-

sis. I actually ended up serving for seven years. Once again, I enjoyed this chance to serve the organization and to continue my learning. In this new position, I was responsible for collecting the yearly dues from institutional members, working closely with program chairpersons, informing members of the conferences, supporting the Board, scouting out conference sites, supporting the conference committees, and even choosing the menu for the conference banquet. All in all, it was a very rewarding experience that provided a nice capstone to my many years with the organization.

Conclusion

Cal Council provided me with the support necessary to build and maintain quality programs during my tenure at UC Davis. Clearly, my growth as a professional teacher educator is very closely tied to my time with CCET. In addition to the professional growth, I treasure the many friendships that developed over those 29 years and the impact they had on my life and work.