



# *Principal Preparation Reform Efforts in Iowa*

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Donald G. Hackmann

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



# Iowa's Reform Journey

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- **Fall 1999** Iowa was one of the first SAELP states; Leadership Steering Committee formed
  - **2001** Iowa Standards for School Leaders adopted. Changed state statutes, administrative code to standards-based; state permits alternative preparation programs
  - **Jan 2002** External Review Panel appointed
  - **Feb 2002** Program review instructions distributed
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# Iowa's Program Approval Criteria

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- Conceptual framework and program features
- Curriculum and instruction
- Faculty resources, performance and development
- Candidate performance and exit assessment
- Governance and resources
- Candidate recruitment, selection, and retention

Program description was a maximum of 60 pages;  
50 pages of appendices were permitted,  
with syllabi and vitae on accompanying CD



# Approval Timeline

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- May 2003: Submissions due
  - Late May 2003: Panel submitted questions to applicants, requesting clarifications or additional materials/information
  - June 2003: Applicants met with panel, to address any remaining questions
  - August 2003: Panel submitted recommendations to Illinois Department of Education for approval
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# *Iowa State University's Process: Self-Identified Concerns with Existing Program*

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- Identified through portfolio artifact analysis and oral examinations: Candidates' understanding of:
    - Effective instructional practices
    - Use of research for school improvement
    - Promoting school reform
    - Knowledge of literature related to leadership for school improvement
  - Identified through portfolio artifacts: High quality artifacts/course experiences across the six ISSL standards
  - Structure of field experiences
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# ISU Conceptual Framework – *Effective Principals: Facilitators of Reflective Practice*

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## *Reflective Practitioner*

**Collaborative  
Instructional  
Leadership**

**Transformational  
Leadership**

(Aligned with ISSL Standards)

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# *ISU Principal Preparation Program*

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## *Leadership Core* (15 credits)

- EdAdm541 Principles of Educational Leadership (3 credits)
- EdAdm556 School Systems as Learning Cultures (3 credits)
- EdAdm552 Current Issues in Site-Level Leadership (3 credits)
- EdAdm575 Education Law and Ethics (3 credits)
- EdAdm554 Leading School Reform (3 credits)

## *Curriculum, Learning, and Assessment Core* (15 credits)


- EdAdm559 Curriculum Leadership (3 credits)
- ResEv550 Educational Research (3 credits)
- EdAdm551 Supervision for Learning Environments (3 credits)
- EdAdm558 Diverse Learning Needs (3 credits)
- EdAdm553 Human Resource Development for Learning (3 credits)

## *Clinical Requirement* (6 credits)

- EdAdm591A Supervised Field Experience: Elementary (3 credits)
  - EdAdm591B Supervised Field Experience: Secondary (3 credits)
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# ISU: Standards, Program Content, Activities

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Academic Content</b>	<b>Clinical – Course-Aligned</b>	<b>Clinical – Field-Based</b>	<b>Assessment – In-Course</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>3 courses</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>4 courses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>3 courses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>3 courses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>3 courses</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>3 courses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>



# ISU's Experience with the State Approval Process: *Positive Outcomes*

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- Development of a sound conceptual framework based on ISSL; tightened alignment of curriculum, instruction, assessment
  - Faculty consensus related to teaching and learning  
faculty understand interrelationships of courses throughout the program
  - Uniform syllabi (but an erosion of academic freedom);
  - Enhanced student assessments and clinical experiences
  - Candidates understand six ISSL standards as an integrated and coherent whole
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# Analysis of Approved Programs: *Methodology*

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- **Content analysis to examine program review documents** (Berg, 2004; Neuendorf, 2002; Patton, 2002)
  - **Six review criteria applied**
    1. Conceptual framework and program features
    2. Curriculum and instruction
    3. Faculty resources, performance, and development
    4. Candidate performance and exit assessment
    5. Governance and resources
    6. Candidate recruitment, selection, and retention
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# Review Process Documents

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- Program review instructions (Feb 2002)
  - Iowa Chapter 79 rules (administrative code)
  - Proposals of five fully or conditionally approved programs
  - National Panel reports to State Department (Nov 2002, Sep 2003)
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# Conceptual Framework and Program Features

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- **Conceptual frameworks included:** all five programs consistently portrayed four roles for the principalship: instructional leader, collaborative leader, reflective practitioner, and change agent.
  - **Programs designed for part-time students**
  - **Cohort delivery model**
  - *Review panel: Fully approved programs had well developed conceptual frameworks, with alignment in courses, syllabi, clinical experiences, and assessments. Conditionally approved programs had less well-developed conceptual frameworks.*
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# Curriculum and Instruction

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- **Curricula aligned with conceptual frameworks**
  - **Universities used courses (1-3 credits); alternative program used modules. Credit range: 35-40 hours**
  - **All required clinical component (400-hour minimum)**
  - **Instruction emphasized active learning, clinical experiences in courses**
  - *Review panel: Approved programs demonstrated high degree of academic rigor, ISSL-alignment. Conditionally approved programs not fully aligned with framework, lacked attention to ISSL elements, or failed to develop relevant behaviors in the conceptual framework, ISSL, and state policy. All fell short with clinical experience design.*
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# Faculty Resources

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- University FTE: ranged from 4.0 to 7.25; all with doctorates, 14 (of 18) with administrative experience
  - Alternative program: 1 full-time director, 19 “expert faculty;” 13 with master’s degree, 9 with administrative experience
  - *Review panel: Noted “UCEA Standard” of five full-time faculty. All five programs had adequate to strong faculty capacity. Alternative program made “some panel members nervous.”*
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# Candidate Performance and Exit Assessment

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- **Student portfolios used in all programs**
  - **Advisor contact** (program director review for alternative program)
  - **Mid-point and exit assessments**
  - *Review panel: Programs struggled “valiantly” with performance assessment and few succeeded. Better programs specified assessment at each stage of the students’ progression from application through graduation. Few successfully identified true performance outputs in the form of demonstrable competencies or specified practicable criteria and measures for determining competency.*
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# Governance and Resources

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- The four universities reported typical university governance structures
  - The alternative program used Advisory Board to design, deliver, evaluate program
  - All pointed to adequate institutional resources (library, technology)
  - *Review panel: Few comments. Concern expressed over alternative program's heavy dependence on tuition for fiscal support and governance structure.*
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# Candidate Recruitment, Selection, and Retention

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- Recruitment relied on self-selection, some nominations by local administrators
  - Selection criteria included: reference letters, transcripts, GPA, writing sample
  - Retention included orientation, continuous monitoring, advisement, mentoring
  - *Review panel: Cited some strengths in fully approved programs, described conditionally approved programs as adequate.*
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# Finding 1: Numerous similarities were apparent across programs.

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- Convergence in conceptual frameworks
  - Cohort programs for part-time students
  - Similarities in course structure and content
  - Uniform instructional methods and clinical requirements
  - Faculty consistencies: Caucasian, administrative experience, university programs trend to hiring more clinical faculty; vacant lines in all programs
  - Similar assessments, recruitment, and selection
  - *These alignments were driven by review instructions*
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## Finding 2: Approval instructions and criteria were problematic.

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- Instructions and requirements extended beyond state statute and rules
    - Clinical experience requirements exceeded state rules
    - “Critical mass” faculty requirement not listed in rules
    - Programs bore burden of justifying when panel’s standards were not met
  - Some instructions were vague and redundant
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## Finding 3: Little qualitative distinction in (fully/conditionally) approved programs.

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- Cut-off points between full and conditional approval were undefined, difficult to determine
  - Unaware to program developers, panel used a review form, applying varying point values to each criterion
  - Scoring rubrics would be helpful to share distinctions among programs and to provide feedback
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# Conclusions

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- Existing programs improved their existing programs, due to the state of Iowa's increased rigor.
  - The use of the review panel provided an interesting component, in that the state relied on out-of-state experts to determine the program approval process, interpret state policies, and write the instructions and criteria for approval.
  - Using this panel raises a question of who should interpret state policy, as well as the abilities of leadership preparation faculty members to accurately foresee which elements will be most important in the review process.
  - Providing greater definition (precise instructions, consensus on standards, sharing review criteria, scoring rubrics) would greatly reduce the ambiguity inherent in the process.
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# For more information...

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Hackmann, D. G., & Wanat, C. L. (2007). Licensing principals: Iowa's preparation reform initiative. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 2(3). Available from:  
[http://www.ucea.org/JRLE/vol2\\_issue3\\_2007/HackmannArticle.pdf](http://www.ucea.org/JRLE/vol2_issue3_2007/HackmannArticle.pdf)

Donald G. Hackmann, Associate Professor and Interim Head  
Educational Organization and Leadership  
1310 S. Sixth Street, 333 Education Building  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Champaign, IL 61820  
dghack@illinois.edu; 217-333-0230

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