

Restructuring Unifies School of Education

The restructuring of Grand Valley State University's School of Education has reorganized the division and re-energized the strengths of its staff and faculty to deliver the best possible product to the students, school districts and communities it serves throughout Michigan and the Midwest.

It is an undertaking that has increased communications among staff and faculty, integrated graduate and undergraduate faculty into a single body, provided a horizontal leadership model and created a more effective and efficient way of doing business.

"We've reached an era in schools and universities where we have to work smarter, and we're trying to utilize our resources more efficiently and effectively," School of Education Interim Dean Anne Mulder, Ph.D., said. "What we are doing is creating a more effective and efficient operation that provides broader services to students and simultaneously addresses program review in a more holistic manner."

The new model — which is broken down into three academic units and three special services divisions — promotes cross-disciplinary research and collaboration.

"Change isn't easy, and we're still a work in progress," Mulder said. "Our goal is to create efficiency of scale."

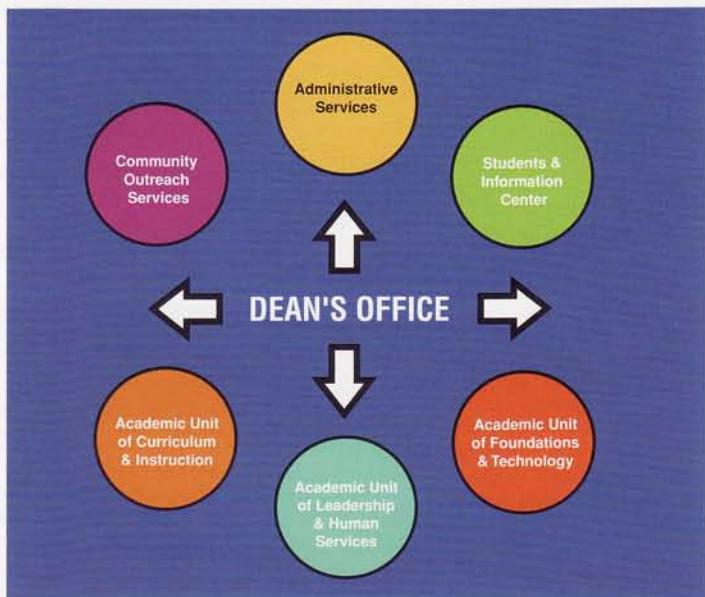
"We have to be better stewards of how we handle our resources here and understand the consequences of our decisions."

The academic units include Curriculum & Instruction, Leadership & Human Services and Foundations & Technology.

"One of the ways we are becoming more efficient and effective at what we are doing is melding the graduate and undergraduate faculty together," Mulder said. "It creates more efficient use of resources and promotes a constructive exchange of ideas."

Those efforts are supported by Administrative Services, Student Information & Services Center and Community Outreach Services.

The Dean's Office is the center of the system. The office coordinates all



unit-wide activities, budgeting, planning and personnel, as well as overseeing School of Education standing committees and serving as a liaison to university communities and representatives to local, state and federal constituencies.

"This is a more complex organization than it was five years ago," Mulder said. "The extent of our services goes far beyond a three county region and stretches all over the state of Michigan."

"The School of Education has a more far reaching influence than many of the other schools in a university setting."

Over the next few pages, *Colleagues* will present some of the faces and places and the restructuring that has taken place in the School of Education.

Curriculum & Instruction Unit Preparing Pre-Service Teachers

As the largest unit in the School of Education, Curriculum & Instruction oversees the progress of pre-service teachers and is involved in a number of field initiatives.

The unit coordinates field placement and oversees any practicum conducted by the School of Education, with the exception of Education Leadership. The practica include Elementary, Reading, Middle, Secondary and Adult, Graduate Teacher Certification and Special Education.

Consisting of elementary and secondary coordinators and supervisors, the unit meets weekly to discuss and coordinate field placements and discuss practicum issues.

"The big difference is that there is a vertical integration with graduate and undergraduate studies put together in departments," unit chair Dr. Linda McCrea said. "We're not separated by facilities, and because of the mixture we can coordinate our efforts much more efficiently."

Student teaching at the elementary level is supervised by McCrea, Julie Chlebo and Liz Storey. Jerry Victor is in charge of secondary education and Barbara Doumanian coordinates special education. The department also coordinates the Graduate Teacher Certification Program, which enables professionals from other fields to attain teaching certificates following a one-year training and practicum.



Dr. Linda McCrea, center, meets weekly with the staff from Curriculum & Instruction.

The division also helps form initiatives for student assisting and student teaching in various school districts.

GVSU's School of Education has 170 students in the field this semester following its

largest contingent of pre-service teachers (209) for the 2002 winter semester. It expects to send its largest-ever number of students into the field for the 2003 winter semester with 220 pre-service teachers participating.