Forty-eight faculty and staff attended the May planning day breakout session on teacher education accreditation. Participants represented Administration, all three academic divisions, and offices outside academic affairs (e.g., College Foundation).

I offered a brief opening statement about accreditation and our intention to pursue both NCATE and TEAC. In my remarks I attempted to identify why I thought we were denied – failure to document our effectiveness and a need to be more transparent in our work. There followed a question and answer session.

In responding to the questions I made the following points:

- No new programs are needed. However, we are continuing to assess our current programs to identify improvements. (An English Department faculty member was commenting on the departments work on a new design for the major, only to be given the impression that NCATE wouldn’t consider it.)
- The evidence we have suggests we are doing a good job – our graduates are hired; employers are happy with the preparation of our graduates; our graduates feel competent; field supervisors and cooperating teachers give high ratings to our student teachers. In talking to students and parents, we can emphasize these points and the observation that we “passed” 4 of the 6 NCATE standards. Students will be held harmless if we do not meet state requirements.
- A data manager/assessment person will be hired soon.
- The conceptual framework (cited by NCATE as a weakness) is already being revised and will be reviewed on an on-going basis. It is a living document.
- A group will be assigned to consider whether the slogan is appropriate or a new and revised version will better serve us.
- With regard to community involvement, I have been in contact and will maintain a relationship with the press. Also, invitations have been sent to a group of 20 area teachers, principals, school psychologists, and school counselors to invite them to participate on a Professional Educator Advisory Council to help us with improving our programs.
• To date we have not involved the local content area associations in our process, but it’s a great idea!
• I was not here when the Center for Teacher Education was reorganized. (Faculty who were here were asked to comment regarding the effect of the reorganization on the accreditation process.)
• While both Middle States accreditation and teacher education accreditation emphasize program assessment, teacher education accreditation requires a multiple of assessment efforts. Middle States accreditation work helped get the assessment efforts going. We need to expand these efforts for teacher education accreditation and, more important, program improvement.

I ended the session with a statement with regard to my hope for the future: 3 years from now I want to see a renewed positive reputation of our programs based on improvements we have made in our programs so that we are better preparing educators for the way we think schools should be 15 years from now.