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# Returning to teach : an analysis and profile of college graduates enrolled in a post-baccalaureate teacher education program.

Mark W. Keefe

*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

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RETURNING TO TEACH:  
AN ANALYSIS AND PROFILE OF COLLEGE GRADUATES ENROLLED  
IN A POST-BACCALAUREATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

A Dissertation Presented

by

MARK WESLEY KEEFE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of  
Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May, 1986

School of Education

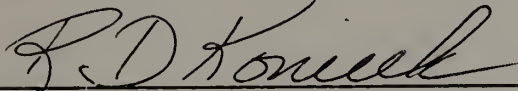
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Approved as to style and content by:



Richard Konicek, Chairperson of Committee



Frank N. Rife, Member



Robert W. Maloy, Member



Mario Fantini, Dean  
School of Education

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ABSTRACT

RETURNING TO TEACH:  
AN ANALYSIS AND PROFILE OF COLLEGE GRADUATES ENROLLED  
IN A POST-BACCALAUREATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

(May 1986)

Mark Wesley Keefe, B.S., Old Dominion University

M.Ed., Old Dominion University

Ed.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by Richard D. Konicek

Post-Baccalaureate (Post-B.A.) students presently account for 20 percent of the teacher education population in the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

In this study a combination of survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used to examine why these Post-B.A. students decided to return to college for teacher certification. The survey was conducted in the Spring 1985 semester.

The survey was a precoded instrument containing 20 close-ended and six open-ended questions. The survey was divided into four sections:

- (a) demographics,
- (b) life experiences,
- (c) career choices and consequences, and
- (d) beliefs about teaching.

Findings from the survey are presented in Chapter IV. These findings confirmed, modified or rejected the author's assumptions about Post-B.A.'s and generated questions for further study.

In-depth interviews investigated the experiences of Post-B.A. students. Interviews which ranged from 70-90 minutes in length were conducted from April through September 1985. Fourteen Post-B.A. students participated. The sample of male and female teacher education students interviewed included a range of ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, work experiences, degrees awarded prior to reentry, and the number of years out of their undergraduate institution(s).

Participants reconstructed personal histories to "make meaning" of life circumstances which may have impacted their decision to return to college for teacher certification. Personal histories shared by Post-B.A.'s included, but were not limited to, the following:

- a) elementary and secondary school years,
- b) undergraduate experiences,
- c) post-degree work experiences,
- d) significant people that influenced decision to enter teaching,
- e) support for decision to teach, and
- f) views on the role of teacher.



Predominant characteristics of Post-B.A.'s emerged from the personal histories which placed participants into four distinct decision-making groups. The following categories describe Post-B.A. reasons for returning:

1. Decision Based on Making Changes in Professional Goals and Expectations
2. Decision Based on Deciding on Personal and Emotional Needs in Work
3. Decision Based on Establishing Initial Career Decisions and Choices
4. Decision Based on Translating Long-Term Beliefs About Teaching into Action

Chapter V presents a perspective on how survey and interview methodologies provide complementary data for examining Post-B.A. students. Implications for higher education programs serving post-degree students and recommendations for further research are also discussed.

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C H A P T E R    I  
BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

In its Fall 1984 edition, the New York Times Educational Supplement acknowledged what many in teacher education already knew: across the nation, a growing number of adults are reentering college to pursue certification as elementary or secondary school teachers (Reed, 1984). Some institutions of higher education have responded to this trend by establishing special programs for reentering adults, notably the Midcareer Math and Science Program at Harvard University, the Teacher Preparation Program for Retiring Engineers, Scientists and Mathematicians at the University of Vermont, and the Advanced Certificate Program at the Bank Street College of Education in New York City.

At many other schools, reentering adult teacher education students are unrecruited and unnoticed. Enrollment of one group of these adults, the "Post-Baccalaureate" (Post-B.A.) student has been quietly, yet steadily increasing at the University of

Massachusetts at Amherst. "Post-Baccalaureate" refers to individuals who a) received their Bachelor's degree in fields other than education, b) worked in non-teaching careers after graduation, and c) decided to return to college to pursue teacher certification as non-degree, continuing education students. Presently, Post-B.A. students constitute 20% of the university's total preservice teacher certification population.

The reentering adult, Post-B.A. student phenomenon, is emerging amidst a growing national focus on improving the public schools and the people who work in them. Maeroff (1985) notes:

An educational reform movement that started by urging higher standards for pupils has now widened to call for improving the preparation of teachers. School systems, colleges of education, and state regulatory agencies are paying more attention than ever to the issues of who should be permitted to teach and how such people should be prepared for the job (p. 1).

Adding to this climate of concern about teacher preparation is the growing national problem of increasing school enrollments and teacher shortages in elementary and secondary public schools. Institutions of higher education in many sections of the country are finding it very difficult to entice college-age people

to enter the teaching profession. At the same time, Darling-Hammond (1984) and Feistritzer (1984) document the steady decline in the academic ability of traditional college-age students planning to become teachers as measured by scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SATs). Each concludes that teaching is attracting and retaining fewer able young people than it has in the past.

Conversely, studies of adult learners and continuing education students by Cross (1981) and Knowles (1973) suggest individuals who return to college are highly motivated, experientially diverse, and constitute some of the "best and most serious students in all higher education" (Cross, 1981, p. 79).

These diverse perspectives illustrate why adults returning to college for teacher certification are an interesting and relevant topic of study for teacher educators. Who are these students? Why are they returning to college? Did they always want to teach? What are the issues that prompted them to make a career transition? What kind of teachers are they likely to become? Are teacher education programs responding to this new population of students?



Using these questions as a research base, this dissertation will investigate Post-B.A. teacher candidates at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The study will focus on why these adults chose to enter teaching at this time. Researching these questions will create a better understanding of Post-B.A. students and their potential as teachers and provide solid data to guide teacher educators in advising, directing, and preparing this growing group of prospective teachers.

To date, few studies of adults reentering teacher education have been conducted. Emily Feistritz provided a pointed summary of this situation:

We don't know much about teacher education students in this nation. A major reason seems to be that the teacher education programs they are in have not been collecting much information about them (1984, p. 16).

An ERIC literature search using the descriptors Adult Learner, Teacher Education, and Career Transitions yielded only articles on adult learning styles and the educational needs of adults in higher education. No references to the experiences of non-degree, post-baccalaureate students in teacher education were found. The motivating factors and

attitudes shaping adult decisions to reenter higher education were analyzed broadly without specific attention to the decision to become a teacher. As a result, teacher educators are encountering a population of students about whom they know very little. Lacking specific information about who these students are and why they are returning to college, teacher educators face a difficult task in developing effective, professional preparation programs and experiences for these students.

Little is known about Post-B.A. students at the University of Massachusetts. Institutionally, they do not fit into conventional administrative categories; that is, they are not typical undergraduate or Master's degree students. They seek teacher certification only. Their numbers have not yet been great enough to force programs to change, but the problems Post-B.A. students face in courses and systems designed for more traditional teacher education students are becoming more frequent and apparent. Their strengths as experienced learners, who have significant professional and real-world experience in the areas they plan to teach, are just beginning to be recognized. Difficulties involved with reentry, fears and doubts

about academic abilities, and other life issues cause additional hardships in adjusting to this new role. Whatever their motivations, most adults encounter very similar problems in academe. Often older students must relinquish all or part of their regular income, while some not only juggle child care, homemaking and homework, but must campaign hard to maintain the support of friends and family, many of whom question the teaching profession as a positive career move. These factors illustrate the relevance of adults returning to college for teacher certification to faculties of teacher educators.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate adults returning to college for teacher certification as Post-B.A students. Dissertation methods will explore their decisions to return while the findings of the study will describe events in the transition process. Focusing on why, when, and how these students chose to leave present career directions or interests to enter teaching will provide teacher educators with the information needed to better understand their

students in order to improve existing teacher education programs.

Prior to 1982, a limited number of individuals chose to acquire certification through the Post-B.A. pathway. During the 1980-1981 year, 12 students were enrolled as Post-B.A. candidates. By 1985, 48 adults entered university teacher education programs through the Post-B.A. route. In the School of Education, where a majority of the university's certification programs are located, Post-B.A. students presently account for over 20% of all teacher education students (N=357).

Cross, Knowles, and other prominent writers in the field of adult education have discussed the importance of understanding the attitudes and motivations of adult students as a prerequisite to designing programs to meet their educational needs. The process of deciding to reenter college is used here to reveal and describe the attitudes and motivations about teaching and the formal education of these Post-B.A. adults.

#### Significance of the Study

The following points establish the rationale and significance of this study:

1. Elementary and secondary teacher education programs are facing a substantial shift in the population of students they are serving.

For the past decade teaching has been viewed as a less desirable career option. During that time, the number of prospective teachers in undergraduate programs dropped precipitously. In 1973, an estimated 688,000 students were enrolled in undergraduate teacher education programs in 1,172 colleges and universities. By 1983, there were 115 additional institutions which had an undergraduate teacher education enrollment of only 444,000. This represents a thirty-five percent decrease in students (Feistritzer, 1984, p. 3).

With impending teacher shortages, teaching is a more attractive job prospect and teacher education programs are experiencing an increase in the number of teacher education candidates. Many of these are older non-traditional students with needs similar to the University of Massachusetts Post-B.A. student.

2. A steady decline in the academic abilities of teacher education students has created a climate of concern about teacher education candidates and preparation programs.

The National Commission for Excellence in Education, in its 1983 report, A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform recommended that colleges toughen admissions standards and strengthen curriculum requirements for those studying to be teachers. School systems, colleges of education, and state regulatory agencies are paying more attention than ever to the issues of who should be permitted to teach and how such people should be prepared for the job.

Any assessment of improving teaching, and teacher education, must include further investigation of older students and their potential as teachers. This study will illustrate the increased perception that teacher education students are not of the highest academic calibre and that the teaching profession continues to draw from the "bottom of the barrel." It will document Post-B.A. teacher education student perceptions of teaching/work/life experiences and abilities as they relate to "becoming a teacher."

3. The literature on adult learning indicates adults have diverse experiences, needs, motivations and expectations that impact their decision to reenter school.

Aslanian and Brickell, in their 1980 publication about Americans in transition, contended that adults are surrounded by examples of what can be accomplished by learning. Their lives are filled with teachers, relatives, friends and acquaintances who have learned their way to success.

Some adults regret the learning opportunities they have let slip by and wish, hope, or believe that they will take advantage of them the next time. The notion that there are potential adult learners who plan, want, or need to learn, but who will not learn unless there are specific events in their lives to trigger their decision to begin, is intriguing (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980, p. 35-37).

Cross (1981) supported Aslanian and Brickell's theory and notes, "Life transitions generate especially high motivation for learning" (p. 81). While Tarule and Weathersby (1979) indicated, "Adults tend to enroll in undergraduate programs at times of transition in their lives" (p. 18).

But what were some of the prior work/life/family experiences which influenced them to return to college? What were their expectations, aspirations and concerns when shaping their decision to return to college? What made them act? Why teaching? What are the dynamics of this decision-making process?

### Methodology

A combination of a) descriptive surveying and (b) in-depth interviewing will be utilized to research Post-B.A. students at Massachusetts.

a) Questionnaire. The survey was conducted at Massachusetts during the Spring 1985 semester. The population studied was defined as teacher education candidates registered with the Division of Continuing Education as Post-B.A. students during the Fall 1983, Spring 1984, Fall 1984 and Spring 1985 semesters (N=86). The survey focused on why these students chose to return to school at this time, their goals, and their problems as older, non-traditional students. A precoded instrument of original design containing 20 close-ended and six open-ended questions was developed. The instrument was field tested and refinements made in the survey questions prior to its distribution.

The survey was divided into four sections: (a) demographics, (b) life experiences, (c) career choices and consequences, and (d) beliefs about teaching. The researcher gathered preliminary data regarding issues faced by Post-B.A. students enrolled in elementary and secondary teacher education programs at Massachusetts.



The research findings in turn, generated questions for further study.

b) In-depth interviews. Interviews designed to investigate the experience of Post-B.A. students, took place from April through September 1985. Fourteen Post-B.A. students from the university participated in the study. The sample of male and female teacher education students interviewed included a range of ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, work experiences, bachelor degrees awarded prior to reentry, and the number of years since graduation from formal institution(s). An open-ended interview guide was used to focus the interviews. Each was 70 to 90 minutes in length and was tape recorded. Tape recordings were transcribed by the author and a disinterested third person. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the interview process.

The two methodologies employed provide data to analyze the decision-making of Post-B.A. students in choosing to reenter college to become teachers. Both the survey and in-depth interview findings are used in reconstructing segments of personal histories for each participant. The meaning of past and current life events (experiences) are revealed giving the researcher

a better understanding of the context in which the transition to teaching has emerged.

### Limitations of the Study

The population in this study is teacher education candidates registered with the Division of Continuing Education as Post-B.A. students during the Fall 1983, Spring 1984, Fall 1984 and Spring 1985 academic semesters (N=86). Not included in this population are: (a) students enrolled in teacher education at Massachusetts as either full- or part-time graduate or undergraduate students, (b) Post-B.A. students who could not be located by address or telephone, and (c) Post-B.A. students who had dropped out of teacher education programs.

Due to the nature of the research, this study has limitations relating to selection of participants. Because the study uses in-depth interviewing of the experiences of Post-B.A. students, the researcher attempted to select particular students that reflected a broad spectrum of experience. All Massachusetts Post-B.A.'s describe themselves as White, non-minority. For this reason minority populations will not be found in the sample. Also, the location of the university in

rural, western Massachusetts indicates generalizations which may not be possible for universities in urban and suburban areas. Because of the uniqueness of this population, generalizations beyond this study may not be appropriate.

### Definition of Terms

#### Adult Learning

Adult Learning refers to both the process which individuals go through as they attempt to change or enrich their knowledge, values, skills, or strategies and to the resulting knowledge, values, skills, strategies and behaviors they gain.

This definition appears to be valid for both adults and children. In general, child learning is viewed as "forming" (acquiring, accumulating, discovering, integrating) knowledge, skills, strategies, and values from experience while adult learning is viewed as "transforming" (modifying, relearning, updating, replacing) knowledge, skills, strategies and values through experience.

## Adult Education

Adult Education refers to the institutionalized system which provides the programs, administrative structures, processes, settings, and resources that facilitate adult learning. Learning may be carried out by individuals acting on their own, as in libraries; by individuals interacting with another person in a one-on-one relationship, as in counseling (or independent study); and by individuals acting in group settings, as in formal courses provided by colleges, night schools, universities, and other institutions.

## Developmental Tasks

Developmental Tasks are those physiological, psychological, and social demands that a person must satisfy to be a reasonably happy and successful person. These tasks will arise during defined stages of an individual's life cycle and are global with suggested broad dimensions of development and learning. The concept, often with different labels, is employed by researchers to apply life cycle theory to learning.

## In-depth interviewing

The thrust of in-depth interviewing is for the interviewer to try to understand how the participant makes meaning of their experiences.

A face to face interview where the interviewer attempts to understand the experience of the participant as the experiences relate to the subject/issue being investigated. At the center of in-depth interviewing is respect for the "stories and experiences" the participant shares. As the interviewer, it is important to have the participant reconstruct the details. Then, and only then, can they begin to give meaning to their experiences

### Methodological Assumptions

A significant portion of this study on returning adults is based on the assumption that it is possible to discover motives and meanings of their decisions for reentering college for teacher certification through our connections with them, through their words as they communicate with us, and through our knowledge of our own words and actions towards them. It is assumed that the researcher can learn and understand the interaction

between feeling and thinking through the words of the participant and that those very words are a representation of the participant's experiences. It is assumed that the researcher can draw inferences from the verbalization of participants' experience and can therefore "know" something about another person's experiences, in as much as it is possible to know.

The qualitative methods proposed in this study help us to better understand the "world" of the Post-B.A. student by engaging each in a reflective conversation of their past, thus, allowing us to "enter their world" as they perceive it. Post-B.A.'s verbal reconstruction of their experience brings with it a special assumption--that a participant's "saying aloud" what is in his/her mind during that recreation of the past is an accurate representation of what really happened in their "turning point", what is happening now and the meaning that the participant makes of the experience. It is assumed that the participant will know more about themselves and their decision-making process as it relates to pursuing the profession of teaching. These assumptions are all inherent in the methodology chosen for this study.

### Organization of the Study

Chapter I has introduced the dissertation topic and analytical focus of the study, including the background of the problem, purpose of the study, methodology, limitations, definitions of terms, assumptions and context of the study.

Chapter II will review literature written on several areas related to the dissertation topic. Included in the review will be an introduction to current demands for adult education and nontraditional programs in higher education, evidence of the current trend of adults reentering college to pursue teaching and a review of hypotheses/theories, concepts, and emergent patterns of motivation and decision-making in adult learners. A review of the research on adult development and the life cycle conclude the chapter.

Chapter III will outline the research design, procedures and methodology of the preliminary study and the in-depth interviews.

Chapter IV will present survey and interview research findings to describe/document/ Post-B.A. student decisions and attitudes about reentering college to pursue teaching.

Chapter V will summarize the findings, offer interpretations of these findings and will suggest general implications for higher education programs serving adult learners. Specifically, this chapter will provide teacher educators and other professionals related to the field with information that will be useful in designing more effective teacher education programs to meet the needs of Post-B.A. students. A summary of recommendations will be provided. Chapter V concludes with the author's perspectives on further research that may contribute to the current body of knowledge to better inform teacher educators about this emergent population.



## C H A P T E R I I

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The intent of this review is to discuss the literature in the fields of teacher education, adult higher education and continuing education as it relates to adults in career transition in general and to adults returning to college to pursue teacher certification in particular.

Subsections include: the demand for adult education and non-traditional programs in higher education; the current trend of adults reentering college to pursue teacher certification; a review of concepts, theories, and emergent patterns of motivation in adult learning; and a review of the research on adult development and the adult life cycle.

#### The Demand

With a longer life expectancy resulting from a higher standard of living, better nutrition and medical advances, the average age in the United States is expected to increase for at least the next 40 years.

What follows will be a larger percentage of the population over 25 years old.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census (October 1983) reported that nearly one-sixth of the people in the 25-34 age group are enrolled in some kind of educational institutional, compared with one-eighth of that age group 10 years ago. Thirty-seven percent of all college students were over the age of 25 in 1983 and colleges and universities have increased their enrollment of students over 35 years old by 36.5% in 5 years. Statistics show just how important adults are in the higher education scene. The percentage of total enrollment in higher education consisted of adults 25 years and older was 25.9 percent (1.9 million) in 1968 and 37.5 percent (4.2 million) in 1978, a 42% increase! Census experts say the 5.2 million adults over 25 years old now on college campuses have returned for a variety of reasons--among them the demands of an increasingly complex, technological society, the emergence of the two-career family, a competitive job market and changing demographics.

Vance Grant, chief of the Statistics Information Office at the National Center for Educational Statistics, comments on the influx of older,

non-traditional students, "What we're seeing is the beginning of a trend that will continue for at least the next ten years as colleges continue to experience the decline in 18 to 24 year olds."

During the five-year period, 1979-1984 enrollment of students over 25 grew by about 26%, while the enrollment of students under 25 rose by about 10%. Presumably, as the percentage of the adult population increases, demands for post-secondary education will also increase. At the same time the number of traditional "college age" students will decline. The increased adult demand occurring simultaneously with the decrease in numbers of younger students will result in higher educational institutions shifting their focus to serve both groups.

Adult higher education has grown to encompass a variety of subjects, and has been projected to serve as much as 44 percent of the American population by 1988. (Haponski and McCabe, 1982, p. 1)

To distinguish new adult students, new techniques of educating them, and new ways of granting credit, a label was created. This label is "non-traditional", and is used to characterize students, programs, and sometimes institutions or branches of institutions. As

broadly interpreted, "non-traditional" means that post-secondary institutions recognize they do not exclusively serve only the young in standard two- and four-year blocks of classroom time. But it does not tell us either what these institutions are or where they should be going.

Hundreds of traditional colleges and universities have been working hard since about 1970 to attract and recruit adult learners. A national survey of institutional practices has not been conducted since 1972, when the Commission on Non-traditional Study commissioned the Center for Research and Development in Higher Education at the University of California at Berkeley to survey two- and four-year colleges and universities for their responses to the adult learning movement (Ruyle and Geiselman, 1974). At that time between 1,000 and 1,400 American colleges and universities offered degree programs that were considered "nontraditional" in the sense that they served nontraditional learners or were free of the time or place requirements of traditional classroom instruction. The overwhelming majority (86%) of the programs were less than five years old in 1972; only 7% were more than ten years old, clear evidence of the

"sudden" entrance of colleges and universities into the business of making program modifications in order to attract and serve adult learners.

Research suggests, however, that changes in nontraditional programs have been rather modest. The commission's survey showed that 67% of the programs classified as "nontraditional" were nontraditional in the sense that they utilized off-campus locations; 57% used nontraditional methods; and 48% offered nontraditional content. In the words of the investigators, Ruyle and Geiselman, "the nontraditional programs in existence in 1972 more often constituted new ways of teaching old subjects to new students rather than new subjects as such". (Ruyle and Geiselman, 1974, p. 71),

Adult Education is a rapidly expanding field. Major development of post-secondary programs occurred particularly in the 1960's. The planning and implementation of national programs such as the University Without Walls (UWW) in the United States and the British Open University of England, plus programs in major state systems such as Empire State College in New York, University of Mid-America, and Metropolitan

State College in Minnesota, indicate the recognition of a growing need for adult post-secondary programs.

The 1970's saw many colleges and universities rush headlong to serve adult populations, while many others reacted little, if at all. But the transformation was sufficiently widespread that a modern Rip Van Winkle, sleeping through the 1960's and the 1970's, would have awakened to the sound of a new vocabulary that included experiential credit, off-campus learning, lifelong learning, open universities and weekend colleges.

It would be fair to say that around 1970, hundreds of colleges made rather minor changes to accommodate adult learners in regular degree programs. During this same period, however, a variety of bold, innovative degree programs for adults attracted considerable national and international attention. British Open University and University of Mid-America are examples of experimentation with new methods for instructional delivery. The British Open University was opened to serve vast numbers of adults with traditional course offerings. The British Open University still provides course material in writing, on television, via radio and on film in local learning centers. There are no residency requirements but the time limits and the

course requirements are fixed. It now serves over 80,000 people in B.A. and B.S. degree programs. University of Mid-America (UMA) now reaches about 10,000 students via multimedia packages which combine television, print, newspapers, audio components, video discs and satellite hookups. UMA is a consortium of universities established to bring higher education to off-campus students. Degrees are not awarded by UMA but by participating universities (Cross, 1981, p. 74-75).

Empire State College in New York and Metropolitan State College in Minnesota, and University Without Walls Program (UWW) are also examples of totally new educational programs, specifically designed to allow the adult learner to create (via negotiation with an advising committee) a program of study that best meets their academic interests. Coursework can be taken at other colleges and credits transferred directly into their program of study. This and other forms of off-campus learning is becoming a sizable venture. Since 1971, approximately 150 colleges and universities have enrolled 60,000 adults in off-campus programs established away from the regular university campuses. (Pasztor and Jaroslovsky, 1979)

### Reentering College to Pursue Teacher Certification

Adults are now attending college in greater numbers than ever before. Reasons for returning to college are numerous and diverse. Whatever their motivations, most adults encounter very similar problems in academe. Often, older students must relinquish all or part of their regular income, while some not only juggle child care, homemaking and homework, but must campaign hard to maintain the support of their families.

Across the nation, adults are returning to college campuses to continue or begin courses of study. This includes a significant trend toward older adults seeking teacher certification. Although the older students are helping lend needed financial support to colleges and universities, they are also challenging these institutions to provide appropriate and flexible curricula, as well as appropriate assistance in meeting their unique psychological and practical needs.

For forty years, researchers have explored the interests, needs and abilities of adult students. However, no concensus has been reached on the best design for adult programs in higher education. Recent work exploring adult developmental stages indicates



that there may be no one way to design a program because adults are not one population of people. Age and related experiences, interests and responsibilities may break up "adults" into a number of groups with characteristic needs for each group.

Several interpretations have been provided for the role institutions of higher education play in facilitating adult transitions. Monge and Gardner (1976) contend that education can be considered as a means of keeping open the options for individuals as they advance through the life cycle. Education can help prepare an individual for the transitions that will occur in life circumstances. Likewise, Tarule and Weathersby (1979), Chickering (1981) and Cross (1981) affirm that institutions must be aware of the transitions experienced by adults and that helping individuals meet the developmental tasks associated with transitions should be a major goal of higher education.

In taking on the task of teaching older students, educators will have to recognize the difference between the traditional college student and the older student. The recognition of these differences, coupled with the adult education literature which contends older

students are of high quality, highly motivated and bring rich perspective via their many and varied experiences, speaks to the necessity for teacher education reform.

For these non-traditional students, certification often represents the beginning of a new career (life) and the triumph of determination over a constant temptation to give up. To insure the retention of this teacher education pool, we must change how we prepare teachers.

Before considering changes in teacher education programs we need to better understand reentering teacher education candidates, their needs, motivations and expectations.

#### Adult Motivation to Learn

Motivation is a most complex phenomenon with roots in psychology, but a topic viewed with interest by nearly all of the scholarly disciplines. A direct and basic definition of motivation is taken from An Outline of Social Psychology which was authored over thirty years ago by the social psychologist, Muzafer Sherif (1948): "Motivation is goal directed behavior

which grows out of the needs of an individual at a specific point of time in a specific situation" (p.43-44).

The author looked in both the Psychological Abstracts and the file of the Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse, which list journal articles, state and federal committee reports, published conference papers, and doctoral dissertations. The following "indicator" words were used in an extensive computer search: career-change, nontraditional, reentry, returning, motivation, decision-making, post-baccalaureate students, adult education and teacher education. These search categories resulted in listings only remotely relevant to this study.

Quite clearly, much room exists for qualitative research in the areas of adults leaving initial career jobs or interests -- at any time in the life cycle, to pursue teaching.

Like the national economy, human motivation is a topic that people know is important, continuously discuss, and would like to predict. We want to know why people do what they do. But just as tomorrow's inflationary trend seems beyond our influence and understanding, so too do the causes of human behavior evade any simple explanation or prescription (Wlodkowski, 1985, p. 1).

The biggest problem with motivation is we cannot see it and we cannot touch it. It is what is known in psychological literature as "a hypothetical construct, an invented definition that provides a possible concrete causal explanation of behavior" (Baldwin, 1967). Therefore, we cannot directly measure motivation. Nonetheless, we do know that understanding why people behave as they do is vitally important to helping them learn.

This is indeed troublesome for teacher educators who need to recognize and understand the motivations of this new and emergent pool of adult learners (Post-B.A.'s) in career transition. With no unifying motivational theory or model with which to organize and build motivational skills, we cannot easily change our practices, and what we learn about motivation from experience on the job often remains fragmented and unconnected with instruction. If we are to be successful in training effective teachers for the future, we must first accept our responsibility to familiarize ourselves with the motivations of adult learners.

Adults are defined throughout according to the two criteria offered by Knowles (1980):

First, a person is adult to the extent that the individual is performing social roles typically assigned by our culture to those it considers adults - the roles of worker, spouse, parent, responsible citizen, soldier and the like. Second, a person is adult to the extent that that individual perceives herself or himself to be essentially responsible for her or his own life.

Among the over twenty internationally recognized theories of motivation, "there is not one that is exclusively devoted to an explanation of adult motivation" (Madsen, 1974). There does exist a comprehensive theory of adult learning, "andragogy", but "its acceptance by most scholars in the field of adult education is questionable" (Cross, 1981). However, there are generalizations of this theory that are widely regarded as accurate, the most important of which is that adults are highly pragmatic learners. Research consistently shows that vocational and practical education that leads to knowledge about how to do something is chosen by more adults than any other form of learning. "Adults have a strong need to apply what they have learned and to be competent in that application" (Knox, 1977). Knowles (1980), who developed the theory of andragogy, believes that the deepest human need is for self-esteem.

There have been a significant number of studies exploring why adults choose to participate in various kinds of learning activities. There is usually some problem to solve that may be as broad as how to successfully change careers or as narrow as learning how to earn extra money by refinishing furniture.

Learning that will improve one's position in life is also a major motivation for participation. This varies with age, gender, occupation and life stage. Young adults are primarily interested in education for upward career mobility. Older adults seek education for better job opportunities when this is possible, and those reaching career levels with few possibilities for career improvement are often interested in learning that will enhance the quality of life and leisure. In general, most adults have multiple reasons for learning, but motives just cited "tend to dominate their entry into group learning situations" (Wlodkowski, 1985, pp. 2-3).

### Concepts of Motivation

Perry London (1975) viewed motivation as the integral stimulation of goal directed behavior. This definition is not radically different from the one

pronounced by Sherif twenty-five years earlier, but London went on to classify motives as: (1) Primary, which are physiological, and (2) Secondary, which are socially derived. The primary motives refer to the basic needs or drives relating to survival, such as sleep, hunger and thirst, and are normally ranked according to their intensity and involvement.

The body is called upon, or motivated, to correct a homeostatic imbalance. Secondary motives, or the social motives, affect our primary life goals, and are rooted in the socialization process (p. 72).

The classified motives of London's were very much like Abraham Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Human Needs. Maslow's Deficiency Motivation coincide with London's Primary Motives, while his Growth Motivation, Self-Actualization, is in phase with London's Secondary Motives. Maslow was one of the foremost spokesmen of humanistic psychology, and a widely quoted developmentalist within the area of developmental stages and its relation to motivation. His discussions concerning behavior and the psychological characteristics of Deficiency (low-order needs) and Growth (leading to Self-Actualization) Motivation are extensive. The ultimate plateau in Maslow's scheme is

termed Self-Actualization, an introspective experience. It is the opening up to yourself and finding out who and what you are, to include what you like or do not like, what is good and what is bad for you, where you are going and what your mission is, and becoming what you are capable of becoming.

Applying the concepts of Maslow to teacher education, the lower-order motivated students are participating in an attempt to cope with some aspect of life by acquiring utilitarian knowledge, attitudes, and/or skills. The growth motivated students, those who have reached Self-Actualization, tend to participate for expression and for knowledge itself as a continuous part of living.

#### Patterns of Motivation

The educational community has borrowed the concepts of motivation as developed by the behavioral sciences and applied them in research to define the motives that account for participation in programs of higher education. Realizing that motivation is internal, behavior can be understood to be its only indicator. Motivation must, therefore, be skillfully uncovered by inference. Programs in teacher education



are primarily designed according to certification requirements. Often needs assessments are implemented to identify students' interests and learning activities designed in harmony with the needs and interests of the students. These needs and interests are closely associated with patterns of motivation, or motivational orientations as they are often called. Motivational orientations are constructs that identify the complex patterns of diverse reasons, as given by students, for participating in teacher education.

Because motivational orientations are a reflection of students needs and interests, the ability to determine these orientations obviously has important implications in the process of more effective teacher education program development. Darkenwald (1977) stated that "motivational orientations can be analyzed for the design and management of learning activities" (p. 132).

Cyril Houle (1961) emphasized that most people have more than one motive for their participation in higher education. Motivation must be explained with "whys" rather than "why" -- "It is a cataract of consequences" (pp. 55, 80).

Paul Burgess (1971) stated that students are usually not precise when presenting their reasons for participation in continuing their education, sometimes stating them much like educational objectives, and sometimes simply stating the subject matter to be studied. Burgess listed four different approaches that had been used by researchers for the determination of reasons for participation:

1. analyzing the kinds of activities in which the adult student participates so that reasons can be inferred for those activities.
2. asking students to state in their own words why they participate in a given activity/course.
3. asking students to check from a list of reasons why they participate in a given activity/course.
4. concentrating on adults' orientation toward education (p. 3-4).

Possibly the earliest of studies relating to reasons for participation in continuing education was the published work of the English researcher, Joseph Hoy (1933). In Hoy's study 372 students from seven Adult Evening Institutes in a large English city were asked to state their reasons for participation. Categories that evolved included: (1) desire for

knowledge and improvement, (2) for examination purposes, (3) to develop a hobby or for use of leisure time, (4) for recreation, change from day's work, and (5) for social reasons, meeting other people. This approach provided interesting and similar clustering, yet the researcher faced the danger of incomplete data --students may not be able to express, on short notice without assistance, to think of all of their reasons for participation.

Another particular approach for eliciting reasons from adult students was based upon a prepared list of possible reasons on which students checked applicable items. This method was in vogue in the 1950's and early 1960's. David Nicholson (1955) used this approach for his study to identify and analyze the major educational needs and interests of adults. His check-list contained ten items for each of three categories:

- (1) Economic-occupational
- (2) Intellectual-cultural
- (3) Personal-Social

He had 5,211 respondents who checked off as many reasons as they felt were influential. The results, displayed in percentages, indicated 58.3 percent for

Economic-occupational, 62.2 percent for Intellectual-cultural, and 30 percent for Personal-social reasons. No data on the age distribution of the respondents were given. Many similar studies utilizing this approach have demonstrated impressive clusters of reasons for participation, however, many of the check-lists are reported to be incomplete in the range of all possible reasons for participation.

Cyril Houle's (1961) Three-Factor Typology is an example of an approach to elicit adult student reasons by "concentrating on the student's orientation toward education". His study was qualitative in methodology, and his instrument was of two parts. The first part consisted of a briefing sheet sent to prospective interviewees. The second part was the check-list of major questions for the interview, plus subquestions to be used as possible probes, designed to establish: (1) characteristics of interviewees, (2) factors leading them to continuing education, (3) previous continuing education and/or formal coursework, (4) current courses of study, (5) their perspective of society's view of continuing education, and (6) their perspective of continuing education.

Twenty-two people from the Chicago area were interviewed. The interviews, average time of two hours, were tape-recorded. Each interview was analyzed and separated into themes. During the process, it became apparent that the people studied, while basically similar, fell into certain groups. What emerged was the Three-Factor Typology: (1) Goal Oriented, students participating for a clearly understood or predetermined end; (2) Activity Oriented, students participating primarily for social reasons--content is secondary; (3) Learning Oriented, students participating for the sake of learning or for knowledge itself--a continuous part of living.

Houle's study resulted in a proliferation of research activity concerned with motivational orientations. Much of this research has been an attempt to test and refine Houle's basic concepts.

Roger Boshier (1971) was the next researcher to construct a device for the measurement of motives. It was created while he was a Lecturer of Psychology at Victoria University in Wellington (New Zealand). His stated purpose was to test Houle's Typology in a New Zealand context by using 233 adult education participants. He called his instrument the Education

Participation Scale (E.P.S.), and it originally contained forty-eight Likert-type items with a nine-point scale. His 1970 initial findings gave fourteen first-order factors which he later pared down to six:

1. Escape/Stimulation
2. Professional Advancement
3. Social Welfare
4. External Expectations
5. Cognitive Interest
6. Social Contact

Paul Burgess (1971), a student of Houle at the University of Chicago developed an instrument, Reasons for Educational Participation (R.E.P.), that consisted of seventy Likert-type items with a seven-point scale. His sample consisted of 1,046 usable responses from the St.Louis area. Seven factors evolved in his findings:

1. Desire to Know
2. Desire to Reach a Personal Goal
3. Desire to Reach a Social Goal
4. Desire to Reach a Religious Goal
5. Desire to Escape
6. Desire to Take Part in an Activity
7. Desire to Comply with Formal Requirements

### Adult Development and the Life Cycle

Research has documented that transitions generate especially high motivation for learning (Cross, 1981, p. 81-97; Aslanian and Brickell, 1980, p. 38-39) and that "adults tend to enroll in undergraduate programs, particularly liberal arts programs at times of transition in their lives" (Tarule and Weathersby, 1979, p. 18).

Adult students are presenting to institutions of higher education a wide range of needs reflective of the tasks of their life cycle stages. Meeting the educational and personal development needs of those in transitions represent the greatest challenge. As educators, we must begin to tailor curriculums and instructional practices to particular needs of the adult learner. This section concerning adults in transition will provide a range of conceptual frameworks within which to examine these needs.

When the adult transition is considered as a period of the life cycle, it is too often mistaken as a time of mental instability marked by unpredictable and unprovoked personal reactions. Such situations fortunately are not common, thus institutions of higher

education need not prepare for a flood of unpredictable students. As a period within the overall sequence of the life cycle, adult transitions are, however, a time of questioning, evaluation and decision-making.

The human life cycle has been described since ancient times by philosophers, poets and playwrights. However not until the twentieth century did social scientists begin to assemble the facts and concepts needed for a life-span description of human development. This deeper and more complex view of adult development assumes a multi-disciplinary approach that encompasses biology and sociology in addition to psychology.

The first twentieth century scholar to expand upon the view of the life cycle and included adult development was Sigmund Freud (1964) with his *Depth Psychology* at the turn of this century. Freud developed the theory that personality development in childhood profoundly influences one's personality in adulthood.

Carl Jung (1971), called "the father of the modern study of adult development", was a disciple of Freud, but split from Freud to initiate his psychoanalytic movement. Jung developed a concept that assimilated



development during the entire life cycle rather than focusing primarily on childhood development. Jung integrated external cultural forces with internal psychological processes. The foundation built by Freud and Jung provides the base utilized by contemporary scholars of developmental psychology.

Erik Erikson with his work, Childhood and Society (1950) viewed growth through the life span as a challenge of eight psychosocial tasks that dominate the development of the individual at given age-related stages of the life cycle. Persistent problems are created if one or another of these tasks are not successfully resolved. The Erikson tasks or developmental issues, as dichotomies, that relate to the adult life cycle are:

- (1) Identity versus Role Confusion, during adolescence
- (2) Intimacy versus Isolation, during early adulthood
- (3) Generativity versus Stagnation, during middle adulthood
- (4) Integrity versus Despair, during later adulthood

Erikson advanced the idea of an internal unfolding of maturational potentials as a part of the life cycle.

... anything that grows has a ground plan, and that out of this ground plan the parts arise, each having its time of special ascendancy, until all the parts have arisen to form a function whole (Erikson, 1968, p. 92).

Erikson's contributions laid the foundation for other investigators to learn more about the stages of the normal adult life cycle.

Several scholars have expanded on the work of Erikson. Some of the more prominent research directed toward the life cycle has been performed by Aslanian and Brickell (1980), Levinson (1978), Gould (1978), Knox (1977), Vaillant (1977), Sheehy (1977), Lowenthal (1975), Havighurst (1972), Neugarten (1968) and (1979), and others.

Carol Aslanian and Henry Brickell in Americans in Transition: Life Changes as Reasons for Adult Learning, (1980) interviewed a national representative sample of nearly 2,000 Americans twenty-five years of age and older. Their questions probed for explanations as to the causes and timing of adult learning.

Adulthood is not a time of stagnation or stability, at least in the early and middle years; instead it is a time of change. Further, the information

available on current and prospective social and economic changes in population, mobility, technology, occupations, housing, income, inflation, government, family life, politics, minority affairs and leisure make it apparent that more adults will experience increasingly complex life transitions and a faster rate of change in adult life in the future (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980, p. 33).

Several interpretations have been provided for the role institutions of higher education play in facilitating adult transitions. Aslanian and Brickell (1980) contended that education can be considered as a means of keeping open the options for individuals as they advance through the life cycle. Education can help prepare an individual for the transitions that will occur in life circumstances.

Likewise, Monge and Gardner (1976), Tarule and Weathersby (1979), Chickering (1981) and Cross (1981) affirmed that institutions must be aware of the transitions experienced by adults and that helping individuals meet the developmental tasks associated with transitions should be a major goal of higher education.

Daniel Levinson, in The Seasons of a Man's Life, (1978) pointed out how "human beings continue to change

throughout their lifetime according to an age-linked timetable." Levinson's study involved middle-class men from their mid-thirties to their mid-forties. His research identified four eras of approximately twenty-five years each within the life cycle that are separated by transitions. The eras are composed of developmental periods. The transitions are relatively short periods of change that act as a bridge between two stages of greater stability. The developmental periods are about five years in length.

Levinson both expanded on Erikson's notions of stages in the adult life cycle and described vividly that time around the age of forty.

But for the great majority of men--about 80 percent of our subjects--this period evokes tumultuous struggles within the self and with the external world. Their Mid-life Transition is a time of moderate or severe crises. Every aspect of their lives comes into question, and they are horrified by much that is revealed. They are full of recriminations against themselves and others. They cannot go on as before, but need time to choose a new path or modify the old one (Levinson, 1978, p. 199).

Unlike Erikson's view of the life stages as simply an unfolding from within, Levinson assumed a broader approach. He visualized developmental tasks, structures and processes that included biological,

psychological, cultural and social-structural factors all interacting in partial synchronization.

However, as with Erikson, Levinson believed the transitions must be traversed in sequence and developmental tasks specific to each stage must be met.

Some theories describe developmental stages that follow an ascending or hierarchical order: a person advances from one level to the next, each stage representing a higher capability.... Other theories, such as ours, posit a sequence that is not hierarchical. One period is not higher or better than the preceding ones. Again the imagery of the seasons is useful. Spring is not intrinsically a better season than winter nor is summer better than spring. Each season plays its essential part in the unfolding of the life cycle, and the sequence follows a prescribed course (Levinson, 1978, p. 319).

He contended that the movement through a transition is not quick, but requires "a basic modification in the fabric of one's life." Such transitions also have been characterized as periods where adults lose the "equilibrium" in their life course and struggle to regain it.

Each era in a person's life is more than simply a developmental stage or period--eras in the life cycle are analagous to the acts of a play or the major segments of a novel (Levinson, 1978, p. 324).

Roger Gould (1978) wrote that growth during adulthood is an obligation and an opportunity, and a necessity to cope with the predictable sequence of change.

... adulthood is not a plateau; rather it is a dynamic and changing time for all of us. As we grow and change, we take steps away from childhood and toward adulthood--steps such as marriage, work, consciously developing a talent or buying a home. With each step, the unfinished business of childhood intrudes, disturbing our emotions and requiring psychological work. With this in mind, adults may now view their disturbed feelings at particular periods as a possible sign of progress, as part of their attempted movement toward a fuller life (Gould, 1978, p. 14).

He, like other researchers, viewed the significance of specific events as "milestones" along the life course.

Certain key events--buying a first car, a first house, experiencing a first job, a first baby, the first loss of a parent--force us to see ourselves more as the creators of our lives and less as living out the lives we thought were our destiny (Gould, 1978, p. 13).

Gould researched the age-related changes in the issues that his patients divulged during therapy groups conducted at the University of California--Los Angeles Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic. He documented the responses of 524 white, middle-class people who had

been positioned into seven age-related categories. The responses were grouped into eight sections that covered relationships to parents, friends, children, and spouses, plus feelings related to their personality, job, time, and sexual behavior.

Gould found that a need existed to overhaul the old concept of adulthood, and to realize that there is a developmental sequence during the adult years.

The prevailing concepts of adulthood have been obscured not only what is being faced, but also the fact that an adult needs to engage in any kind of continuing growth process at all. Like a butterfly, an adult is supposed to emerge fully formed and on cue, after a succession of developmental stages in childhood. Equipped with all the accouterments, such as wisdom and rationality, the adult supposedly remains quiescent for another half century or so. While children change, adults only age (Gould, 1975, p. 78).

Gould's survey contained an over-sampling of middle-class and professional populations, however, this stated deficiency is typical of most research on adult development. The Harvard Grant Study of Vaillant (1977) was a longitudinal study of male, Harvard University graduates, and the research of Levinson was focused upon the middle years of middle-class males.

Nevertheless, Gould remains one of the leading contemporary scholars researching the sequence of

periods in adult development. "While children mark the passing years by their changing bodies, adults change their minds" (Gould, 1975, p. 78).

Alan B. Knox (1977) examined life change events and the need for an adaptation process.

The relative stability of adult life is periodically punctuated by change events such as marriage, a job change, or the death of a close friend, that alter significantly the individual's relationship with other people and disturb the routine of social participation . . . Because change events entail alterations in role relationships, some adaptation is inescapable (Knox, 1977, p. 513, 548).

Knox is aligned with other researchers of human development in the belief that the life cycle is divided into stages of segments. He proposes that the gradual change in adults over the years is punctuated by the change events that require adaptation to the addition or loss in established role relationships. Knox stated that a high proportion of the change events as distributed along the adult life cycle are concentrated in the age category of early young adulthood. Understandably, most of the change events during young adulthood involve gains of role relationships, most of those during middle age relate



to family and career changes, while most of those during old age entail losses.

Knox is a strong supporter for the linking of adult learning with adult life changes. His attention to the category of adaptive behavior that he labeled "educative activity" is illustrated below.

When a change event occurs, the need for some adaptation produces, for some adults at least, a heightened readiness to engage in educative activity. The resulting educative activity may be directly or indirectly related to the change event, and the relation may or may not be recognized by the individual . . . The educative activity may include all types of informal information seeking such as reading or talking with others, as well as more formal participation in part-time or full-time educational programs (Knox, 1977, p. 539).

George Vaillant (1977) reported on a forty year, longitudinal study (Harvard Grant Study) of 268 Harvard graduates. The study looked at the lives of men chosen from the graduating classes of 1939 to 1944. Vaillant stated that evidence from his study supported the earlier life pattern research of Erikson in Childhood and Society (1960).

Unlike the seasons, the individual life cycle occurs only once for each person. In 1950, Erikson, who cut his teeth on

the first great longitudinal study of human development at Berkeley, argued convincingly that adults, like children, evolve and mature. He was among the first social scientist to appreciate fully that adults do not march on from life event to life event, from graduation to marriage to "empty nest" to retirement. Instead, he demonstrated that adults change dynamically in the process. Certainly, Shakespeare had said it all before; but most textbooks of human development associate changes in adult personality with external events (Vaillant, 1977, p. 201).

The longitudinal study permitted Vaillant to conclude that patterns and rhythms are certainly associated with the life cycle, and that they must be passed through in sequence punctuated by critical events.

In general, the prospectively studied lives of the Grant Study men supported Erikson's hypothesis that the stages of the life cycle must be passed through in sequence. Although one stage of life is not superior to another, a given stage of development could rarely be achieved until the previous one was mastered. Men did not usually achieve real responsibility for other adults without having first consolidated their careers and having learned to love their wives (Vaillant, 1977, p. 207).

Thus, on the one hand, Vaillant supported the stability of the adult life cycles, yet, he determined that the lives of the Harvard men in his study did not unfold with a predictable clocklike precision.

We can discover developmental discontinuities in adults that are as great as the difference in personality between a nine-year-old and what he becomes at fifteen.

...When the Grant Study was started, the hope was that it would allow prediction and that once all the data were in, college counselors could interview sophomores and tell them what they should do with their lives. This was not to be. The life cycle is more than an invariant sequence of stages with single predictable outcomes. The men's lives are full of surprises, and the Grant Study provides no prediction tables (Vaillant, 1977, p. 373).

Vaillant referred to the pre-Spock era with regard to child development, and noted the great progress within that discipline. Within a period of one hundred years, knowledge of the phases of childhood has moved from the relatively unpredictable to the point where children are watched as they predictably move from phase to phase, probably with crossed fingers, but not totally surprised. He then contrasted the knowledge of child development with that of adult development.

However, adult development is still a mystery. Humans are not mature at Freud's five or Saint Loyola's seven, or even the law's eighteen or twenty-one. Ronald Reagan's ultraliberal college politics must seem utterly foreign to him now; for one price of growing up is to lose touch with one's past (Vaillant, 1977, p. 200).

Vaillant further contributed to the research surrounding midcareer/midlife reevaluation as it related to work transitions among men.

At age forty--give or take as much as a decade--men leave the compulsive, unreflective busywork of the occupational apprenticeships, and once more become explorers of the world within (Vaillant, 1977, p. 219-220).

For her study, Gail Sheehy (1977) interviewed 115 people whom she termed "America's pace setter group--healthy, motivated people who either began in or have entered the middle class, though some began in poverty, even ghettos" (p. 23-24). Her population ranged in age from eighteen to fifty-five, and included professional and high-achieving men as well as top-achieving women from across the United States. She stated that one of her aims was to compare the developmental rhythms of men and women.

It soon became glaringly obvious that the tempo of development is not synchronized in the two sexes. The fundamental steps of expansion that will open a person, over time, to the full flowering of his or her individuality are the same for both genders. But men and women are rarely in the same place struggling with the same questions at the same age (Sheehy, 1977, p. 22).

She labeled the life stages with such provocative terms as Pulling Up Roots, The Trying Twenties, Catch 30, Rooting and Extending, and Renewal. She believed that the use of the word crisis to describe the unstable periods of the life cycle had caused confusion, so she "replaced that confusing label with a less loaded word for the critical transitions between stages, and called them "passages" (p. 23).

Sheehy related her thoughts on the adult life cycle and the function of change.

The work of adult life is not easy. As in childhood, each step presents not only new tasks of development but requires a letting go of the techniques that worked before. With each passage some magic must be given up, some cherished illusion of safety and comfortably familiar sense of self must be cast off, to allow for the greater expansion of our own distinctiveness. It would be surprising if we didn't experience some pain as we leave the familiarity of one adult stage for the uncertainty of the next (Sheehy, 1977, p. 31, 513).

Marjorie Fiske Lowenthal (1975) and colleagues reported on a study of 216 urban men and women conducted at the University of California at San Francisco. Lowenthal and her associates selected a non-affluent population which was a departure from

other researchers, notably Gould, Levinson, and Vaillant. The subjects were from blue-collar, white-collar, managerial, low-middle and middle class backgrounds. Four separate groups of men and women were studied--high school seniors, young newlyweds, middle-aged parents with grown children, and a group about to retire. The wide age-span and backgrounds of the respondents presented a somewhat broadened perspective of the life cycle.

The study identified four stages in the adult life cycle:

- (1) Early Adulthood,
- (2) Parenthood,
- (3) Post-Parenthood, and
- (4) Retirement.

Major transitions were located between the stages together with life-course events or stressors (which they termed Idiosyncratic Transitions within the stages)--divorce, illness, loss of a loved one, and the like.

Among the major findings of the Lowenthal project follow:

1. Transitions are stressful: "... all such changes, whether incremental (involving role

gain) or decremental (involving role loss), are potentially stressful" (p. X).

2. Young adults experience more life crises than the older age groups: "The number of life-course events, or stressors, reported over the prior year declined across successive stages in the adult life course, with a sharp drop between newlyweds and the middle-aged and the preretirement groups" (p. 229).
3. Women experience a greater number of stressful events than men: "Women in all stages report more stressful experiences than men" (p. 229).
4. Middle-aged men experience especially stressful work-related events: "Work-related problems were critical for the middle-aged men, mainly having to do with lack of advancement and the pressures of assuring sufficient income to maintain a comfortable lifestyle throughout the retirement period" (p. 229-230).

The documentation of significant differences between men and women is an important contribution. They state that men value self-assertion and achievement more than women, but that women may be more

willing to recognize short-comings and men more compelled to deny them.

The first prominent researcher to apply life cycle theory to learning was Robert Havighurst (1972). Havighurst structured developmental tasks which he stated were required for healthy and satisfactory growth in our society. They are the physiological, psychological, and social demands a person must satisfy to be a reasonably happy and successful person. A given developmental task will arise during a defined stage of an individual's life.

Havighurst viewed his developmental task concept as assuming a stance between two opposing theories of education: the Theory of Freedom--that development will best occur if the person is left as free as possible, and the Theory of Constraint--that the person must learn to become a worthy responsible adult through restraints imposed by society. Developmental tasks are positioned midway between an individual need and a societal demand. The task assumes an active learner interacting with an active social environment. Accordingly, this concept relates nicely to research correlating human development with the problems and processes of education. "Living in a modern society is



a long series of tasks to learn, where learning well brings satisfaction and reward, while learning poorly brings unhappiness and social disapproval" (p. 2).

According to Havighurst, motivation to return to higher education is seen as a dynamic characteristic of adults. He explained his phrase, "the teachable moment":

When the body is ripe, and society requires, and the self is ready to achieve a certain task, the teachable moment has come (Havighurst, 1972, p. 5).

Of all the periods of life, early adulthood is the fullest of teachable moments and the emptiest of efforts to teach. It is a time of special sensitivity and unusual readiness of the person to learn. Early adulthood, from 18-30, . . . If ever people are motivated to learn and to learn quickly, it is at times such as these (Havighurst, 1972, p. 5).

Bernice L. Neugarten (1968) departed from the importance of internal changes--biological and psychological--to place an emphasis on social influences for the establishing of adult life stages. The Neugarten research conducted between 1951 and 1964 with adults in Kansas City by members of the Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago

involved repeated interviewing and testing of both men and women between the ages of forty and seventy-five.

...we need a social framework for understanding the timing patterns that occur... There is a prescriptive timetable for the ordering of life events: a time when men and women are expected to marry, a time to raise children, a time to retire (Neugarten, 1968, p. 142-143).

Neugarten defended her views on the importance of social influences by stating that the sociological timetable is adhered to by most people in this society.

Age norms and age expectations operate as prods and brakes upon behavior, in some instances hastening an event, in others, delaying it. Men and women are not only aware of the social clocks that operate in various areas of their lives, but they are also aware of their own timing and readily describe themselves as "early" or "late" or "on time" with regard to family and occupational events ...The saliency of age and age-norms in influencing the behavior of adults is no less than in influencing the behavior of children (Neugarten, 1968, p. 143-144).

Neugarten recognized the importance of the inevitable life stages, but she maximizes the relevance of the social at the expense of the biological clock for their establishment. However, she did allow for the providing of a time clock that can be superimposed over the biological clock that will help us to understand the life cycle. She took into account

specific life events that happen on time--marriage, parenthood, occupational achievement, the climacteric, retirement, losing a spouse. However, she stated that these events are not experienced as crises if they occur on time--synchronized with the biological/social clock. The departure of children is not a crisis for the majority of middle-aged women, but when children do not leave home on time, a crisis is created for both the parent and the young person. Certainly, the loss of a loved one causes grief, but when such events happen at times and in ways consistent with the normal expected life course, most will cope without major upset.

Neugarten recognized the changing rhythm of the life cycle for both men and women based upon our changing contemporary society. She referred to the lack of synchrony among age-related roles and the increasing number of role transitions by alluding to the

renewal activities represented, for example, by the middle-aged or old person who becomes a college freshman or the persons who enter May-December marriages and begin new families, with the occasional result that a man may become a father again at the same time he becomes a grandfather... if the interpretation is accurate that lives are becoming more varied and more fluid, that major life events and major role transitions are becoming more irregular,

that age is becoming less relevant and age norms less limiting, then it is of doubtful value to describe adulthood as an invariant sequence of stages, each occurring at a given chronological age (Neugarten, 1979, p. 889).

### Adults in Transition

Research studies relating to adult development, the life cycle, and adult motivation to learn have shaped the author's contextual framework for understanding the general transitions adults experience through their lives. However, the specific published study by Aslanian and Brickell has been instrumental in constructing a framework for examining the reasons adults give for returning to higher education.

Aslanian and Brickell (1980) reported on a two-year study of nearly 2,000 Americans who were twenty-five years of age and older, designed to determine why, when, and what they learn. They described their line of thinking that led to the formation of their hypothesis.

The outpouring of recent professional and popular literature made it evident that adult life--especially adult life in the United States--is filled with transitions. The transitions of younger people moving through infancy, childhood and adolescence are followed by the transitions of older people moving through college, military service,

marriage, employment, parenthood, church membership, union membership, civic or community leadership, home rental or ownership, relocation, retirement, loss of family and friends through death, personal infirmity, and finally death itself. Adulthood is not a time of stagnation or stability, at least in the early and middle years; instead it is a time of change (Aslanian-Brickell, 1980, p. 33).

Based upon these beliefs, the following general proposition evolved:

#1 "Moving from one status in life to another requires the learning of new knowledge, new skills, and/or new attitudes or values" (p. 34).

Proposition #1 did not explain why adults make a status change at a particular point in time. So, Aslanian and Brickell asked the following questions:

Why not earlier? Why not later? After all, the learning opportunities are there every single day, but adults do not take advantage of them every day. How do adults schedule their transitions and thus their learning? Do they actually control their own schedules or are they running on a biological, psychological, social, or economic timetable not under their control (Aslanian-Brickell, 1980, p. 35)?

Aslanian and Brickell were intrigued by the notion that there may be potential adult learners who plan, want, or need to learn, but who may not pursue learning

until there are are particular events in their lives to "trigger" their decision to begin learning. Thus, they offered a second general proposition:

#2 "Some identifiable event triggers an adult's decision to learn at a particular point in time" (p. 37).

Perhaps being ready, willing and able to learn are not quite enough. Perhaps there also has to be an occurrence--a specific life event--serving as a starter's pistol to signal that the time has come to start learning in order to move on (Aslanian-Brickell, 1980, p. 36).

Data generated from the Aslanian-Brickell study supported both propositions of their hypothesis.

The bulk of the data supported our hypothesis that most adults learn in order to move out of some status they must or wish to leave and into some new status they must or wish to enter. That is, their reason for learning was to perform well in the new status (Aslanian-Brickell 1980, p. 52).

Also,

As we had hypothesized, all the adults who named transitions in their lives as motivating them to learn could also point to specific events triggering their decisions to learn currently rather than sooner or later (Aslanian-Brickell, 1980, p. 55).

It is anticipated that data collected (transcriptions from interviews) will uphold the basic

premise that transitions of the adult life cycle result in a desire to learn and that triggers (as Aslanian and Brickell define them) will be present in all fourteen Post-B.A. interviews. These "triggers" may be seen as recent events which led up to informal knowledge-seeking (talking to friends, sending off for school information), then, to formal application (the actual admissions process seeking teacher certification).

However, the transition-trigger hypothesis, as well as, other propositions attempting to explain adult motivation and decision-making are seen by the author as oversimplified answers to extremely complex questions. All were perhaps valid for the population studied at that time, but, translating those specific findings to explain career change among Post-B.A. students is unfounded.

The intent of this review was to lay the research-based foundation discussing the historical literature, current trends and statistics, and completed studies relating to adults in career transition in general and to adults returning to college to pursue teacher certification in particular.

This chapter offered a wide range of studies from which to gain perspective on the following study investigating Post-B.A.'s and the variables which influenced them to enter teaching at this time in their lives.

The following chapter will utilize an original research design to investigate the complexities of Post-B.A.'s decision to reenter college for teacher certification. The author views the decision to reenter as a key indicator of their attitudes and motivations towards the teaching profession.



## C H A P T E R I I I

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents a research design which was used to identify Post-B.A. students and investigate their motivations for reentering college to pursue teacher certification. The development of the research study will be discussed throughout this chapter to engage the reader in the research process. Subsections of this chapter--approach to the problem, Post-B.A. student survey and in-depth interviewing are presented in the following pages.

#### Approach to the Problem

A combination of quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) methods was utilized to collect information about Post-B.A. students at the University of Massachusetts. The two methodologies provided complementary data to examine the patterns of transition for individual Post-B.A. students in their decision to reenter college to become teachers.

### Post-B.A. Student Survey

A questionnaire survey (see Appendix A) was the first investigative procedure used to explore Post-B.A. students at the University of Massachusetts. Following sections will describe: (a) Selection of Survey Method, (b) Survey Participants and Questions, and (c) Purpose of Survey Questionnaire.

#### a) Selection of Survey Method

The survey asked students to describe reasons and motivations for returning; asked them to recall events, people, and circumstances in their lives which may have influenced their decision; and asked them to share their views on teaching. It is anticipated that survey data collected in this manner will contribute to the understanding of Post-B.A. students' reasons for career change and to the generation of specific hypothesis for future investigation.

#### b) Survey Participants and Questions

A study of Post-B.A. students and their potential as teachers was conducted at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in the Fall 1984 semester. The population to be studied was defined as teacher education candidates registered with the Division of Continuing Education as Post-B.A. students during the

Fall 1983, Spring 1984, Fall 1984 and Spring 1985 academic semesters (N=86). Not included in this population were: (a) students enrolled in teacher education at the University of Massachusetts as either full- or part-time graduate or undergraduate students, (b) Post-B.A. students who could not be located by address or telephone, and (c) Post-B.A. students who had dropped out of teacher education programs. Of the 86 questionnaires mailed out, 45 were returned in the first round. Follow-up telephone calls and a second round of mailing yielded an additional nineteen questionnaires for a total of 64 respondents. (75%)

The survey focused on why these adults chose to return to college at this time, their goals, and their problems as older, non-traditional students. A precoded instrument of original design containing 20 close-ended and six open-ended questions was developed. The instrument was field tested and refinements made in the pilot survey questions prior to its distribution.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections: (a) demographics, (b) life experiences, (c) career choices and consequences, and (d) beliefs about teaching.

### c) Purpose of Survey Questionnaire

It was anticipated that answers to these survey questions would provide solid descriptive data regarding: (1) who these students are; (2) preliminary data describing previous specific life experiences; and (3) current issues faced by Post-B.A. students enrolled in teacher education programs. The survey findings in turn, would generate questions for further study.

### In-Depth Interviewing

In-depth interviewing was the second investigative procedure used to explore the experience of Post-B.A. students. This subsection is divided into four headings: (a) Selection of Qualitative Research Method, (b) Selection of In-Depth Interview Method, (c) Interview Participants and Questions, and (d) Analysis of In-Depth Interviews.

### a) Selection of Qualitative Research Method

Surveys have had limitations in examining the experience of Post-B.A. students and how they think and feel about their experience. While researchers can never "know" (in the same way that they "know" their own thoughts and feelings) what another person's

experience is, the intent is to get as close to that "knowing" as possible.

Bogdan and Taylor (1975) commented that methodology is "the process, principles and procedures by which we approach problems and seek answers" (p. 1). The issues, questions and goals of the research determine the appropriate methodology. The issues for this study involve the thoughts, feelings and current perspectives of the participants regarding particular periods in their personal lives. These periods may be times of transition through the career decision-making process when participants moved away from initial career direction(s) into teacher training programs.

Having selected the focus of this work as the examination of the qualities of decision-making in the life/career process, the author then selected a research method which was considered the most useful for the research questions (qualitative), and included one appropriate strategy (in-depth interviewing).

Lofland (1971) defined qualitative methodology in Analyzing Social Settings:

Qualitative analysis seeks to find the characteristics of a social phenomenon, not the causes and consequences of it (p. 7).

He wrote about the commitments of the researcher to be descriptive and factual while at the same time representing the participants on their own terms:

A major methodological consequence of these commitments is that the qualitative study of people in a situation is a process of discovery (p. 4).

This voyage of discovery demands the study of human behavior in a way which defies quantification.

Beyond questions of technique and technology are, however, matters of the frame of mind associated with each. If you get into a strongly quantitative frame of mind, you are likely to have your attention drawn away from the major qualitative features of the setting itself. You can easily trap yourself into exclusive concern with very small problems simply because these problems are subject to quantification (J. and L. Lofland, 1984, p. 102).

Goffman (1961) supported the importance of collecting qualitative data by describing his fieldwork experience in a mental hospital:

Desiring to obtain ethnographic detail regarding selected aspects of patient social life, I did not employ usual kinds of measurements and controls. I assumed that the role and time required to gather statistical evidence for a few statements would preclude my gathering data on the tissue and fabric of patient life (p. x).

Qualitative methodology allows for explorations of concepts whose "essence may be lost" through other research approaches (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975, p. 4).

Golden (1976) stated his biases favoring qualitative research approaches when appropriate:

Certain kinds of information (someone's age or sex, what's the population of a city) may remain relatively, but not entirely, free of a subjective element. Other variables (marital happiness, job satisfaction, educational aspiration) are less objective and may require a response from a subjective perspective. Sometimes it is desirable, even necessary, to understand the whole research situation from the point of view -- or the perspective -- of the participant (p. 24).

Lofland (1971) added to the validation of the qualitative approach in this process of discovery:

Abstracting, conceptualizing and ordering activities for social science are activities we carry on anyway. Through them, we understand the world better. Through detailed rendering of the reality of other people's worlds, we understand other people better (p. 17).

Using the qualitative approach, the researcher must find techniques for gathering data which provides the greatest opportunity for learning about the participant's perspective. Golden (1976) wrote:

In this case gaining insight and acquiring understanding in great depth are probably more important than obtaining full . . . detailed information. Hypothesis are more likely to be the result rather than the impetus for such research. It would certainly be necessary to develop strategies which would allow for openness and flexibility; discovery and consideration of as many factors as possible would be the paramount concern (p. 10).

The distinction between "facts" and "values", or between objectivity and subjectivity, cannot be taken for granted, and the interviewer cannot be conveniently dispensed with. Therefore, it is advisable for the interviewer to maintain a neutral stance so as not to influence the participant's storyline.

As early as 1912 William James made a strong case for the inseparability of "subject" and "object".

If the observer affects, or contributes to what is observed, there cannot be such an entity as a pure, objective scientific fact (p. 9).

Social scientist Bateson (1979) went farther:

There is no objective experience; all experience is subjective. The social scientist looks for the pattern which connects and the notion of context, of pattern through time (p. 43).



During the development of the analysis of interviews, the researcher thought of Erikson's insight to human development:

We each live in a body and a world. The route our lives take is determined by a complex matrix of factors--biology, history, culture, values, family life, health, employment opportunities and even technology. It is an outgrowth of being born of a certain ethnic origin in a certain social setting at a certain period in history. In short, we do not grow up in a vacuum, we are not raised in a psychological isolation tank. We are each different and also part of a web of expectations, traditions and prejudices. We are individuals and yet part of a connecting community called society (Erikson, 1968, p. 126).

When gathering information about attitudes and feelings and relationships, a "face-to-face knowing" (Lofland, 1971, p. 2) allowed for flexibility and adaptability in the search.

#### b) Selection of In-Depth Interview Method

In-depth interviewing, also known as "the informal conversational interview approach" (Patton, 1980, p. 197), is a guided conversation whose goal is to elicit from the participants rich, detailed information that can be used in qualitative analysis. The in-depth interviewer seeks to discover the participant's experience. In contrast to "structured interviewing"

where the interview seeks to determine the frequency of preconceived kinds of things, "the in-depth, unstructured interview seeks to find out what kinds of things exist in the first place" (p.198).

In-depth interviewing tends to "capture the participants in their own terms" and to understand their means for explaining "the flux of raw reality" (Lofland, 1971, p. 7). The personal, in-depth interview provides the best way to do this. It can yield information as "personal documents, . . . those materials in which people reveal in their own words, their view of their entire life, or a part of it, or some other aspect about themselves" (Bogdan and Taylor, p. 6).

Seidman (1985) interviewed a national representative sample of community college administrators, instructors and counselors "in order to gain access to the meaning the faculty made of their experience. We explicitly asked them to concentrate on reconstructing, and reflecting on, that experience" (p. 15).

Schutz (1967) gave suport to interviewing as a means to better understand participants of studies:

The meaning an individual makes of her or his experience is accessible when

the individual (subject) reflects on the constitutive factors of that experience (p. 122).

c) Interview Participants and Questions

Fourteen Post-B.A. students from the University of Massachusetts were interviewed from April through September, 1985. This sample of male and female elementary and secondary teacher education candidates included a range of ages, socio-economic backgrounds, work experiences, bachelor's degrees awarded prior to reentry and the number of years out of their formal institution(s). All survey respondents were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. Many respondents from the survey were unable or unwilling to be interviewed even after follow-up phone calls and personal contacts had been made. Some changed their original decision to be interviewed and chose not to participate, making it difficult to satisfy the intended mix. Therefore, the fourteen participants more accurately reflect the Fall 1985 UMass Post-B.A. teacher education population rather than the 1984 survey population.

This part of the dissertation will explore the educational, work and career histories of these Post-B.A. students. Using an in-depth interview

process, students will be asked to share the meaning of past and current experiences in chronological order of occurrence. The themes and patterns that emerge from these personal accounts will help the researcher to understand why these students are returning to college to pursue teacher certification. A pseudonym has been assigned to each of the Post-B.A. participants to protect their confidentiality. While granting them anonymity, the details are as they presented. Table 1 conveys some of the demographic, logistical facts of the participants of this study.

Table 1  
Background of Interview Participants

<u>Name, Age</u>	<u>Most recent occupation(s)</u>	<u>Undergrad. major</u>	<u>Certification program</u>
Frank, 28	Y.M.C.A. Director	Leisure Service	Sec. Sci.
James, 30	Carpenter and Outdoor Leader	Environ. Study	Sec. Sci.
Ann, 25	Free-lance Artist	Studio Art	Elementary
Sally, 33	Educational Texts salesperson	French/Italian	Sec. Eng.
Donna, 25	Smithsonian Museum Natural Historian	Anthropology	Sec. S.S.
Linda, 29	Boston Children's Museum Interpreter	Geography	Elementary
Nora, 26	Pub. Relations Dir. Architectural firm	Fine Arts/Eng.	Elementary
Nancy, 26	Recreation Leader for Community Cntr.	Eng.Lit./French	Sec French
Susan, 29	Retarded Citizen's caseworker/advocate	Psychology	Elementary
Ellen, 33	A nanny in France and Univ. Teaching Assistant	French	Sec French
Marta, 38	Springfield, MA. mayor's task force monitor for Health Care Advocacy.	Health/Phys.Ed and Veterinary Animal Sciences	Mid Sci.
Joe, 24	Nursing Home worker and cook	Psych/English	Sec. Eng.
Beth, 27	Assistant to Head Librarian at H.S.	Forestry	Sec. Sci
Gary, 25	Shoe salesman and H.S. Hockey coach	Applied Math	Sec. Math

An open-ended interview format was used with an interview guide (see Appendix B) to focus the participant's responses. The unstructured nature of the interviews allowed the participants to explore their own thoughts, feelings, and life histories with the freedom necessary to explicate fully their understanding of their life experience at the time the decision to enter teaching was made. The interview sought to allow the participants to become partners in the research.

Interviews were 70 to 90 minutes in length and were tape recorded. The audio tapes were transcribed using a word processor. The questions in the interview guide included:

1. Why did you choose to return to school to pursue teacher education, specifically the University of Massachusetts?
2. What were the circumstances in your life at the time you made the decision?
3. After graduating in your degree area, what career directions did you focus on?
4. What occupations did you hold?
5. What factors in your life led you to choose the teaching profession?

Individual interviews were transcribed by the author and a disinterested third person. The interviews yielded approximately 200 pages of typed transcripts.

#### d) Analysis of Interviews

The data will be analyzed using the general guidelines suggested for the in-depth interview method by Patton (1980). This is a method of analysis which requires that the emergent "...patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data...rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1980, p. 307). This method suggests that the key element of the analysis is to organize the data in such a way that the natural variations of the research subjects are allowed to emerge in ways which are accurate reflections of their differences. The primary purpose of this type of analysis is to describe the data so that it is possible to make interpretations about the nature of the Post-B.A. students.

Given the use of the informal conversational interview method, it was anticipated that Post-B.A. participants would answer the time-ordered sequencing of questions chronologically so that their life experiences could then be described by the author in historical perspective. However, since participants in interviews "jump around" from event to event and from thought to thought, moving forward and backward in time

as they describe their lives, the researcher reordered the transcribed interviews by using a word processor.

As Patton indicated, there is no "right" way to organize qualitative data. It is a process which depends on the creativity and insights of the researcher in arriving at a description of the subjects in a way which suggests causal linkages between the data and process variables.

After chronological ordering of each participant's individual life history, an inductive analysis was conducted.

Patton (1980) defined inductive analysis:

Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes and categories of analysis come from the data; these emerge out of the data rather than being imposed prior to data collection and analysis (p. 306).

...The naturalistic evaluator then looks for recurring regularities in the data and works back and forth between the data and the classification system (patterns, themes or categories) to verify the meaningfulness and accuracy of the system and the placement of data in the system (p. 311-312).

In the present study the qualitative analysis of the data was accomplished through compiling personal histories common to Post B.A. students as they described specific circumstances in their lives, that is, as they recounted events in their lives that may have impacted their decision to become certified. The



exact meaning of those events, as is consistent with qualitative research methods will not be known until after the transcripts have been analysed.

Specific issues and experiences expressed by Post-B.A.'s during the discussion of their lives will be identified in Chapter IV as emergent "segments of personal histories." These segments were given a number in order to distinguish one segment from the other. Segments may include, but are not limited to, specific descriptions of influential people and relationships, school, work and teaching experiences, and critical times for decision-making which collectively or individually may have had an impact on their decision to return to college to enter teaching. After completing the process of reading the transcripts, establishing and marking historical segments, descriptive excerpts (from transcripts) will be woven together to illustrate those segments that connect Post-B.A.'s.

These segments will then be superimposed over the chronological transcripts to establish predominant decision-making themes that will best describe individual reasons for entering teaching. It is anticipated that those components of personal history

talked about most may have had the greatest impact on returning to college, and on present attitudes about becoming a teacher. The author will tabulate the frequency of specific segments talked about by each subject and gather statements by individual Post-B.A.'s to establish decision-making themes.

The author searched for a system of classification which could serve as a tool for defining and describing the different patterns revealed by the interviews. The guidance Patton offered was as follows:

Patton suggested that a qualitative research classification system be designed in such a way that it meets the criteria of "internal homogeneity" and "external heterogeneity." With respect to the present study, this suggested the following: (1) teacher education students who are grouped together within a particular pattern should all show similar behaviors and attitudes as Post-B.A. students (internal homogeneity); and (2) Post-B.A.'s who are compared between groups should be obviously different (external heterogeneity).

Patton also suggested that a complete system of classification has not been devised as long as there are a large number of cases which are not assignable to

a pattern. In the final analysis, the classification system should be reasonably inclusive of all the existing data. Utilizing common "segments of personal history", the author will devise a classification system using the framework proposed by Patton.

After transcripts have been reviewed, segments identified, and themes established, Chapter IV will present the study's findings of Post-B.A. student attitudes and reasons for returning to college. Findings will be derived from the data collected by the survey questionnaires and interviews. Chapter IV will also present an introduction and description of the identified themes along with excerpts from Post B.A. interviews which support each thematic area.

## C H A P T E R I V

### STUDY FINDINGS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents survey and interview research findings of Post-B.A. students at the University of Massachusetts. The development of this Post-B.A. investigation is presented chronologically to engage the reader in the research process.

Survey Results reports handwritten responses to questions asked in the six-page questionnaire. Post-B.A. student data collected includes: demographic information, life experiences, career choices and consequences, and beliefs about teaching.

Interview Findings presents the results of fourteen 70-90 minute interviews. Analysis of the interview transcriptions yield two subsections describing students responses to interview questions. Subsections include: Personal/historical commonalities--excerpts from the transcriptions which illustrate six "segments" of personal history "talked about" by each participant, and Turning Points,

excerpts from the transcriptions which summarize four distinct "themes of transition" that influenced Post-B.A.'s decision to return to college for teacher certification.

### Survey Results

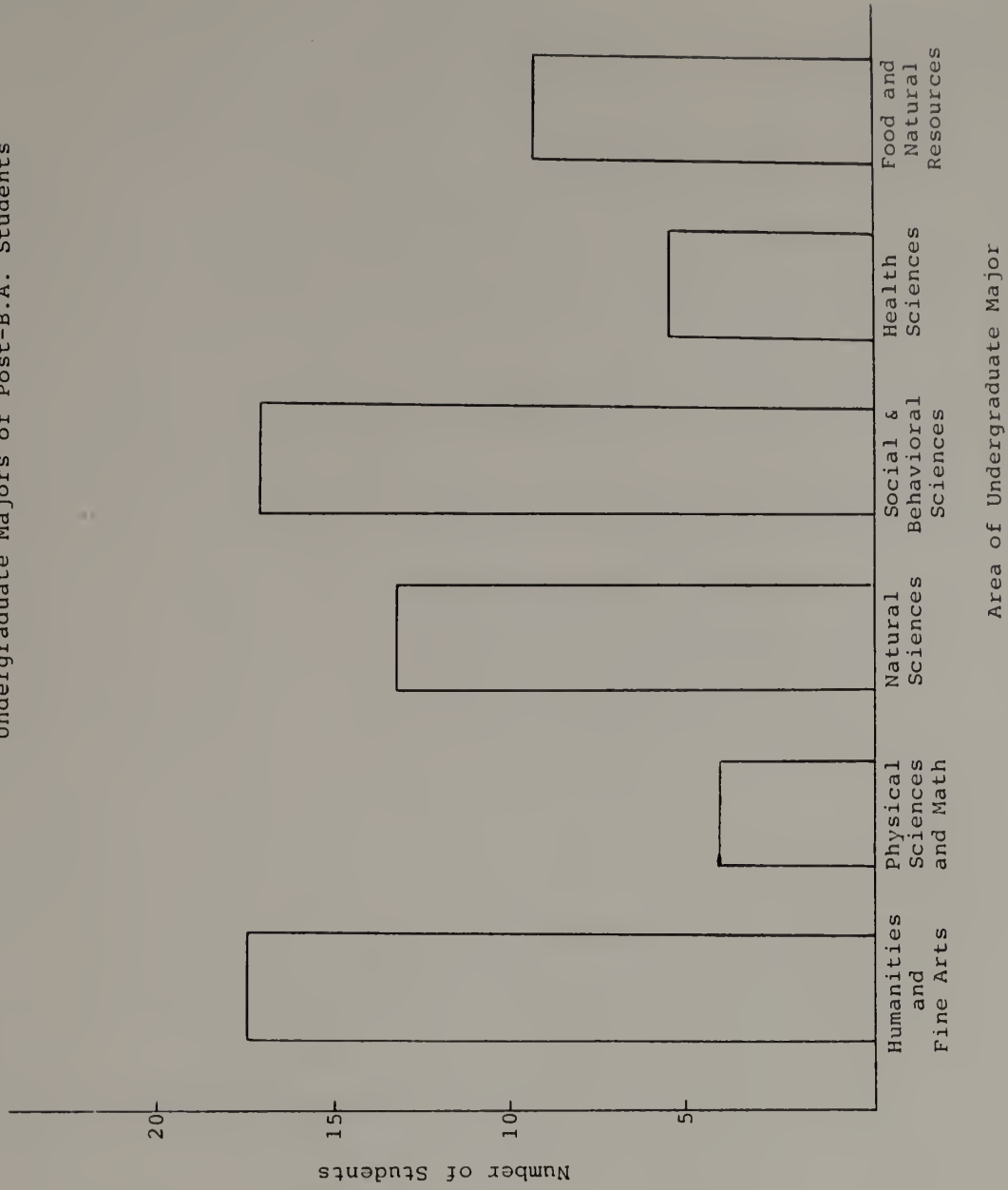
#### Demographics

Women made up 79% of the population surveyed. Everyone described themselves as white, non-Hispanic, and over 22 years old. The average age of all respondents was 30 years old with 63% being in the 20-29 age group. Thirty-five percent were married, while 60% were single. The remainder indicated they were either divorced, seperated, or single parents.

More than one-half of the undergraduate majors of Post-B.A. students were humanities and social sciences. Slightly less than one-half of these individuals had majored in science-related fields (See Figure 1).

There was an equal distribution of employment status: one-third of the participants were presently employed full-time; one-third employed part-time; and one-third not employed while attending school. Only 1 student lived on or near campus and the rest commuted between 2 to 50 miles one-way, an average of 4 times a week.

Figure 1  
Undergraduate Majors of Post-B.A. Students



### Life Experiences

Post-B.A. students were asked to rate and describe their work experiences in their undergraduate major and any teaching experiences they had either before or after graduation. Better than 90% reported experiences in teaching-related activities such as substitute teaching, tutoring, or teaching assistantships in college.

Respondents rated these experiences on a five point scale ranging from "very negative" to "very positive." Eighty-nine percent of the ratings assigned to teaching-related experiences ranged between "positive" and "very positive." By contrast, non-teaching experiences were rated somewhat less positively with 73% of the responses ranging from "neutral" to "positive."

### Career Choices and Consequences

Post-B.A. students did not perceive a graduate degree in education as a "helpful" process for a new teacher. Fifty percent felt the non-degree, Post-B.A. pathway would require the least amount of time or expense. Some stated they believed a Master's degree might actually hinder them from getting a job while

others saw teaching experience as a more appropriate foundation for M.Ed. studies.

Respondents identified "managing academic, personal, and work commitments" as the most difficult problems faced by an adult student returning to school. "Relevance of academic coursework" and "social and economic adjustments" were also cited as significant problems.

Asked to characterize their career in education over the next five years, 80% of Post-B.A. students described teaching as a full-time career, as opposed to a part-time or secondary career option.

Interest in the field and desire to become a teacher served to override the so-called "negative" features of teaching. Respondents were asked to rate possible concerns over low pay, limited openings, limited opportunities for advancement, and the lack of status given to teaching by the public on a five point scale ranging from "to a very little extent" to "a very great extent." Responses to each negative feature ranged between "to a very little extent" and "to little extent." The lack of public respect and social status given to teachers were the areas of greatest concern.



Summarizing their decision to return to college at this time, Post-B.A. students were given several possible explanations or asked to write one of their own. While all expressed interest in the field of education, only 25% stated they had always wanted to teach.

### Beliefs about Teaching

Over 40% of Post-B.A. students chose "recognition of and planning for diverse learning styles and needs" as their most important strategy for enhancing student learning. Also emphasized as important were "student self discovery", "discussion groups", "students choosing their own activities" and "learning by doing/experiential learning."

Several themes emerged from answers given to the open-ended question, "What do you see as the role of a teacher?" These included leader (15%), motivator (10%), facilitator (10%), guide (10%), resource person (10%), role model (10%), counselor (8%), director (8%) and classroom manager (8%).

Practicums, student teaching and internships were described by Post-B.A. students as the kinds of experiences most vital to their teacher training. In the area of formal coursework, only specific hands-on

seminars in curriculum development, multicultural education, drama, movement and art were identified. Many students expressed their difficulty in seeing connections between other program requirements (e.g. theoretical/philosophical coursework) and their professional training needs.

### Interview Results

In presenting interview findings the researcher will attempt to reflect the lives and words of the people interviewed. To facilitate this process, the author will cite direct quotes from the recorded interviews as illustrations of the concerns, issues and decision-making processes participants expressed. The goal is to seek information about those life experiences and circumstances which deal with career change and the decision to enter teaching. The two subsections which follow, Personal/historical Commonalities and Turning Points will engage the reader in excerpts (from transcriptions) describing significant aspects of Post-B.A.'s lives. In both subsections, participants tell stories about schooling, jobs, and relationships, reconstruct past events, discuss important people in their life, and disclose feelings about themselves. Each subsection illustrates

the "meaning that Post-B.A.'s make" of these past experiences and how these experiences may have shaped their decision to enter the teaching profession. An introduction of each subsection serves to clarify the distinct perspective of each.

#### Personal/historical commonalities

As students recounted past experiences that may have played a part in their decision to return to college for teacher certification and openly communicated their thoughts and feelings about those experiences, the researcher became familiar with their lives, as they perceived/understood them. From the fourteen interviews emerged common "segments of personal history." It is these segments which the author will present using selected excerpts from the transcriptions. All Post-B.A. students interviewed discussed each of the following:

1. The Elementary and Secondary School Years
2. Undergraduate Experiences
3. Post-Degree Work Experiences
4. Significant People that Influenced Decision to Enter Teaching
5. Support for Decision to Teach
6. Views and Philosophy on the Role of the Teacher

## 1. The Elementary and Secondary School Years

Post-B.A. students recalled specific classroom activities, and extra-curricular experiences to describe teachers, after school play, and memorable days of pre-college schooling. Subjects retraced both positive and negative experiences during elementary, junior and senior high school years that may have contributed to their recent decision to enter teaching.

Eighty percent of the women interviewed shared elementary "after school" experiences where they played "teacher" with friends. Only one of the four Post-B.A. men recalled "playing school." The following excerpts, from interviews, illustrate feelings expressed by Post-B.A. men and women regarding these experiences.

For example, Donna, age 25, worked a semester interning as a natural historian for the Smithsonian Museum before deciding to come back to Massachusetts. This internship completed her anthropology major requirements. She began her Post-B.A. teacher education program immediately after graduation. Donna is single, she recalls her elementary days:

...In third grade, kids would come over to my house and we'd all play school, I'd always be the teacher. In Junior High, I was a babysitter and loved to play teacher for the kids next door.

Susan, age 29, single, in her third year as a caseworker for a local retarded citizen's center. She had been taking graduate level courses "off and on" since graduating in psychology four years ago. She reflects on "after school play":

...My friends and I would put on plays for the whole neighborhood. I would always play the role of teacher. When friends and I began to play neighborhood games, I would be the one to give instructions, lay out rules, and organize teams. Everyone sort of depended on me to run the show.

Other aspects of public school experience surfaced in the interviews. Several participants reported on their role as "helper" in elementary and secondary classrooms, others describe "instructional responsibilities". Each shared these experiences in terms of: 1) how they believed these experiences may have prepared them for the role of teacher and 2) how these experiences influenced their recent decision to enter teacher training.

Joe, age 24, works part-time as a provider for a local nursing home, part-time cook. He returned to pursue secondary English certification immediately after graduating in psychology (minor in English). His interview illustrates points 1 and 2 above:

...Ever since grammar school I've helped peers and younger students. Each teaching episode seemed to better prepare me for the next. These teaching

experiences may have left a sort of impression on me to continue this helper role.

...I can remember in high school setting goals and objectives for myself and my tutee. All of these instructional skills began to transfer into various jobs that I held. No matter what job, I was always helping someone to learn a skill, a concept, a way of doing something better. Two years ago I finally realized my potential as a teacher by reflecting on this aspect of my earlier years. I would not be here now if it weren't for those encounters.

Ann, age 25, a studio art graduate is currently "free lancing." She is single and has returned to college after one year of "travel and exploration of careers" to seek elementary certification. She talks of positive teaching experiences in her elementary classrooms:

...I was miss smartypants--sometimes I got teased because other kids saw me as a genius. It didn't bother me, I really enjoyed being the little teacher--I mean, this teacher would actually sit with me and we would plan strategies for helping some kid who was just not getting it.

...In the fourth grade I started acting like I was the teacher when the teacher left the room--that got me in trouble--kids would really act up and she would walk in. I was just practicing classroom management--that's all. No, seriously, I was planning to become a teacher back then. If I'd failed then, I would've quit. I was a big hit, and teachers reinforced my wanting to become a teacher by allowing me to practice right there.

Linda, single, age 29, a part-time children's museum interpreter, part-time outdoor leader graduated in Geography 5 years prior to returning to college for elementary certification. She retraces her "most

memorable experience" as a leader in extracurricular school activities:

...I was very involved with theatre in high school and was always in a position of responsibility and leadership for many after school happenings. I always seemed to take charge somehow and frequently had a large number of people that I was to motivate towards some known end, a stage production, a dance for instance. I was in charge mostly because I knew people looked to me. And in that crowd of people in high school, to get into the maternal thing, everyone would come pour their problems out to me. I was everyone's mom. I loved it then, I love it now. It was those kinds of experiences that prepared me for becoming a teacher.

Linda also reports on becoming aware of her teaching potential in high school. Teachers recognized her abilities and called on her to help:

...I knew the potential was there because I was a good student, and if I knew something, I could teach it. All through high school I held onto the idea of teaching some day. Some of my best experiences as instructor were in high school as a peer tutor, Teachers would ask me to help others basically because things just came easy to me. I'd already thought of myself as a teacher even back then, partly because I identified with high school teachers and partly because I would amaze myself at how effective I was at helping other students understand. Teachers saw this and as a result, gave me instructional responsibilities all the time. Teaching began to be a part of me.

Nora, age 26, single, a fine arts graduate (minor in English), recently left her job as a public relations director with an architectural firm in hopes of becoming certified to teach in the primary grades.

She reflects on her summer work experiences during her high school years:

...I was an art teacher and camp counselor every summer. I loved that time in my life, and I was good at relating to kids. That was over 10 years ago, and yet, only recently did I draw on those experiences to frame a new career for myself. I only recently realized that those summers were my training ground for a very logical occupation for me--teaching children.

## 2. Undergraduate Experiences

Two sets of observations emerged as students described their undergraduate experiences: 1) general accounts and attitudes about undergraduate school; and 2) specific accounts which impacted their decision to enter teaching.

Frank, single, age 28, in his fourth year working with a local Y.M.C.A. (2 years as director) decided to resign from that position to enter a secondary science teacher education program. He compares and contrasts his undergraduate degree program in Leisure Services with his current teacher education program:

...After my experience in Leisure Services and now as a student in the teacher ed. program, I see that the students here receive more and better practicum experiences, with helpful feedback from cooperating teachers and supervisors, moreso than those I found in the L.S. program. However, my practicums in L.S. and a job in recreation during college gave me organizational and management skills that have given me a different perspective



from which to view the teacher education program. That last year in L.S. helped rekindle my desire to teach by giving me the opportunity to see myself in a leadership role. A role that I assumed in my job, my practicum and in the L.S. classes.

...I think that L.S. experiences, both coursework and practicums had alot to do with my decision to enter teaching. But my job and subsequent work with high schools during college had more to do with it.

Others viewed their undergraduate degree as an important and necessary "step" before entering teaching. They saw the value of their undergraduate degree and how they did not want to end up like other graduates in their degree area. As an example, Donna cites her friend who graduated with her in Anthropology and is now bartending:

...that wasn't for me, I wanted to do something related to my field (Anthro), yet I saw few possibilities available. I did not want to be a clerk in some office. My college practicum work in day care gave me skills, confidence and another way of looking at the field of anthropology. I saw the option of teaching and felt that I could easily integrate Anthropology into a classroom and be very happy doing so.

Many described the "college experience" in terms of how college introduced the need to think about careers. Ann, echoes a Post-B.A. majority opinion:

...High school did not prepare me for career decision-making. Not until college did I begin to see the process of skills training for specific careers. College forced me to decide on a career in the first week of orientation, forced me to look at my interests and match my talents to a

logical undergraduate major, and, for the first time, gave me perspective on many of the career choices available. I began to understand more about life choices and consequences.

All subjects related how experiences during their undergraduate years may have influenced their decision to enter teaching. Friends, intimate relationships, fellow students, dormitory life, jobs, financial circumstances and travel during their undergraduate years were recurring themes.

Sally, married, age 33, recently resigned from her position as an educational textbook salesperson to gain certification in secondary English. She completed her undergraduate degree in French/Italian and has "worked and traveled extensively over the past 10 years." She reflects on her experiences as a tutor:

...I was a French major in college and there was this somewhat informal arrangement in my dorm where you sign-up so new students in your major could come to you for assistance. It was my senior year and I helped freshman with their intro French, that was over 10 years ago. I remembered times of frustration and impatience with those freshmen. I also remember some successful, rewarding tutoring experiences. I also enjoyed tutoring special ed. children one semester. I thought to myself, do I have what it takes to become a teacher? I reflected on those experiences and others during my summer of reflection.

James, age 30, married, a "part-time father", part-time carpenter, and recent graduate in

environmental studies. He finished his undergraduate major at Massachusetts (and transferred the credits to the degree-awarding college) the same semester he applied to the Post-B.A. program to pursue secondary science certification. James shares how he believes his college years prepared him for teaching:

...I was not a traditional college student. I attended a university which allowed me to participate in the design of my own Environmental Studies major. I went to 5 different college campuses across the U.S. taking related courses and working in various practicum experiences where I found myself in the role of student, yet, often in the role of instructor, leading excursions into wildlife refuges, up mountains, down rivers. For a while there I was paid to teach in the school's conservation program and coordinate an outdoor leadership program. All of these experiences gave me the content, skills, and confidence to take my science background a step further. That is, to pass on the knowledge I've gained and become a science instructor.

### 3. Post-Degree Work Experiences

Participants interviewed reported that they participated in one or more "work experiences" after completing their undergraduate program of study. These experiences included paid positions and volunteer work in both teaching and non-teaching roles. Each subject characterized their work experiences as either satisfying or dissatisfying. Each described their job or jobs, their attitudes about work, and how their work

fit into their preferred lifestyle and career interests.

Nearly all subjects described one or more post-degree experiences as teaching-related. Each commented on how these experiences may have impacted their decision to enter teaching.

Frank, relates:

...My intent was to find that job that would involve skills I'd learned in the Leisure Services Program, I thought I had found it at the YMCA, instead I found that what I'd be doing was not what they had originally hired me to do - coaching and counseling kids. They had shifted their emphasis away from that, almost to the point where I wasn't working with people any more, only doing administrative stuff. My work there went from 60% instruction, 40% administrative, down to 10% instruction. I decided then that I wanted to be in control, I was not happy with the politics. It was time for a change, and teaching seemed to be the logical change to be making.

Ellen, age 33, married, a former nanny in France, is currently teaching undergraduate French courses at Massachusetts and seeks French certification. She shares her memories of post-degree (Government) goals she set for herself over 13 years ago: "to earn enough money to go to France; to live and work in France; and to learn the language and culture." Her story is as follows:

...All of my goals would help me achieve a foundation to then get certification. I earned enough money to get to France by waiting tables

and working in Washington D.C. teaching American toddlers French and Spanish. I took a job there as a nanny and went to school. After a year I investigated opportunities for scholarships through the French Embassy. Turned out that there was one that required working with adolescents in a sort of camp situation--we would be restoring old French chateaus. I saw this as a great chance to emerge myself in the culture and work with a different age group. Anyway, I was given the job. Kids, ages 12 to 17 from all over Europe came to be a part of this effort and learn on-the-job training in masonry, plumbing, construction, carpentry and landscaping. To try to motivate these kids was extremely difficult. I was only 20 years old and I think they resented me in some ways. It was very challenging basically because I didn't have those technical skills to teach them, I was just learning, however, it was a joy to learn all of those skills with them.

...Then I was off to Spain--again, with goals to learn the language, culture. Through a series of unforeseen events I wound up in another camp counselor situation for a month there. Took a mini-Spanish Speaking course, then returned to the U.S.

...I lived at home and substitute taught almost every day. I taught nearly all the grade levels, K through 12. Then, in the last 6 weeks of the school year I was hired as a high school French teacher in my home town.

Marta, age 38, a mother of two, presently a part-time health care advocate for a Massachusetts state task force while student teaching for her final certification requirement in middle school science. She graduated in Health and Physical Education "in the sixties." Her teaching and non-teaching experiences after graduating were quite extensive. The following are excerpts from an hour-long explanation of her

occupations, education and responsibilities after her first degree:

...I would consider my jobs at the Institute of Living, the directorship of Halfway House, my help in the coordination of the Runaway Hotline, all as teaching experiences. You see, these were all opportunities to help children on an individual, one-to-one basis. Guidance may be a better word--I've always wanted to go into guidance because I felt that this was the only situation where you are helping children without the constraints of a classroom, that is, you get to know the kids and their problems and their joys and do things that are prohibitive in a classroom setting. These experiences were somewhat influential in my recent decision to teach, as well as, my next career focus: community development. I spent the next 4 years working as a community organizer in several different programs, worked in economic development, sat on the Parent Advisory Committee during the desegregation hearings, then headed up the human services component in the Headstart Program. For 2 years directed the first housing redevelopment project in Springfield called the Brightwood Neighborhood Council.

...later, I decided that I would rather not have the pressures of community service development projects, I had been in for 10 years and now I wanted a change--kept my hands in a few different programs and gave of my time when I could. Then went back to school for a degree in Veterinary and Animal Science--got married second semester and had Jenny (daughter) in the 4th. I completed the program in 5 years. Instructors urged me to go onto graduate school, if I wanted to really do something in veterinary--I wanted to work with livestock, and the university was using their graduate students for that sort of work. Instructors said that with all of my experience and education I would be overqualified for jobs around here--they were right, no one locally would hire me. My husband and child had made alot of sacrifices over this 5 year time period and it was time for me to find work here, especially, once

we'd decided to bring up our children here. So, I began substitute teaching in local schools

An example of post-degree non-teaching experiences are described in the following excerpt from Gary's interview. Gary is single, age 25, a shoe salesperson and part-time hockey coach currently pursuing secondary math certification. His undergraduate major was in applied math. A synopsis of his story follows:

...I've been a shoe salesman on the side for over 5 years, part-time during semesters, full-time over the summers, and full-time after I graduated--all to help get me through school. It's hard work especially when you are a full-time student. However, my undergraduate degree in math certainly helped me in retail. I had a couple of lucrative offers to open my own shoe store back home, but I think that it requires a certain kind of personality to make a career in buying and selling. I don't think that I fall into that personality type. Sure, there are certain aspects of the job that I like, but the negatives far outweigh the positives.

James held 4 different jobs in 3 different states after finishing his degree in Environmental Studies. Three of his experiences were teaching-related. The following is a description of his non-teaching experience.

...My brother and I both worked with this corporation that renovated old homes all over New York. I really liked working with my hands. I hadn't before that time. I had no knowledge of how to work with hand or power tools, but I enjoyed it and it was good money. There was no boss, we all just worked together. We were good as a team, and did good work without supervision.

I liked the people I worked with. It was a learning situation for me--and that worked well with our (he and wife) plans. We've always had as our number one goal--it's our dream, to buy some land and build our own home. There I was earning lots of money and learning the skills to build.

About half of the subjects interviewed stated that they held jobs unrelated to their degree area. For example, Joe talks about his full-time job in the nursing home:

...After graduation I went back to my home town, I was making great money caring for the elderly and had the hours I wanted. One day I just sort of sat up, looked at myself and said, damn, anyone can do this. I'm not just anyone, I possess specific "people skills", I can do much more for this place than they will allow, I am grossly underutilized. Nothing here has challenged me, it's too predictable, too repetitious. I remember thinking, "This job didn't really require my psych degree. All that time and money wasted on a degree that was landing only maintenance level jobs like this one". I couldn't see any evidence of forward progress for myself. The future looked bleak, yet I knew I had much to offer people. I felt stuck. I began thinking of going back to college--try something new.

Ann expresses a more positive view of her experiences after graduating in Studio Art:

...After graduating I really didn't know what I wanted to do. My parents gave me a trip to London as my graduation present. The travel did me good in many ways: took the pressures of "job search" off, opened my eyes to many real and available opportunities for art expression and exposed me to another artistic community very different from any I'd been a part of. I waitressed there for about 7 months and learned to appreciate those who live "hand to mouth" because that was virtually how I was living. I found myself in San Francisco only



a couple of months after returning from London. Waitressed and worked in clothes retail while actively seeking employment in my degree area. I had some success from 3 art showings there, but felt that I needed something more secure--a stable and predictable income. All of these experiences helped me to grow. I began to look at myself and my chances for making it in the art world. I was on my own for the first time and really focussed my energy into "finding myself" and building a career and lifestyle to fit my interests and talents

The other half spoke of jobs during their undergraduate program which were degree-related. James comments favorably on his experience at an institution for retarded citizens in Wyoming:

...It was the outdoor experiential component of the institution that attracted me, I was surprised at my prior misconceptions about mentally retarded people. My 1st week on the job I just sort of tagged along and then suddenly I was in charge. I just really enjoyed myself, I felt appreciated, important. For the first time, I could actually apply some skills I learned in college and I felt that I'd established a really good rapport with them, we accomplished a hell of a lot in a short period of time. I learned alot about myself and my natural instincts as a teacher. I think my downfall was trying to do too much too fast. I ran into some real administrative hassles by trying to start a fishing program and a cooking class and the nutritionist was outraged that I might do it without her supervision and control. From that point on I was doomed. It became more and more apparent that there were some really good staff with high energy and creative ideas and there were some that had just been around too long and weren't into it. I learned quickly about the politics of institutions and how I deal with them.

Susan worked with handicapped individuals part-time during her undergraduate program and

full-time after she graduated. She expresses dissatisfaction in the job, yet, reflects on how it has helped her to look at herself, her needs, and how the job experience motivated her to look at potential career alternatives:

...Although I enjoy working with these people and find it very rewarding, the field in itself has not been very satisfying for me overall mostly because of the working conditions and the very overwhelming demands of time and energy. There are very isolating positions where you work with very few people in a very confined physical space for many hours--it's draining. I've worked in this field for 7 years. For the past year or so I've been talking to people, doing a lot of career counseling and thinking about my own personality and who I am and trying to find a career for myself that suits the lifestyle that I want to lead as well as fulfill a lot of my needs. I need the change, more variety in my day to day life. I still want to work with people, preferably children, but I want to be my own boss, that's really more my style. I added all these things up and came up with teaching as my choice for a new career.

4. Significant People that Influenced Decision to Enter Teaching

Post-B.A.'s describe the people in their lives who influenced their decision to enter teaching--usually identifying two or more individuals. College instructors, college counselors, parents/family members, spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend and friends were most often mentioned. Some common terms used to

describe relationships were: role model, mentor, teacher, advisor, guide and counselor. They recalled how these people influenced them.

The following excerpts from interviews describe Post-B.A. relationships with "influential" people in their lives.

Donna recalls her struggle to deal with the many views of influential people and the impact each had on her decision-making:

...Prior to my decision to enter the field of anthropology, pressure to go into nursing came from all directions. My father wanted me to--my sister was in nursing and she seemed happy. ...After a couple of semesters of indecision my roommate suggested that I go after what interests me most, not what my father wanted me to do. She said that I should use my college education to learn about my interests, then pursue that interest. At that time my interest was toward working with kids, I remembered the pleasant experiences I had working with children. That's when I decided to take a course in the school of education. My instructor, Dr. U. was excellent, he turned me on to the idea of becoming a teacher. So, I had to think about whether I wanted to be what somebody else wanted me to be or whether I wanted to control my own destiny. I used to let people control what I was. Friends, my father and my sister used to say how bad the pay was in teaching and I allowed them to sway me. However, I was so inspired by this instructor and his ability to motivate his students that I practically signed up right then and there. I suddenly wanted to learn the skills that would help me to motivate children, he was a wonderful role model for me and he encouraged me to try a prepracticum. Now here I am, in teaching, controlling my own life.

Few subjects credited family members as influences that played a part in their decision to teach.

Comments were most often limited to family members' occupations, schooling, accomplishments, values and lifestyles. Only 4 subjects interviewed spoke of the direct influence family members had on their career decision-making. Linda was quite proud of her family and states their influence on her:

...My dad grew up in very rural Maine, he was the son of a mail carrier. His mother learned to read when she was about 4 years old, so the story goes. Anyway, she saw to it that he received a good education. He was the top of his high school class, then went onto the U. of Maine--again, in the top of his class. He went on to M.I.T. and received his Ph.D. So, you can see the emphasis they (mom and dad) placed on education for us. Dad would describe education as a "socially mobilizing force." However, he still doesn't think that his kids should be teachers, and two of his three daughters are going to be.

...My entire family influenced my decision--our whole house was full of books and I remember how my sisters and I would read with seemingly insatiable appetites. We'd bring 'em to the dinner table. My mom would try to keep up by reading the same books we read and ask us questions about major characters. When I was a teenager, she would periodically lead me in storybook analysis, asking about character motivation, antagonist, protagonist, symbolism etc. She was extremely engaging during those times and boy what a great story teller.

...My mom was a wonderful role model for me, she had all the sensitivities of a teacher. She was always counseling misguided neighborhood kids when they had trouble at home. I began to take on some of her traits early on--in high school I became everyone's mom, supporting friends in need, the shoulder for all to cry on--never to fall apart.

...While working in the town planning office and vacillating over whether to stay on or quit, I began to think about what my mom would say to me about my unhappiness here. Yes, she not only influenced me in my decision to become a teacher but also inspired me to end a not-so-good job situation.

Only one subject mentioned the influence of a boyfriend and his family. Nora had been discouraged from entering teaching for years by family members and friends. She states that she always agreed with them and continued to pursue her interests in free-lance art and advertising:

...R. (boyfriend), R's brother and wife, and I, travel alot together. R's brother teaches English as a Second Language at a university and wherever we are, he's always working on his lesson plans and he'll have me do tapes for his students in different vernaculars of English. I guess that over time I just saw that his personal interest were always integrated into his profession. That really started making sense to me. I also see his summer vacations as attractive and psychologically healthy in a couple of ways: he gets time off to reflect on his teaching away from the demands of his students and pressures from the university; and he has the opportunity to develop personal interest, which can then be applied to his classroom. That, and the fact that whenever I'm over at R's parents, who are both teachers, the conversation is nearly always "education." I think that R. and his family have been the strongest influence towards my decision.

Subjects recalled favorite teachers in elementary, secondary or higher education. Most subjects mentioned more than one. All were asked to describe the setting, tell the story which would best characterize the

teacher, and comment on how each teacher may have influenced their decision to teach. Only three felt that a specific teacher had a direct influence on their decision. In a preceeding excerpt Donna described an education instructor, Dr. U. as someone who "turned her on" to teaching. Here Ellen revisits a former high school calculus teacher:

...I really respected and admired this man and he was saying not to go into teaching, go into business. He was going through a serious depression in his life, he had to drop out of teaching for 2 months because of anxiety and burnout. What he had to say about teaching was very important to me because he was a damn good teacher. He was feeling down about the lack of respect given to teachers. You know, it really had gotten to him--into his bones. He didn't want to go into administration where he knew he could make more money. He was a teacher and he was now battling with himself and talking about it with me. I really admired the fact that he had come to his own hard reality that money was not the motivating force of his existence, he really felt that he had to let me know of his biases regarding the profession. He probably didn't realize that his talk inspired me to pursue teaching at a time when I was unsure about whether I was going into teaching or not.

Marta remembers a college physical education instructor who served as an advisor in her undergraduate program over 18 years ago:

...My goal was to become a P.E. instructor like Ms. G, with the ability to motivate students by relating to all of them as she did. She was my mentor, I watched her, tried to emulate her. I remember her as though it was yesterday. My classroom teaching definitely has certain style

and character which mimic some of those very same movements that she created. This woman created an environment that not only promoted learning, but integrated all aspects of family, community, current events, everything into her curriculum. ...I thought about her when I was making my decision, I even tried to reach her, I think of her often when planning my strategies for the day.

##### 5. Support for Decision to Teach

Students recall the support they received from various people regarding the decision to become a teacher. Students spoke of the level of support they received during the decision-making process and after the decision had been made to enter a teacher training program.

Sally speaks for over half of the participating Post-B.A. colleagues in this study who expressed "little" to "no" support for her decision to teach from friends and family:

...Both friends and family were not very supportive during the time I was trying to decide to either keep my job and be miserable or enter teaching and try something new. Only my husband was "there for me." Most were upset that I was going into a career that paid so little, others said that it was a "cake" job that I would find it boring, unchallenging and would burn out in my first year because kids don't care, are disrespectful, and get this, ironically they warned me of the lack of administrative and emotional support in schools--they were discouraging me and this actually helped to strengthen my conviction to help schools...

This excerpt captures her experience regarding "support" from the university:

...and what made it tougher for me was the fact that after I had made the decision to enter I found no support from the university. My expectations when I applied were that I would receive guidance, support, at least some organization to this already difficult process. Here I was, 30 years old coming back to school after being out for seven years, I was a little rusty, the process for registration was very different now. The whole university world and it's rules had changed. I called everywhere to find out what courses I needed to take in order to meet the requirements of the state and university. They just kept referring me around and around. I just wanted someone who could answer these basic questions and tell me about tuition. I never received anything through the mail and the office for certification actually discouraged me from entering the field of teaching, I nearly gave up the whole idea.

Married Post-B.A.'s reported positive support from their spouses. Ellen is one of four subjects interviewed who is married (married Post-B.A.'s interviewed - 3 female, 1 male). Her comments about her spouse are similar to statements made by other married Post-B.A.'s. She speaks of the support from her spouse:

...My husband, an electrical engineering doctoral student, was very supportive of my decision. He is Swiss and in his culture teaching is highly respected. He's pleased with the time obligations of a teacher. He likes the fact that we can travel in the summer and that there is usually more flexibility in terms of raising children.

Gary reports on the positive support he received:



...My parents, my fiance, and friends were all very supportive of my decision to quit my assistant management shoe sales position and go into teaching. All were confident that I would be happier teaching high school math and coaching hockey--they told me how proud they would be. This became my new goal. I was really very excited and with everyone's support it made the transition easier.

Ann wanted to continue her work in art free-lancing while pursuing her teaching certificate.

She comments on the support of the university:

...Continuing Education at UMass is very accomodating for students such as myself. It would have cost me a lot more money if I had come in as a regular student. Also B.M., an advisor for Post-B.A.'s is very clear about what is required for certification and let me know of the various options available.

## 6. Views and Philosophy on the Role of Teacher

Students reported a wide range of answers when asked about their views on teaching. Post-B.A.'s interviewed echoed nearly all of those roles identified by Post-B.A.'s surveyed. However, the interview gave the student more freedom to expand and communicate their ideas about teaching. Many shared their views and philosophy of how they feel students learn best and supported these views by using examples of situations they had encountered in teaching-related experiences. Many stated that their philosophy and skills were

congruent with the present efforts for improvement in teaching, and because they were committed to these views, could offer something to the field of teaching. For some, this awareness of educational reform and commitment to contribute to the educational process was a motivation to return for teacher certification:

Beth, single, age 27, a Forestry graduate talks about "teaching" in her work as a high school library assistant at the time she made the decision to enter elementary teacher training:

...I viewed teaching as a winning situation for everyone involved: in the Library, the students learned from me and from other students; I learned from my students and from my peers; and so on. A real community of learning and growth here. But I wanted more, my classroom. I think I made the decision to teach because I felt as though I needed the kind of feedback you get as a teacher, the kind of input you get from students, the student-teacher interaction that is necessary for understanding/knowing that you're getting through, and when you're not getting through, why not? I liked the idea that I'd be a part of a reform movement in education, an effort to change the bad rap teachers get and I felt that the commitment of teachers here was similar to my commitment. I liked knowing that I was appreciated, this may be selfish but I think students need to feel appreciation as well. I want to be a positive role model and share my perspective not by forcing my opinion on students.

Nora shares her impressions of what it takes to be an effective teacher.

...As a teacher you really have to be able to think on your feet, you know, not be so rigid, be

very creative and go with the flow of the classroom. A kind of spur-of-the-moment thinking is necessary, you have to be an entertainer and know your audience. I think I realized that I was more people-oriented than the corporate world allows you to be. I think I just needed to pass on things that had been passed on to me, and isn't that really what teaching is all about?

### Turning Points of Post-B.A.'s

Participants shared stories of their recent movement away from particular career directions to their present movement towards certification in teaching. As the researcher heard them communicate the accounts of their lives, he knew what other investigators would have said if they had been listening. Sheehy would have used the term passages to describe their shifts from one status to another. Vaillant would have observed that they were moving through stages. Neugarten would have heard the dual ticking of the biological and social clocks. Aslanian and Brickell (1980) would have referred to the Post-B.A.'s explanations of career changes as transitions--past personal experiences of life circumstances, feelings, thoughts and actions of the person in life change and probably would have been able to identify a specific life event or "trigger that

served as a starter's pistol to signal that the time had come to start learning in order to move on" (p. 36).

The time period between Post-B.A.'s former status (non-teacher) and their current status (teacher education candidate) might best be characterized as their "turning point." This interval of time was seen by Post-B.A.'s as "an important and crucial time in the decision-making process" and became the focal point of this study and its analysis of fourteen Post-B.A. students.

All Post-B.A.'s shared detailed personal histories to describe life circumstances during their turning point. These included but were not limited to the six common segments of personal history described earlier: (a) elementary and secondary school years; (b) undergraduate experiences; (c) post-degree work experiences; (d) significant people that influenced decision to enter teaching; (e) support for decision to teach; and (f) views on the role of teacher.

As indicated in Chapter III, the researcher must wait until all data is collected before analysis and classification of individuals can be completed. Transcriptions have been read, and historical segments

established and tabulated. Therefore, descriptive excerpts can be woven together to illustrate predominant decision-making attributes and qualities for each student. Using Patton's classification scheme, four distinct turning points have been identified from the segments, they are:

1. Decision Based on Making Changes in Professional Goals and Expectations
2. Decision Based on Personal and Emotional Needs in Work
3. Decision Based on Establishing Initial Career Decisions and Choices
4. Decision Based on Translating Long Term Beliefs About Teaching into Action

#### Decision Based on Making Changes in Professional Roles and Expectations

Students in this pattern most often spoke of their teaching and non-teaching experiences after graduation from college by describing the termination of one job and the beginning of another. Major portions of these interviews were spent talking about the expectations they had before entering the job, then, discussing their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction for each job. The predominant theme for each student was that their reason for this change in career focus rested in their dissatisfaction with their profession.

For Frank, age 28, a Leisure Services graduate, it was a matter of a job he liked until the recreational organization began to change their emphasis regarding who they were to serve. At first, Frank's expectations were being met as Y.M.C.A. program developer/instructor/counselor, yet, organizational changes redefined his original job responsibilities.

...There was a strong philosophy in this organization towards serving youth, however I found a large discrepancy between what they were saying philosophically and what was actually going on, that was disturbing. Shifts had been made to move towards serving adults and adult activity programs. The emphasis shifted simply because of economics. There was more money to be made serving adults.

Even with the awareness of the organizational change, Frank continued his work.

...My responsibilities hadn't changed. I felt that I had found a nice niche there and enjoyed a wonderful balance between instruction/counseling 60% of the time and administrative responsibility 40%.

However, soon those changes within the organizational structure began to effect his role there.

...The shift may or may not have been necessary, I don't know. The difficulty came when my job responsibilities went down to 10%-20% for instruction/counseling, and up to 80%-90% for the administrative work. I was specifically asked to

counsel and teach when they first interviewed me for the job and that is what I wanted--to work directly with the kids at that level. I was not interested in hiring of new people and sending them out for training. I was very happy when new employees came to me for training, I would work with them. I served as a role model for how you instruct children, I enjoyed that as much as I enjoyed instructing on my own. I was hired with that understanding, they were renegotiating my role and I was unwilling to compromise. What this leads up to is, in December of 1984 I gave notice to resign my position there and to go on, to go back to school. My intent was to find a situation where I could find a job that was more instructional. I think teaching will satisfy this desire.

Sally found herself in an occupation where her initial expectations were not being realized.

...Publishing is something that I thought about doing when I finished my degree in French/Italian. I jumped at the opportunity to become a textbook rep, and saw it as a first step towards publishing. I took that job selling college textbooks thinking it would be interesting, intellectually stimulating, and challenging to meet professors who would be so thrilled to meet and talk with me. Well, I was in for a big surprise. I have never had a more ego shattering experience in my life, professors who didn't care what books they used because they said that their students didn't read anyway. Their attitude about college students was abominable. I felt as though they should be ashamed for the way they felt. What is going on here, no wonder kids are living up to these expectations, that's why nobody's getting anywhere, that's why Johnny can't read, because these guys don't care. They have no interest in what these kids are doing, how they are learning to think, they are not giving them the tools to learn how to learn, nothing, they (professors) are just throwing really inferior texts at them (students) and I think the publishers are following suit.

She stated her reasons for leaving the textbook sales position:

...I had to leave because I just could not resign myself to selling college professors textbooks that were eighth grade level. No wonder college students don't read, the books they are given are so boring. Kids are bored by these, professors know it, publishers know it, yet the publishers see what the professors want and because their business is to make money, they give it to them. Okay, maybe I expected every place to be like Mt. Holyoke and every professor to be Mt. Holyoke but I found that when I was selling that even they could care less, so it's everywhere and very unfortunate. So, I left my high paying job, company car and expense account and went back to living on half the amount of money that we were used to living on. It was a pretty amazing move on my part but I just couldn't cope.

That summer, during what appeared to be a crucial period in her turning point, Sally reflected on former jobs and life experiences searching for a satisfying career direction.

...I spent the summer wringing my hands, moping around, sitting in the sun and reading trashy novels. I began to think about my job at the bookstore where I had responsibility for making sure that all the right texts were there. I was making important decisions about ordering reference materials for various departments. It got to the point where professors would come in and ask me what text would be appropriate to substitute for a text that had gone out of print. I was so intuned to the students and the instructional approaches of professors that I began to be recognized as a consultant. That was flattering. Then I thought, I've always been surrounded by an educationally oriented environment where students are pursuing learning. I was part of a tutorial program working with



learning disabled elementary kids, and an outreach program up in Northfield helping low income kids learn basic social skills. I loved that feeling of passing on those things that have been passed on to me, a sense of gratification that I helped others less fortunate grasp certain concepts. I also remembered that wonderful feeling of satisfaction during college when I tutored incoming freshman in introductory French. For two years freshmen came to me. I learned that you can do lots of things with learning through group interaction and students helping other students. That summer I realized that I was much more people oriented than the corporate schema allowed me to be. And that is when I made the decision. I think I made the decision to teach because I felt as though I needed the kind of job that would give me the opportunity to work more directly with people, I need the kind of feedback and input from students that tells me that I'm doing something for them, that I'm appreciated.

#### Decision Based on Personal and Emotional Needs in Work

The two students in this decision-making pattern primarily expressed past work experiences as successful occupations, yet were not personally or emotionally satisfied with themselves. A predominant theme talked about by each was how their jobs met and did not meet personal and emotional needs at a particular time in their life. Both felt that teaching might offer personal satisfaction. Nora talked about her recent position as a public relations director as her turning

point. She expressed pride, success, then self-reflection:

...One aspect of this multidimensional role was the task of writing state and federal architectural job proposals. That required contacting architectural consultants to compile incredible amounts of information; complete lengthy applications; and compose projected budgets, construction timelines and material specifications. They hired me because of my expertise in graphic design, primarily to help them develop a whole new corporate identity but felt that I could handle most anything and everything that they sent my way. So, I wrote press releases, gathered promotional materials, and photographed construction sites at various stages of development, the list goes on--and I did each task well. I could have stayed with them and been very comfortable financially. I would still be very successful but I felt such a pull inside myself to look carefully at who I was and what I was becoming. I didn't like myself.

Nora continued her work at the architectural firm and stated:

...the decision-making process really got going once I began to look at myself and how I may not really be cut out for this kind of business. Even though I liked the work and responsibilities I still felt this dual personality, you know, one personality at work and one outside of work struggling to get in. I wanted to feel free and comfortable sharing what I am and who I am openly and honestly. In this business, I felt that at 8:30 a.m. I had to leave the personal side of myself outside the door and change into Nora the business professional, that bothered me.

Nora communicated how important her personal and emotional needs were while contemplating her movement

away from a "successful" occupation and trying to make important decisions about how to go about searching for a sensible option for a new focus. She specifically identified a period of "soul searching" where she reevaluated past experiences in terms of how they met her need for personal and emotional happiness she called "being whole."

...I began to reassess this job and reflect on previous things in my life that made me feel whole. One of the major attractions which brought me into teaching was what I saw in myself through past roles as college level art instructor and as a camp counselor and art teacher. I did a lot of soul searching during that time. I thought, what kinds of things do I like? What do I like about living? I asked myself these questions instead of thinking about it in terms of what kinds of skills do I have. My answer came up teacher, and it really clicked. I was really very happy during those times when I helped children. I felt like a whole person, not a split person. I really felt that I had a separate identity in my work, separate from who I was outside of work. It all came together for me, it made sense, you can do what you feel you want to do.

Gary described his shoe salesperson position both in terms of his success and the perspective he gained from working there.

...I was an undergraduate in Math at UMass when I took this job as assistant manager. I intended to work in a business like this and gain skills to become a successful buyer in a lucrative market like shoe sales. I'm still working there part-time. As a student I have the opportunity to see two worlds: the cushy life of those undergraduates whose parents are putting them

through school and the hard life for those of us who must work and fight just to make ends meet. My work gives me a sense of the true value of the dollar, it gives me a sense of pride, it builds character and I feel good about myself. I'm very good at my job and make pretty good money. The people I work with remind me of myself when I first came into this business, a little green with not much experience in sales.

Gary described his turning point as a "crucial time" when he began to look at himself, his career opportunities in shoe sales, teaching and how others around him played a part in his decision:

... I had just graduated and was thinking about whether I should stay in the area, coach, and continue my work at the shoe store or stay at UMass and shoot for the teaching certificate. To add to the complexity of my decision, an opportunity to open my own place in Danvers surfaced--had the shop all picked out. I simply had to stop, look at myself and what I was faced with. It was the big D (decision). Others gave advice and tried to be helpful, but I had to make the final decision. In the final analysis it came down to one or two basic human needs: to be happy in one's work and to feel wanted, useful. I was proud of my work in shoe sales until I began to think of the possibilities in teaching. There was no comparison, sales was satisfying, but not to the same extent as teaching. I wanted more. I wanted to feel the same kind of pride that I felt when my hockey players grasped a new skill or strategy. I thought to myself, I can't do this job (shoe sales) the rest of life, there are too many important life skills and experiences that I will miss. Anyone can sell shoes, and nearly anyone can train others to sell shoes, but teaching is special. In teaching, I have the opportunity to touch the lives of people each day. I can't in sales. In teaching, I can see and be part of the development in my students. I can help them to see relationships and see how math

really does play a part in our lives. And, because I care, there is a good chance that I'll be good at it. I care about people, and because I know about the impact teachers can make, I know that I will take great care in developing and refining my own teaching skills.

When I came home that June after graduation, the word was out: "Gary is thinking about becoming a math teacher!" I must admit it sounded a little strange to me too. I was still not quite sure about my decision until family friends and others began asking me why I would choose teaching, some were supportive, others were not. Both forced me to think about and articulate my reasons, for example, some would say, "You'll be unhappy making minimum wage." I would respond, "To the contrary, better to be poor and like what you are doing than to be wealthy and miserable." I told 'em "that teaching is what I really want to do." Here I was defending a profession that I was still not completely sure of. I somehow felt that I needed to defend teaching and justify my intent for going into it. From similar encounters and some of my own internal thought grew this tremendous devotion to teaching. Then began the stage of curiosity, need, desire to know more. I knew I was happy in my decision but I wanted to know what I was in for. My expectations for teacher training were just beginning to take shape.

### Decision Based on Establishing Initial Career Decisions and Choices

This pattern described six of the fourteen Post-B.A. students interviewed. In general, students in this pattern shared the following school and occupational characteristics after graduation:

- (1) all returned to college the semester after receiving their undergraduate degree.

- (2) no one worked full-time after graduation. Four attempted to get full-time work in their degree field--two did not.
- (3) each held part-time jobs between the time they graduated and the time they decided to pursue teacher certification.
- (4) all expressed the need for additional training and university coursework to discover and/or secure their career as a reason for returning.
- (5) nearly all saw their undergraduate degree as "another phase" in their "exploration of career."

Patterns previously described present Post-B.A.'s as post-graduates working full-time in professional jobs immediately following graduation, their experiences and feelings about themselves in occupations and how they moved out of "a potential career focus" and into their most recent career direction in teaching.

These students have returned to college to establish /initiate, for the first time, a career focus and stated that they were undecided about a career direction upon entering college and after graduating in their chosen degree area. All six knew during the ladder part of their undergraduate work that they would return to college--some wanted to because they were "still exploring"--others felt they had to because their degree "wouldn't get them a job." Half said they were still unsure about teaching as a career.

Others speak to the notion that "as people grow and life circumstances change, so do people's orientation regarding career".

Ann, a 25 year old Studio Art major in pursuit of elementary teacher certification, tells the following story about life and career exploration after graduation:

....I saw myself maturing quickly during college. You know, away from school for the first time and relying on self for making decisions--especially when it came to thinking about career. My growth in this area (developing career) fluctuated semester to semester--sometimes I was excited about becoming an artist, other times complete depression and a lack of confidence. It was those times of depression that I knew I needed further art training. Looking around at the talent and success of classmates, there was no doubt in my mind that additional time and commitment were necessary to refine my art studio skills.

When I graduated from college I hadn't done any interviewing because most of it was more business-oriented and I was an Art Studio grad. I really didn't know what I wanted to do with my art degree, I wasn't really sure what I could do with it. Maybe I should start thinking about other areas--I needed time and space to think about it. I think my parents picked up on this and gave me a round-trip ticket to London for a graduation gift. I went with a friend who was in the same boat as myself--just graduated and unsure about career. I stayed for about 7 months, waitressing to afford the flat I lived in. I learned a lot while I was there, but unfortunately, not about myself in a particular career. I returned to the U.S. and from there I decided to go to San Francisco--I had attended Stanford for a semester during my first year of college (before coming to Connecticut) and really enjoyed it. I knew that to find any sort of success with my art I had to be in a large

city. For me, New York City wasn't it, Boston wasn't it, and I didn't know much about Washington D.C. I knew more about San Francisco.

I had already made a job contact there for a waitressing position in the financial district. I waitressed there for about 4 months and did a lot of informational interviewing, went to a gallery to inquire about work there, was offered a job at the Museum of Modern Art--not a very good job, but it might have been a stepping stone job. The conditions of work were as follows: I would work in the photography department doing a lot of cataloging and that I would need to return to school for a degree in Arts Management if I wanted to successfully move up their career ladder. I really don't know why but I declined and started working at a very shiek women's clothing store. There, I was immediately offered a management trainee position, took it and worked there for 9 months. I really didn't like my work there. I remember during that time that I was having those thoughts of whether to go back to school for Arts Education or Arts Management. I was very confused yet I didn't let it get the best of me. I did a lot of job search stuff, I sent to a lot of schools for information.

During that time (working in clothes retail) my father relocated to Amherst, he told me of the educational opportunities at UMass. I looked into the Art Education program and made the decision to attend UMass in the fall. I was accepted into the Art Education program and declined, basically because I was still unsure about how I would use this type of degree. I decided, once I got here, that I would work, go to school part-time and continue to explore my career interests. After a couple of exploratory courses in education I decided to look at teaching art. My dad was excited at my entertaining the idea of teaching--he got his doctorate in education at UMass and was still very active in secondary schools as a consultant.

I began rationalizing the whole idea. Elementary certification looked like it would involve my artistic talents and also involve working with children and adults--I knew I really enjoyed the freedom of working in my artforms and I knew that I've always been a people person.



College did not teach me that about myself. I already knew that. I know it's hard to believe, but, I have never considered any other field but art. I did discover, during and after my undergraduate work, that I was not cut out for working in an art studio all day long. It just took me some time and exploration to figure out how I could combine my love for art and my need to be around people in my work. Teaching seems to be the most sensible career for me at this time in my life. One day that may change, but for now, I think it's me.

James, age 30, received his Environmental Study degree from Empire State College, a non-traditional college for students interested in designing an individual learning plan as a course of study for graduating:

...you can take courses at any accredited college anywhere in the U.S. and transfer the credits to Empire State. It's a university without walls. It took me about 9 years--from the time I was 18 until the age of 27. I've been around, I've done alot of travelling. I'd say that I've lived in approximately 15 different states over that 9 year period and held at least 12 different jobs--some I got college credit for, some not. During my college career I led canoe trips in Oregon, Michigan, Maine and New Hampshire before I slaved as an omelette cook, busboy and waiter in Washington, D.C.; went to Alaska for National Outdoor Leadership training; worked in Wyoming, West Virginia and New Mexico as a counselor for retarded citizens; and served in a variety of capacities in several different environmental centers across the U.S.

After I got married and before I finished my degree, my sister offered us her house in Amherst as a place to stay and finish my last few credits. So, I commuted back and forth to New York to do carpentry and studio stain-glassing during that time. After I got my degree in Environmental

Study, I continued my work in New York while living in Amherst. That summer I worked with a local environmental center, then, supplemented our income by teaching tennis for \$10.00 an hour.

I don't know if I ever had any career interest. I did know that, eventually, when the time came to decide about career I would probably have to return to college or access further training. I felt I would have to because basically I had been jumping around the country doing so many different things and I hadn't really put together a skill base of marketability for myself. I think that I've had a real block with setting any kind of career goals because I don't like to be locked into anything.

My wife and I are parents now and that has forced me to look at financial stability, career, and ways to insure a comfortable future for my wife and child. A position in teaching may be the answer. I don't know. Even as I move through this teacher training program, I still question if this is for me. I often think of working with special education students in outdoor settings--another interest of mine. I'm just not sure about being restricted to a classroom setting. Perhaps I'll follow through and complete this program. If I do it will be the first time, the first real career direction.

Joe, age 24, a Psychology and English graduate with extensive experiences in Massachusetts nursing homes and presently working as a cook in a local restaurant, reflects on several "starts on a career" that "just didn't work out". He shares his dreams and stories about how he is shaping a "possible career" in teaching as a result of these "starts and stops":

...Right after my freshman year of college disillusionment, I mean really disappointed in college to the point where I felt a strong urge to

leave UMass and the state of Massachusetts for something new and different. I decided to try my independence from family and friends--to be on my own and self-sufficient. Next thing I knew I was selling books door-to-door in Tampa, Florida and actually thought I might make an occupation out of this sort of thing, you know, sales. I burned out quickly, then I started thinking about coming back to UMass and try college again--and I did.

Clinical Psychology was an area of interest that fascinated me and English was my best subject in high school, so I declared a double major to play it safe, you know, check out both fields simultaneously and allow some choice when it came down to selecting a career. Isn't that what college is all about, exploring yourself and different majors to discover your niche, your profession? Clinical Psych is supposed to be an excellent career, high paying, and very rewarding because you are helping people daily. Well, UMass didn't and still doesn't have a very well developed Psych program so I ended those initial thoughts of making several hundred thousands of dollars a year as a clinical psychologist, but remained in psych as part of my undergraduate degree. Lab experiments just didn't appeal to me, yet, I think that I gained a better understanding of people and perhaps myself through psych courses, labs and practicums. I am still entertaining the idea, if I can ever afford it, to attend a university with a more extensive psych department to see if that dream is still there--still realistic for me. If I ever do it will require many more years of coursework, extensive research and probably a doctorate in order to launch a practice.

Anyway, that's where that stands. I think that English was much more real to me as a potential career interest, therefore I stayed with it. I saw myself aspiring to become a college English professor, you know, and have the freedom to teach when I want to, research and write when I want to, and in general, have that lifestyle of 9 months on and 3 months off. English professors here make average salaries. If I wanted to write and to be a writer, I could write and publish those things that the college supported and also those things that I was into. In that way the

college would become my source of income for what I wanted to do. And see that's what I really wanted to do. That's interesting that I said that because it is a fact that almost all English professors publish literary criticism, that's mainly the way it is and I want to do something very different from that, but I'm not quite sure what. Whatever it is or was, it would take a few more years of Master's work in English--perhaps even a doctorate. If I sound confused about my intentions, it's because I was. College really didn't prepare me for a specific profession.

Anyway, I finished my double major here (UMass) and returned immediately to start up yet another possible (career) interest--teaching English at the high school level. It sounds like I've started and stopped alot doesn't it? My intentions, this time around, are to get English certification, teach for a while, then think about getting my Master's in an English Literature program somewhere. I've been in this teacher training program for two semesters now, and feel quite encouraged to complete it. I'm also working two part-time jobs simultaneously to get me through school. Looking back on my past, I must admit, I became dissatisfied very easily. Perhaps that is why I've started and stopped as many times as I have. I would like to say, however, that there has been one aspect about myself that has always been a part of me--I've always kept myself busy and financially stable with jobs, perhaps hoping that one (job) might eventually turn into a career. You know, you look around and see so many students here at UMass that are dependent on mom and dad for just about everything--sometimes even dependent upon their parents for choosing and securing their (student's) career. Maybe I haven't pursued those career interests aggressively enough--maybe I have been easily discouraged about some of my initial career interests. Maybe so, but, I've always kept options at my fingertips and protected myself financially with some of these occupational options. I think of myself as unique in that respect and that I've matured in that way. I figure that where I am now is the result of the way I moved through my life, the workplace and my college career. All of those difficult transitions I experienced have shaped this

potential career in teaching. Who knows, this experience (teacher training) may prepare me for an entirely different career direction. I don't mean to be flip, it's just very hard to say. As people grow and life circumstances change, so do their orientations to career.

Beth, age 27, a Forestry graduate recreates her past experiences to communicate how she arrived at her decision to become certified as an elementary teacher:

...I was 23 years old when I graduated from college--a little older and maybe wiser than most. Worked at a day care center during my junior year of college and was always involved in some sort of outdoor education program during my summers. I've always waited tables to supplement what little I got from mom and dad. I still like to work in restaurants--it's just so social. Met some rather fascinating people, learned about humility and began to develop a sort of work ethic for myself. I've always felt good about myself working while going through college. It certainly forced me to organize my time, deal with difficult people--both customers, other wait staff and management. It was good for me--helped me to look at myself and how I might fit into this crazy world. Yea, I can remember many times talking with coworkers and others about careers, lifestyles, values, and what is really important in life. I looked at others and learned from their mistakes. During my college days many friends from my hometown, my relatives and classmates tried to encourage me to go into this field or that, you know, telling me where I should end up. I resisted those that I saw as hypocritical or unhappy in their work and tried to learn from those that I saw as satisfied and at peace with themselves regarding their focus for work--they didn't realize it and maybe I didn't either but, they were helping me to know better where I didn't want to be, rather than helping me to know where I want to be--sort of a process of elimination and/or illumination. And now that I think about it, they were helpful in that way.

Two years ago if you had asked me, I would have said that Forestry was my calling--that you'd find me out in the midwest somewhere working in a national park--I was very certain of that. My expectations were to be employed right out of college--and I could have been if I had been willing to take a low paying entry level job. I was too proud, I wanted to be in the thick of conservation and land management. I was simply unskilled and too inexperienced to just step in and take charge. I learned about the realities of my chances, in the area of forestry that I had envisioned, very quickly. I had no idea of the competition--no idea of what it took--I felt misguided. Was this my fault or the fault of the university? I like to think that it was a little of both

Now I look back and think to myself, wow, did I waste 5 years of my life and many dollars searching for that perfect career in the out-of-doors, only to find out that I don't even come close to measuring up. No, I can't really say that I wasted that time--it was a great exercise in learning about nature and relationships. Besides, in college my focus for career was always being blurred by my work in day care and my love for teaching children. There was always the likelihood of finding me with kids rather than doing my forestry lab work--I found myself very content doing both--each gave me perspective on the other. Also, many of the skills that I learned in my undergraduate work were quite transferable to teaching--especially the content--there were times when I just wanted to stop everything and take all of them (day care children) out to explore the local wilderness.

I think that I will prefer teaching children, yet, you never know, I may come back to Forestry after x amount of years in the classroom. For now, it looks like I'll be working with children, running my own classroom, and developing those skills that will enable me to be helpful to others--everyone wants to be useful and to feel wanted--it's human nature--I'm no exception.

Nancy, age 26, an English Literature graduate reflects on her undergraduate experiences as they relate to her career directions and decision-making:

...I was convinced from the start of my freshman year in college (Middlebury) that I would go through my major (French) very easily, with little effort--mostly because I'd been taking French since the 7th grade, and would learn the language well--just like everyone else I knew who had gone there. This college was known for its excellent language department. I felt equally certain that I would have to travel there (to Paris) to get more than just a head full of theory and trivial information. So, it didn't surprise me that I was successful--you know, the self-fulfilling prophecy kind of thing.

I'm an extremely motivated person--always doing a hundred things at once. I've always taken dance, I'm learning the intricacies of the French language and culture, I've always worked part-time in high school--part-time in college, I've always worked at camps during summers and have even substitute taught on several occasions--usually on my college breaks. Maybe that's been the problem--not focusing in on one direction. It's delayed me but also has allowed me to explore.

In college I wanted to develop skills in all of those areas (dance, French, and teaching) to become well-rounded and to expose myself to a lot of different experiences. Virtually everyone in my major was pretending to be preparing for a right-out-of-college job. I knew that this was absurd--everyone knows that you can do little with an French degree--it's very limiting. It's like getting a degree in history--all you can do is teach, and even then, you must go back for certification.

Anyway I flew to Paris, attended the Middlebury College (Paris campus) there, in an intensive French language program and added Political Science as my minor. I took a part-time tutoring job in an elementary school teaching English. I guess it was there when I first started thinking about French as an occupation. I wasn't sure just what aspect but it was exciting

finding out all of the oportunities that were possible for second language speakers--French in particular. That quickly wore off just before I left Paris when I saw how difficult it was to go around trying to market myself with only a couple of years of college under my belt and only a few practical experiences.

When I returned to Amherst, my parents home, I went around to all kinds of private schools because I thought that a private school would need a person like me. They didn't and it was discouraging. I thought long and hard about this (teaching French) as a career--I knew that if I wanted it bad enough I would have to finish up at Middlebury and go back for certification.

After a while it got more and more that I wanted to teach more than just the language of France, I wanted to teach the history, the culture, and everything about France around and through all of the elementary subject areas. This became very possible through the Integrated Day Program at UMass.

I was glad to have received such a wonderful college experience where I had the freedom to investigate many career options for myself--Middlebury encouraged that. It really irritates me to see college students come in to pursue one particular field simply because that is the field that daddy or mommy is in, or because some high school counselor said to. People need to shop around, try some different experiences in those areas that interest them, then make some preliminary decisions based on satisfaction rather than on dollars. Perhaps I'll never make much money in teaching, but you can bet, I will continue to be true to myself and will always feel good about the fact that I'm helping people.

Marta, age 38, a mother of two who holds two undergraduate degrees: Health and Physical Education; and Veterinary and Animal Sciences. She joins this group as the result of her perspective on jobs she has held, potential career positions that she has



envisioned for herself, and circumstances that have brought her to her recent decision to teach. She had been out of college for over :

...Everything that I have done since the day I declared H and PE as my undergraduate major has been related to teaching. I didn't teach PE but I went right into substitute teaching with inner city schools. They had lots of work for me because I was willing to go into these difficult schools--they were seen as difficult--segregation of all kinds still existed then--this was in the 60's.

It never occurred to me until about three quarters the way through my second degree that teaching would be the profession that would weave all of my past experiences together. I really have done it all and it does connect somehow. I mean, I've tried the field of human services as a psychiatric aide, I was the director of a halfway touse, worked in the mental health field, worked as a community organizer and served on parent advisory committees. All have always involved dealing with social and educational issues, research projects, attention to group and individual assessments and needs and evaluation and on and on--almost always surrounding youth and young adults.

My exploration of career has been totally outside of the efforts of career placement offices and guidance counselors. I've paved my own course of action and involvement around this community and around specific societal inequities as they emerge. I've considered myself a change agent in times of great need for social change.

Back when I was doing my undergraduate work--it helped me to see that H and PE was the best place to really find out about where kids were, you could actually make a difference with these kids because it was the setting where they would express themselves honestly and they could receive you as a friend and confidant.

Ten years later I came to UMass to get a degree in Veterinary and Animal Science. They accepted me into this 5 year program, yet I remember that look of hesitancy and unsuredness

from the professors--maybe it was my age. I was 32 at the time. I'm not really sure that I was looking for a career in becoming a veterinarian or not. I think I was mostly exploring personal interest and certainly looking for a change. I've always had this curiosity to work with animals and I was burned out from those years of other responsibilities and it seemed to be my turn to investigate something that I was truly ripe for--seeing rewards. You know, after you've worked in organizational work you see that many of the rewards are not visible and alot of times when you get into a work situation like that you are really more like a bandaid--that you are really kind of keeping people from overreacting because you are trying to guid them to appropriate avenues in order to deal with the system. But their lives haven't changed--I worked with some of these people for over ten years and they are still as poor as when I first met them.

I wanted to go to a real veterinary school but the fact that I was a mother--you have to make choices in your life and I just didn't feel that I could do both well--spend 60 hours a week in veterinary school and raise a family. I couldn't feel good about that so we settled for UMass. After finishing the program professors encouraged me to go onto graduate shool, they knew that I was overqualified to work on a farm and they felt that I was smart enough to make grad school. But I wanted to work part-time on a local farm and raise my child, so, I looked around only to find out that the local farmers felt I would only work for them until something better came along--no matter what I said they wouldn't hire me on. There was very little money around for research in the valley and I was not about to travel far. There was work about an hour and a half away--that's three hours both ways. My family had made sacrifices while I was in school so I decided not to take that job.

I started substitute teaching part-time instead of chasing any chances of vet work--I really enjoyed subbing. I began thinking that this (teaching) might be the ideal career for a woman raising 2 children. On the other hand I may be putting a veterinary career on hold--I'm not really sure. In the mean time this particular

certification programs will allow me to draw on some previously developed skills and combine them with some necessary practical experiences that I believe will help me to move very naturally into whatever profession I choose.

### Decision Based on Translating Long Term Beliefs About Teaching into Action

Students in this pattern primarily shared those past life and job experiences that describe their long held desire to teach. Each reflected on the positive aspects of their own elementary, junior and high school experiences and expressed their feelings about how important schooling was for them. Major portions of these interviews were spent talking about how they shaped their future towards a career in teaching by consciously selecting experiences that would allow them the opportunities to gain those skills they believed were important to understanding the roles and responsibilities of the teacher. These Post-B.A.'s expressed their beliefs about how students learn best and how teachers should engage their students. After expressing their beliefs and biases, students in this pattern, articulated their plan of how they would translate these beliefs into action:

Donna shared her story about how she combined her childhood dreams of becoming a teacher with recent discoveries of her area of interest. She stated her new-found awareness regarding the dynamics of her decision-making process and clearly remembered when and how she came to the conclusion that she would return to college where she could "build a career out of putting these areas of interest together":

...The reason I came back to school was to try to combine my current interests in primate behavior, primitive cultures, ecology, and ecosystems, all together with my long held desire to teach. I wanted to do something related to my field of interest and to the idea of teaching. I never said that I won't come back to primate research. I've recently become interested in that and I still would like to do something in that--but at the end of my last semester senior year I talked with B.M. and his assistant about getting a teaching certificate and they were very helpful. Just by talking to them about past experiences, my current situation and thoughts about job satisfaction--I was encouraged to come back to school to get my certificate.

I went down to the office (certification) and they sent me to B.M. I went to the office in the first place because I was unsure about my career--when you think about it, even when you graduate with a degree in anthropology there aren't very many openings for you, so I was trying to think of a career that would allow me to keep all of those interests and let me teach all that I know.

I can remember thinking of all the incredibly rich curriculum I had right in front of me when I was working at the Smithsonian. I had always thought that teaching would be a great career to go into because you can work with your students in so many ways that, if you think about it, the environment or the current events reported by the media can become the curriculum itself--I mean,

all of those things that interest you and your students can become the thrust of the classroom work. I want to create that kind of a classroom environment where everyone's input is valued and heard with equal attention.

I've often thought about the positives of being a teacher--being able to take summertime off so that you can have time to reflect on your teaching and yourself. To take that time to reconnect with family and friends is important to me. I don't see the same opportunity in other professions--not that large a block of time anyway. Plus teaching your interests to other people is one thing I know that I do well. I've had lots of practice.

I've always wanted to be a teacher. In my neighborhood all the kids would come over to my house and we'd all play school. I'd always have to be the teacher because I was a terrible student. I was always making trouble. I would set the classroom up in my bedroom. I remember we used to save books and extra work sheets and stuff that we'd get from school and bring them home and play with them--I'd hand them out. We sat in chairs. We put different tables around in desk order we had a little chalk board, the whole thing--a map of Africa--we used to do it all the time, all through summer I remember. This was during elementary school first grade.

In junior high I was a baby sitter for the next door neighbors kids and they used to come over once in a while. I still had the idea that I wanted to be a teacher because I remember asking my mom, when will I be old enough to be a teacher? I drove her crazy--always asking that question.

High School? I was a CCD teacher, I taught catechism to second graders and that took place in my kitchen, they would come over to my house on Wednesday afternoons and I'd have the books and the lesson instructions and it was basically open--I had the teachers guide and we sort of went at our own pace. I also baby sat--not a whole lot of teaching was going on--we were into arts and crafts drawing all the time cutting out and pasting pictures. It was kind of hard to do that because I had to keep an eye on them at all times. I was also involved in play productions in high school, plus band and winter color guard. Yea, I

was pretty gung ho in school. I really enjoyed school--almost home away from home, I spent so much time there.

Spring semester my freshman year at UMass I became interested in anthropology, basically because I had this infatuation and all these books on monkeys and all of a sudden my main interest became anything to do with primates. I loved primates so did my roommate. She suggested for me to go for what my real interest was--not to do what my parents wanted me to do, which was to be a nurse. She made me realize that I was here to learn about my interests, explore different majors and learn about myself.

All anthropology majors had to begin to decide about internship sites--I was no exception. My advisor asked me what I want to do with my degree after I finish and I said I really wasn't sure. Teaching children was the thing that I knew how to do the best--I enjoyed it but ever since I came into Anthropology I've sort of fantasized about going out into the field studying and observing primates in the wild of Africa. I don't think I ever seriously thought I would make a career out of this but, I could put teaching on the back burner for a bit longer while I tried this. And who knows, maybe I could teach in Africa.

To make a long story short I did not get to go to Africa. I ended up at American University in Washington, D.C. and worked in my internship at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. It was pretty good, it was in a lab, this huge room right at the top by the dome, it was neat you could look out and see the Capitol. The first day I was given a box full of bones and asked to put them together to make a skeleton and if I needed any help just look at this book. They were American Indian skeletons--they taught me about the different bones and the function and structure of the skeleton. Carding, cataloging and helping them work on cadavers while my mentor ate liverworst sandwiches. Now I know why I didn't go into nursing. It was a good experience, I think everybody should get away from the school that they've been going to--to get another perspective on things.

In December my internship would be over and I was saying to myself, here I am in Washington and I really don't know who I am or what I want. On one side of me was all of my friends from UMass that I had known, who were not graduating after all and on the other hand, here I was with this new lifestyle in Washington--the fast lane. I started really thinking about what was really important to me. I was interested in education and teaching from the very beginning--it was time to take all that I had learned from anthro and integrate it into my teaching. That's when I started thinking about coming back here and getting that teaching certificate that I always knew I would need to get my own classroom.

I decided that teaching would be a practical idea because I began to hear that more jobs than ever would become available for teachers and if I really did want to become a teacher that the time was now. I've always had the ability and the desire to become a teacher and I think that when I wanted to be a teacher in the first place and I wanted to go to college and become a teacher people would say, you shouldn't do that because there are no jobs and it's not very practical and the pay isn't very good. They said this in high school when I was applying to college. And now that I think about it I had two choices--to do what I really wanted to do, or do something that others wanted me to do. I've not always known what I wanted to do. Well actually yes, in a way. I think I've always wanted to do what I'm doing now, but I just--I maybe--I let other people control what I was--friends, and my father. My sister was more towards nursing. That was her goal for me, not mine. You know, all through college I was convinced that there might be something else, besides teaching, out there for me and I remained open to that possibility. I was confused about career much of the time, yet, I always knew that I could rely on my teaching skills. That was always very reassuring--a feeling of security and independence.

I think that by coming back here and student teaching while still maintaining my interest in anthro that that's what I want to do. The pay might not be good, but there are jobs available and I'm willing to relocate, that's no problem.

For Susan, teaching was a childhood dream. Her memories of elementary schooling were mostly unpleasant, yet she learned a great deal about the role of the teacher at that stage of her development. She shared stories that reveal skills she acquired during occupations held before, during, and after high school. She reflected on times of "growth towards becoming a teacher" as she moved through stories about her junior and senior high school, and college experience:

...In elementary school I had horrible teachers I hated them--the majority of them. I especially remember my 4th grade teacher and my 2nd grade teacher being cruel to me. Those experiences and hearing of others experiences of humiliation and punishment and ridicule still makes me really angry. I remember ending up in the corner alot and I would respond with out and out rebelling against this one teacher. I guess inside myself I would not allow the teacher to win and force me to be quiet. I wanted to talk and I didn't want to sit in that desk all day long, so I ended up in the corner for talking and getting out of my desk.

The only teacher that I can remember that I liked was a 5th grade teacher of mine. I liked him because he liked me, but he also was a man who practically put my friend and I on a pedestal as model students. That was really good for me--I needed to feel good about myself. I carried that reputation with me because I sat so quietly and folded my hands all day and would never peep a word, which I don't think is so wonderful. So it was because I conformed so much and was such the good little student that I was seen as such a great student. I think that whole set up is wrong. I won't organize my classroom around these sort of values. I don't really go along with such structure of the rows, that's what I grew up with, rows and rows of desks with 30 students and you



sat in your desk and you did this and then you did that, it is so wrong for children, I think.

I used to pretend being a teacher, we used to put on plays and when we used to play games I'd always take the role of teacher. I've always had this dream, sort of this fantasy of just living out in the country and having my own classroom of children--the whole, very traditional role. I don't know, it's just something that's always been with me--on my mind. It just seems to be a part of me, something that I've always wanted in my life.

My desire to become a teacher may be traced back to when I started teaching Sunday school at my father's church--he was the minister. I was 13 years old and worked with the 3 and 4 year olds. I derived alot of joy and satisfaction from that position working with the young children, I got alot of pleasure out of that and adored them. The church community really made me feel good, useful, wanted--they liked me very much. I was given alot of praise and people just thought I was wonderful, a wonderful Sunday school teacher and a wonderful person and I just felt really good in that role and it was very important that I was doing a good job and I had a place I felt very connected in that church.

I wasn't really teaching much of anything, I mean at 3 and 4 (years old), you can only do so much. I was called the Sunday school teacher. It was mostly arts and stories and music and whatever I wanted to do with them--games mostly. I guess the closest I came to teaching religion to them was reading books to them about their world. That was the first stage in our program, that these young children needed to learn about their world, so I would read them books about that, help them to understand and feel comfortable in this world.

Junior and senior high school is a blur, but I do remember continuing my interest in working with children. I was a camp counselor each summer and even taught part-time in a residential program for retarded citizens. From that experience I remember very strong feelings about the learning process classroom equity and the role of the teacher. I guess I was shaping my philosophy about teaching and learning. I wanted each retarded client to do their best, to realize their

potential and to respect self and others. My goal as their teacher was to help them develop a positive self-image by placing them in situations where they would see themselves as successful. Constant positive reinforcement was crucial to motivating these folks. My next job was also in teaching. It was as a teacher aide, tutor for retarded children. I think all of my jobs have been either in teaching directly or in helping people in some way. It's been ingrained in me as a result of my parents encouragement and perhaps the values I have come to know as mine. All of these skills that I've talked about were steps towards growth in my becoming a teacher. I knew that someday I would use all that I've built upon.

I started my college career in psychology because I really enjoyed the field in high school and was very much interested in learning about why people act the way they do, so that is what I got my bachelor's degree in. I knew I would be teaching one day so I was always thinking about early childhood education as my next move after trying a broader perspective--kind of an investigation of self and understanding others. Even before I entered college I considered teaching as my major but I probably felt it was more important to investigate these other curiosities. And also I didn't think that teaching would be very challenging for me and I wanted to choose something that was a little less traditional for women so I decided to go into psychology. Then I graduated.

For the next 7 years I worked in the field of Human Services mostly with handicapped individuals in school systems and residential programs and although I enjoy working with people and find it very rewarding, the field in itself has not been very satisfying for me overall and mostly because of the working conditions--very demanding of your time and energy and very isolating positions. So for the past few years I've participated in career counseling for myself and thinking about my own personality and who I am--trying to find a career for myself that suits the lifestyle that I want to lead as well as fulfill alot of my needs. I now understand that people and their career focuses change over time. Mine simply changed from

teaching and learning with one special population to another special population.

I decided that coming back to my first love. Teaching children would be a very good decision for me because I love working with people and the people I like working with the most are children. I thought that by working in my own classroom I could be my own boss, which is, after having worked for so many years--I know that's my style that I need to be in a position where I am working independently and it also seems that teaching will have such a great degree of variety and that I will never become bored with the job. So after giving it alot of thought I decided that's what I'm going to do and I guess in a way when I think back on it I've always wanted to be a teacher, even when I was a child. I figure now is the time for me to do it.

Linda shared vivid details of her elementary classrooms, impressions of her teachers as she sees them now, and reconstructed on her world when she was very young. She stated that she has always seen teaching as a career.

The first time I really knew I wanted to be a teacher was in the third grade. All I remember about it is writing a school report on schools in China, schools in America and schools in France. High schools versus elementary schools--a really intriguing assignment. I didn't know much about high schools at that point and I just remember that assignment in third grade that raised my curiosity. I simply decided I wanted to be a teacher right then and there. And I had a wonderful teacher in third grade, I think third grade was probably my best year in school, but then after third grade I didn't want to be a teacher any more. I can remember my father telling me I wouldn't make enough money if I was a teacher--way back then in elementary school. I still get that now. I got that all the way from the time I decided I wanted to be a teacher in

third grade, forever. I don't remember thinking about being a teacher not until the end of college, although I've always taught.

I remember working with different math manipulatives you use for learning different bases. We had little cubes that were  $4 \times 4 \times 4$  and then the little squares that were  $4 \times 4$  and then little rods that were 4. Learning bases and understanding them was fun and we had cuisinaire rods. I remember doing peer tutoring that year. It was a second/third grade mix and I tended to be one of the third graders who caught onto things very quickly and the teacher would pair those of us up who would get done with things quickly with other kids that might be having problems. I remember working with kids who were having problems with understanding. We had guinea pigs in that classroom. She had us doing writing projects where we would pull several slips of paper out of a big envelope that had different key words on them and then we would make a story using "steamboat", "railroad", and "girl with yellow hair" or whatever. That may have been my first lesson, the first time I remember a teaching episode where I was doing the teaching.

I know what else, I just thought of an earlier example. I have two younger sisters and we used to play school down in the basement all the time. I loved making up worksheets, why, I don't know, I don't think I can remember specifics I know we had a blackboard. It was about three feet by two feet, one of the little ones with the little chalk tray. Dad attached it to the basement wall so we could play school down there. They're three and five years younger, so I was always the teacher and they were always the students and I think we tried reversing it some times and I always got so bored that we reversed it back. That was also when we took the chalk and drew on the basement walls dad wasn't terribly pleased about that. I'd forgotten about that. It was always a very standard school setting, you know, the teacher sat up at the front and the two kids, the two students sat in there little chairs facing the front, sitting straight and tall with hands folded in front--I knew what school was all about. (laughing)

It's amazing how graphically I remember third grade. In third grade I remember there was a rug in one corner of the room and there were bulletin board dividers forming a self-contained area, in the other corner were the guinea pig cages--then our desks were in groups of four to eight making a square mass table type thing of the desks, but we all had our own desks. Then there was another big table with the map manipulatives on it. She had created a unique classroom with an office so it was like two classrooms side by side with an office above.

I remember we were in there pulling our story prompters from our envelope and we'd all do small group conferences in her office with her. It was a special place but it wasn't a forbidden place. I remember that was the year I learned to read music, she got the entire class using felt boards to learn to read music and she also had a group of us from the class in special recorder lessons with the music teacher. Even when we moved on to the middle school and through sixth grade we kept having recorder lessons with her. I think most of what makes me want to teach now was the result of the impressions elementary school left on me.

My parents were definitely teacher role models. They encouraged me to read all the time and I think that as far as my education goes, reading has been very important in many ways. My mom especially has shown me different ways of motivating kids to read just through her rearing me. I mean, our whole house was full of picture books, we always had billions of zillions of books. I would read something and bring it home and say mom I read this great book and she'd read it and the next day she'd say, it was a great book, now what do you think about these characters and what they did. Having somebody willing to do that with me and wanting to listen to my ideas and be interested in what I was reading was really important in shaping some of my strategies for teaching reading. What a great teacher my mom was--and she didn't even know it. She was one of my role models, I often think of her when I teach.

Other models in my life definitely include my third grade teacher and the town librarian, H.K., another great motivator. She's worked as the town librarian ever since I was born. She's an

incredible woman. I'd walk into the library and she would have this great book that just came and she would demand that I read it. She knew me well enough that she would save books for me and it wasn't just me it was lots of kids in the town she knew what we liked and she was really on top of current literature. She would save classics for us. I've watched her do story hours with kids and she's phenomenal. She's an incredible story teller, she uses all kinds of other materials and aids while she's telling stories--overheads or felt boards or puppets, she's a very dynamic lady. Boy did I learn alot watching her. She made me love the library so much and she knew all of us individually and to me that's a crucial thing for teaching--knowing and treating all students equally well--she taught me that. I've been picking up my teaching skills one at a time literally over 20 years.

Linda pointed to high school experiences that helped her gain additional teaching skills:

In high school I was the somebody in the theatre group who would always take the initiative. I was always the person who was always in the leadership-type positions--the stage manager, the tech director, the lighting designer, the master electrician. I would frequently be the person in a situation of being responsible for two or three other people who were helping me get a job done whom I had to frequently show how to do whatever it was we were gonna do. And in that crowd of people in high school, to go into the maternal thing, I was always the person that others would come pour their problems out to. I was everybody's mom. When kids had problems at home I would always bring them home for dinner.

Just before college I went through all the alternatives to teaching that met the approval of family, friends, and significant others. I gave some pretty serious thought to some rather unusual, or at least, nontraditional occupations for a woman. Law was one of my first and then I wanted to be an architect and then I wanted to be a doctor, but nothing really clicked. I decided I

didn't like arguing enough to be a lawyer for a living. Even when I went to college I didn't know what I wanted to be or do, or even what I wanted to major in. A friend had taken the introductory geography course and told me that it was a wonderful course. She suggested that I take it, so I took it second semester freshman year and I loved it, and I just decided for a lack of knowing that I'll simply go study geography for four years.

I liked geography and then I loved it and thought I wanted to be a town planner. I worked for a very brief time with the town planner in and found that he was a very political person and that I didn't want to go into politics. I soon found that I was too idealistic to be a planner with it entailing as much politics as it did. This was all going on my first semester senior year in college.

So there I was wondering what to do with my life now that I didn't want to be a town planner. It took a friend of mine to point out that my love for working with kids was as valuable and honorable a career as any--despite the pay. It was true, I've always loved kids and he suggested that I think about becoming a teacher. He told me that I was very good at teaching things and I told him about my third grade story and wanting to be a teacher long ago. I needed to do something that would help me find out if I really did want to be a teacher before I made a blind leap into a teacher education program. So I applied all over from here down to Washington, D.C. for a bunch of private school internship positions. This would be for the year following graduation from college. I also applied for a job at the Children's Museum in Boston and decided that was what I really wanted to do. That was when I was 23. The museum job was only 27 hours a week and I decided it being my first year out of college I wanted to support myself as well so I decided to supplement it with a job at a daycare center. I landed that too. At the museum I had kids that were coming through all the time, that I'd never see for more than five minutes or so and then at the daycare center I had my own group of kids that I saw everyday through the year--saw them growing and changing and learning. I decided I did like to

work with kids and that I did like having my own stable group of kids through the year, so I decided then that I wanted to teach, to use all of that knowlege that I have gained about how to teach and to fulfill a long desired dream.



## C H A P T E R V

### INTERPRETATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

#### Introduction

The understanding of why Post-B.A.'s are returning to college for teacher certification provides information regarding the motivations, attitudes and potential commonalities among this group of students. This chapter will provide teacher educators and other educational professionals with information useful in designing more effective teacher education programs to meet the needs of Post-B.A. students.

Specifically, this chapter looks at initial propositions developed by the author from the literature review, analyzes the results of the survey and interviews in light of these propositions, and suggests implications for higher education programs serving adults.

The organization of this chapter is as follows:

I. Initial Propositions will present a restatement of the author's original hypotheses regarding Post-B.A.'s and their reasons for returning to college to enter teacher training. In this section pertinent survey and

interview results will be used to support, oppose or modify each proposition.

By following the survey research data and its support or rejection of Propositions 1 through 5, allowed a closer look at Post-B.A.'s and their decision to pursue teacher certification.

II. In Implications for Higher Education four sets of implications are presented for four separate audiences who serve adults. Recommendations and suggestions to these programs are made based on Chapter IV's findings regarding Post-B.A. characteristics and decision-making

III. Recommendations for Further Research on Adult Learners underscores the importance of conducting qualitative research. This section discusses final recommendations for practitioners and researchers when examining adults in transition.

#### Initial Propositions

Five propositions were considered to describe the attitudes of Post-B.A. students returning to the University to acquire teacher certification. The first three propositions were not supported by the data, while the final two propositions were modified as a result of data analysis.

Proposition One: Alternative Career Options

The author hypothesized that a significant number of Post-B.A. students, particularly women, were planning to use teaching as an alternative career option or as a supplemental source of family income. The author further anticipated these individuals would not view teaching as the primary career direction they intended to pursue over the next five years.

The results from the survey contradict the view that teaching represented an alternative career direction or supplemental source of income. Women and men overwhelmingly reported that teaching will be a full-time, primary career direction for at least the next five years.

Interview findings also contradict this proposition. Six students (four women and two men) interviewed stated that they see teaching as an "initial career option." Half were still unsure about going into teaching, yet, each felt that if they did, it would be for full-time employment. Two Post-B.A.'s "making changes in professional roles" saw teaching as a full-time occupation over the next five to ten years. Of the remaining six participants, five had anticipated teaching as their primary career direction, one was

still exploring the field "deciding on personal and emotional needs in work."

Proposition Two: Job dissatisfaction

The author hypothesized that people moved toward education after unsatisfying career experiences in areas related to their undergraduate majors. The author anticipated a pattern of movement away from such unsatisfactory situations rather than a positive movement toward teaching as a career choice.

However, Post-B.A. students assigned a high satisfaction rating to their non-teaching experiences, while simultaneously rating their teaching or teaching-related experiences in only slightly more positive terms. These satisfaction ratings failed to sustain a view of these students moving toward education as primarily motivated by moving away from negative experiences in their non-teaching careers and support a view of Post-B.A. students moving toward education as a positive career choice.

Proposition Three: Personal Transition

The author hypothesized that a number of Post-B.A. students might have experienced personal transitions in their lives and as a consequence were entering teaching

without clear motivations or goals. Responses given to questions concerning reasons for choosing teaching did not support this view. Post-B.A. students revealed focused plans about education as a career and had clear expectations about the place of the teacher in the educational process.

Proposition Four: Expanding Job Opportunities

The author hypothesized most Post-B.A. students would be liberal arts graduates who were moving away from an uncertain employment picture toward expanding job opportunities in education. The author also anticipated a large influx of students in the known areas of teacher shortages such as mathematics, science and elementary education.

This proposition was partially validated. Mathematics, science and elementary education attracted the highest number of certification candidates. But 45% of the Post-B.A. population majored in the science-related fields as undergraduates. Since these areas were not characterized by the same employment difficulties as liberal arts fields, expanding job opportunities were not the only reason why Post-B.A. students enter teaching.

Proposition Five: Always Wanted To Teach

The author hypothesized Post-B.A. students were originally interested in teaching as undergraduates but rejected the field because of the low status given teaching and the greater attractiveness of other careers. Today, with expanding interest in educational reform and growing teacher shortages, these students are returning to their original field of interest. The author labelled this explanation the "always wanted to teach" proposition. A corollary to this proposition is the idea that certain people believe they were "born to teach" and now, by pursuing certification, are realizing a long held career goal.

The survey data revises the "always wanted to teach" and "born to teach" propositions. Little evidence supported the view that these particular students always wanted to teach. The questionnaire responses demonstrate that the choice to teach for these Post-B.A. students was contingent more on reactions to specific life experiences rather than long held motivations. Some return to school because of the impact of positive teaching-related experiences. Others cited renewed interest in the employment prospects of the field and others reported they are

ready to try a different kind of career. Defining their interest in teaching, then acting on that interest by returning to college, this group of Post-B.A. students declared the perceived advantages, opportunities, and rewards of the teaching profession as greater for them than those offered by other professions. This suggested students were deciding that even given positive and viable alternatives to the contrary, they would really rather be teaching.

#### Implications for Adult Higher Education

Four separate sets of implications are drawn from the findings of this study, one set for each of the intended audiences: (1) those who provide teacher training (teacher educators); (2) those who supply information and counseling to adult learners seeking teacher certification (college advisors/certification officers); (3) those adults who are in teacher education; and (4) those who study adult learners. Although the sets of implications overlap to some degree, the differences are great enough to justify examining each set.

The implications will be of greatest interest to those concerned with the expansion of adult learners in

teacher training at their own institutions. They will be of the least interest to those who are only concerned with educating younger students and who have no plans for serving older, non-traditional adults.

### Implications for Teacher Educators

The findings in this study give teacher educators many leads regarding who Post-B.A.'s are, life experiences and teaching-related experiences, recent career transitions, attitudes about teaching, and reasons they decided to return to college. This information is useful in designing satisfying programs which meet the overall needs of Post-B.A.'s. An ideal teacher education program would be:

1. Developed in light of the status changes Post-B.A.'s recently made, that is, from non-teacher education candidate status to teacher education candidate. Program planners must design their courses and practicum experiences to help Post-B.A.'s achieve their major objectives--to successfully complete certification requirements and to obtain a teaching job. Teacher educators must build on current teaching-related skills Post-B.A.'s possess, give certification credit requirement waivers for past



- teaching-related competencies gained, engage/instruct/involve them in new teaching skills/strategies/ by building on past experiences, apply these skills to real teaching situations, utilize classroom placements/student teaching sites as locations to practice new skills, involve all students in microteaching sessions, give immediate feedback, and request frequent self-evaluations to be conducted by candidates themselves. Teach peer supervision and self-evaluation techniques.
2. Differentiated/Individualized to meet the needs of adult students who vary according to level of education, previous occupation, income, and age. Programs will gain a better understanding of these students via in-depth interviewing and advising throughout program of study. Programs should observe and recognize and take advantage of the similarities and differences in their students. All student learning will be enhanced as we encourage the expression of our differences and the perspective of others.
  3. Complementary or superior to what other teacher education programs are offering. Post-B.A.'s have

many options of where they can pursue certification. Teacher educators will be successful in attracting adults to the degree to which they keep their programs up-to-date, and continuously raise and maintain high standards of performance.

4. Flexible in order to match the various learning preferences of adults. This includes alternative schedules (some have children, day care centers may open at 9:00 a.m. methods courses presently start at 8:30; some have part-time jobs, need night courses), alternative locations/sites for student teaching (many live far from campus and prefer practicum experiences closer to residence).
5. Sensitive to student learning styles and their preferential modes of learning to the extent that alternative teaching methods may be employed to meet individual needs. For example, Post-B.A.'s express the need to share previous life, job and teaching-related experiences, prefer active participation (discussions) to passive (lectures). Most do not want to sit through theory courses. They have trouble seeing the connection between theory coursework and how it relates to what they

already know about being a teacher. Post-B.A. students express a preference for taking methods courses which engage them in practical, hands-on activities. They want opportunities to share and reflect on what they are learning. Most express a desire to discuss their progress/growth, and next steps towards successful teaching. As teacher educators, we need to take advantage of their prior teaching-related experiences, build on their rich and often diverse experiences, and encourage discussions which will draw students into a more participatory and active role.

6. Equally effective in helping all students cope with transitions of their past and present. Programs must also anticipate future transitions students face in their professional development towards becoming a teacher. The combination of entrance advising and personal interviewing would be useful in understanding the expectations of students, the orientation students bring to the program, and the unique circumstances and special considerations of individual students. The advising process would be on-going and would serve three major purposes:

- a) clarify the scope, sequence and

requirements of the program for the student (i.e. courses, practicums, student teaching)

b) programs would have more information about student skill level, ability to articulate knowledge about teaching-learning process, and the potential of their students.

c) programs would have more information about individual students and the distinct characteristics/personal circumstances of each

7. Informative regarding job placement statistics and the availability of teaching opportunities internationally, nationally, statewide and locally. Most students at this university live in and around the Amherst area where teaching jobs are scarce, especially for first-year teachers (the Amherst area is attracting teachers already at the top of their pay scale). This creates an array of problems for many students, but especially the Post-B.A.'s who feel this places additional stress on an already difficult career transition. Some expressed their anxiety of having to leave the area in order to teach. For some, relocating means pulling children

out of their schools, negotiating with spouse for possible job change, selling the house, changing lifestyle, intensifying and expanding the job search, and financial pressures.

Older, nontraditional students often wonder whether they will receive the academic, social and personal support they need to be successful in teacher training programs. For this reason, teacher educators should periodically assess, plan and reshape their teacher training curriculum according to the needs of individuals in the population to be served. Frequent counseling and feedback to and from students will insure a happier, healthier workplace for professional development.

Teacher Educators may find suggestions somewhat nontraditional. The intent is not necessarily that the suggestions be taken literally or implemented exactly; rather, the author hopes to encourage teacher educators to stretch their imaginations in an attempt to envision new ways of attracting and serving potential teacher education candidates.

### Implications for College Advisors

All colleges that offer information and/or counseling to adults about how to acquire teacher certification should be interested to know of this emergent population of "career changers"--the Post-B.A.'s. It is these adults in transition who are most likely to need assistance regarding their next steps towards gaining certification. Usually counseling offices (centers) are the first institutional/administrative contact for Post-B.A.'s.

The findings suggest strategies for serving this population. Some of them follow:

1. Many adults do not know what they have to learn in order to be certified. College advisors ought to have certification catalogues with current state guidelines, competencies and skills available. University certification program expectations should be made clear. Students should be informed about their options for certification. i.e. the various routes for obtaining certification and provide new students with information about how individual certification programs might meet their needs:  
(scheduling flexibility and self-directed learning)

2. College advisors should be familiar with all certification programs in and around their university. A complete repertoire of alternative places and contacts to recommend to students is useful.
3. Many adults do not see the benefits for themselves in acquiring certification. A complete listing of teacher education graduates and where they are now may be useful in demonstrating placement potential.
4. Many adults cannot make this career transition successfully unless they have accurate information and effective counseling. Advisors need up-to-date information about the world of work and, in particular, predicted career patterns for the nation's teachers and other workers. Then they can advise adults about what they need to learn now or in the future, in order to meet their career goals.
5. Once in a certification program, most adults will dedicate their time to their program of study, part-time work and families. Advisors must be prepared to deal with life changes and learning requirements throughout the students time there.

6. Many adults are not deterred from learning because of their personal characteristics. Advisors should recognize that all types of adults experience change in their lives continuously and need information and counseling to assist them along the way. Staff must be trained to offer advice to all students, regardless of their age, education level, income, or previous occupation.
7. Many adults are unaware of how previous learning, life experiences, and particularly teaching-related experiences can waive certain certification course requirements, thus reducing time in a given program. Advisors should be prepared to evaluate transcripts and other evidence of prior skills/learning.
8. It is equally important for advisors/career counselors to help students feel comfortable about career change (change of major). The old assumptions that "one chooses a career in one's early twenties and remains in that career until retirement" no longer applies in our society. Today we see society's acceptance of the notion that people are leading multiple-career lives. This



new-found freedom for creativity and experimentation may well encourage those now in teacher education to consider and to choose other professions after certification.

### Implications for Adults in Teacher Education

Adults themselves, should find the conclusions of this study useful in understanding and even in predicting how they may cope with future transitions in their lives. Here is some advice for them:

1. Individual adults cannot completely control the biological, economic, and social factors that shape their lives. They do not live their lives on a plateau--they change; society changes; their jobs change; family and relationships change; their children grow up and move on; and their health changes. Since they cannot prevent such changes, they must adapt to them. Adults should know that learning is one way of adapting.
2. The accelerating pace of social change, technology and the increasing rate and number of life/job transitions means that many adults have become lifelong learners/career changers. Adults need to

understand, acknowledge and value this. More importantly, they may need to anticipate and be receptive to undertake learning throughout their lives.

3. Returning to school may be a general-purpose solution to a variety of life transitions and problems. Adults need to understand that learning can be used particularly to cope with career change. At the same time, they need to remember that they will dedicate more time to their families and lives outside of their program of study than to anything else. And that the life changes they experience in those areas, accordingly, will be the most numerous.
4. Thoughts and feelings about specific past life events, relationships and experiences can give adults clues to where they may focus new career directions. Adults need to reflect on these and know how they influence their career decision-making process. Reflecting on elementary, secondary, and undergraduate school experiences; teaching and non-teaching experiences; influential people (mentors/role models), and accumulated values/belief system/philosophy which shaped your present career

needs are themes articulated by Post-B.A.'s as important.

5. As the pace of change in society, technology and in adult life increases/accelerates, adults may have increasing difficulty in knowing what, when, and how they need to learn to cope with those changes. They should understand that support and advice from family/friends/peers complemented by professional information and an investigation of alternative careers can be useful in making career decisions.

#### Recommendations for Further Research on Adult Learners

Currently, institutions of higher education are reporting an increase in the number of older, nontraditional students in their schools. This trend has been recognized in schools of education in general and in teacher education programs specifically.

It is only in the recent past that researchers have come to study adults and adulthood as a developmental period in itself, a time for growth and a time for change. Quantitative studies and reports of adults in teacher education programs have been useful in collecting statistical information about the trend. However, qualitative studies can give teacher educators

many leads regarding who these students are, what career orientation and experiences they bring, why they are pursuing teaching, and what they need in order to learn. The author found no theses, articles, or books to compare with the findings of this study. Moreover, few research studies used an interview format to investigate adults in higher education.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative data was collected for this study in hopes of disseminating the findings and to contribute to the limited body of research that exists in teacher education at the present time. This study, utilizing both a survey questionnaire and an interview format, focused on an attempt to understand Post-B.A. students' psychological aspects of transition and decision-making as they returned to college to pursue teaching. In the interviews, students reconstructed their past experiences, reflected on their recent decision to enter teacher training as it related to their past, and shared their overall needs as teacher education candidates. Students were encouraged to share specific stories about their lives and were allowed to spend as much time as they needed to describe events, experiences, and relationships. Post-B.A.'s stated

that expressing these segments of their personal history and relating them to their decision to enter teaching was "extremely therapeutic." Many expressed that they had "gained a better understanding of self and their decision-making process." Most were unaware of the impact past experiences had on their decision to pursue teaching. As a result of this mode of data collection, the author gained a better understanding of this older, nontraditional population, as well as, a greater appreciation for traditional students and the realities they bring to teacher education programs.

It is important for Colleges of Education to have an on-going systematic approach to assess the needs of all of their students. By knowing students prior experiences, understanding their current life circumstances, eliciting their stories of transition, and by hearing their concerns for the future we can be better informed about how to tailor teacher education programs to meet their ever-changing individual needs. Programs that will attract and satisfy both traditional and nontraditional students need to operate under a set of recommendations derived from research studies, similar to this one. Future research studies should ask the following questions: 1) Are teacher education

programs responding to this new population of students?  
2) Are older, nontraditional learners better teachers?  
3) Are they better students? 4) How many actually get  
teaching jobs? 5) How long do they stay in teaching?  
6) How have their ideas about teaching changed? 7) Do  
they deal with life transitions as before?

In addition to the questions suggested, several other issues mentioned here, would benefit from others in the future. Short-range studies (1-5 years) conducted could best answer the previous questions utilizing a combination of research methods to collect data. The results, if applied, would serve to improve present teacher education programs. However, a long-range study like the Grant Study of Adult Development, the subject of George Vaillant's Adaptation to Life, would be an exciting venture and a useful contribution to the current sociological research across disciplines of human development, adult education, applied behavioral sciences, and important implications in the fields of continuing education, counseling and psychology/sociology. Such a study could provide a more intensive examination of the issues reported in this study. It could contrast the differences in personal and professional satisfaction

for those who stayed in teaching and those who left. It could track Post-B.A.'s and their changes in their decision-making patterns related to occupational satisfaction, look at Post-B.A.'s and how they move through their career(s), compare their teaching style to their younger peers (traditional students) teaching style, compare family dynamics over time, relationships to coworkers, and an array of demographic comparisons (i.e. male/female, mobility, geographic differences, urban/suburban/rural, educational background, socioeconomic, ethnic, family)

Continued research for understanding adult learners, their psychological characteristics, learning styles, overall educational needs and interests remains to be the responsibility of those in higher education serving this diverse population. On-going research efforts in this area may lead toward improved diagnostic skills pertaining to adult learning needs and improved competencies in the planning and design of educational activities. This, in turn, will enrich the total educational environment serving all students, young and old.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS  
AMHERST • BOSTON • WORCESTER

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DIVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS 01003  
(413) 545-2414

Instructional Leadership  
Furcolo Hall  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, MA 01003

August 10, 1984

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Dear // //:

I am a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst, and I am conducting a study on elementary and secondary teacher education. I am interested in finding out why you have decided to enter into this particular field. Through this questionnaire, I hope to identify your needs and circumstances as a "Post BA" teacher candidate.

The purpose of these results is to improve our teacher education programs. Only teacher candidates in the UMass Division of Continuing Education Post BA Teacher Education Program will receive a questionnaire. Therefore, each and every response is crucial to this effort.

This survey will require approximately 15 minutes. Your responses will remain anonymous. At the end of the questionnaire, there is a box to check if you would be willing to help me further by being interviewed. I appreciate the constraints on your time, and value your assistance in responding to this survey.

A pre-paid self-addressed envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. If you have any further questions, please contact Mark Keefe at 545-1577. The results of the study will be available upon request by September 30, 1984 in Room 227 - Furcolo Hall.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark

Enclosure

Please return by: September 1, 1984

MK:PBA/na/C

DIVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION  
STUDENT SURVEY

Life Experiences

This section asks you to describe your professional experiences in and out of the field of Education.

1. What work related experiences have you had in your undergraduate field of study after graduation? (Describe)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What other work or related experiences have you had? (Describe)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How would you characterize your non-teaching work experiences prior to entering the Post B.A. Program?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very \_\_\_\_\_ Positive \_\_\_\_\_ Neutral \_\_\_\_\_ Negative \_\_\_\_\_ Very  
Positive Positive Negative Negative
  
4. Have you had any experience in a teaching position (paid position, volunteer, tutoring) either before or after completing your undergraduate study?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No If yes, describe.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How would you characterize teaching you have had prior to entering the Post B.A. Program?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very \_\_\_\_\_ Positive \_\_\_\_\_ Neutral \_\_\_\_\_ Negative \_\_\_\_\_ Very  
Positive Positive Negative Negative

(turn over page)

6. Did you ever change your undergraduate major from education to another field?

\_\_\_\_\_ Not Applicable

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No                      If so, why did you do so?

Career Choices

This section asks you to examine your reasons for returning to college to acquire a teaching certificate and to describe your experiences as an older University student.

7. Low pay, few openings, limited opportunities for advancement, the belief that teachers are poorly qualified to teach, and the lack of respect and social status given teachers by the public have been cited as criticisms of the teaching profession. To what extent have the following affected your decision to teach? [using the 1 - 5 scale given]

- 1 = to very little extent
- 2 = to little extent
- 3 = some
- 4 = a great extent
- 5 = a very great extent

- \_\_\_\_\_ Low pay
- \_\_\_\_\_ Few openings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Limited opportunities for advancement
- \_\_\_\_\_ Belief that teachers are poorly qualified to teach
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of respect and social status given teachers by the public

8. Why have you chosen the University of Massachusetts/Amherst?

For questions 9, 10, and 11 write number "1" beside the choice most important to you. Next, if you choose, place a [  ] beside any other statements that also apply.

9. Why have you chosen the Post B.A. Program to acquire teaching certification as opposed to either an M.Ed. (Masters in Education) or M.A.T. (Masters of Arts in Teaching in your subject area)?

- Less time commitment
- Cost of courses
- Scheduling and availability of courses
- Faculty recommendation
- Student recommendation
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. What are the most significant problems you face as an older, part-time student returning to the University?

- Relevance of academic course work
- University requirements
- Negative status given teaching
- Social and economic adjustments
- Managing academic, personal, and work commitments
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. As you view the next five years, how would you characterize your career as a teacher?

- Full-time career choice
- Principal source of income
- First career choice
- Opportunity to gain experience to move up in the field of education
- Part-time career choice
- Supplemental source of income
- Secondary or back-up career choice
- Opportunity to gain experience to move out of education into another field
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. The following statements have been given as reasons for choosing to return to college to acquire a teaching certificate. Choose one or write your own.

- I always wanted to teach even though I believe there are limited job/career opportunities in teaching as compared to other professions.
- I recently decided on teaching as I had never really considered teaching while an undergraduate.
- I am not sure about teaching as a career but I believe a teaching certificate will give me greater employment options.
- I always thought about teaching but never explored how certification might be part of my undergraduate program of study.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I am not satisfied with my current work and I see work opportunities in areas of the country reporting teacher shortages.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I recently decided to teach because the nature of the job (length of work day, summers off, child-raising responsibilities) fits better into my overall life commitments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Describe briefly)

### Beliefs About Teaching

This section asks you to describe your beliefs about school and the role of a teacher.

For question 13 write number "1" beside the choice most important to you. Next, if you choose, place a [ √ ] beside any other statements that also apply.

13. How do you believe students learn best?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Discussion groups
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student self discovery/self motivation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Heavy academic emphasis
- \_\_\_\_\_ Students choose their own activities/experiential (learning by doing) education
- \_\_\_\_\_ Emphasis on basic skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recognition of and planning for diverse learning styles and needs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Competitive activities to bring out the best in students
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Describe briefly)

14. What do you see as the role of a teacher?

15. Would you be willing to participate in a more comprehensive survey and/or interview concerning your teacher training experiences here at UMass?
- [ ] Yes [ ] No
16. What kinds of courses and/or experiences do you see as vital to your teacher training here at UMass?

### Demographics

This section asks you to complete demographic questions concerning the Post BA Program. Please place a [  ] in one of the spaces provided for each question.

17. Certification sought:

Secondary School

\_\_\_\_\_ English  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mathematics  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Science  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Behavioral Sciences  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Middle School Specialist  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Middle School Generalist  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Early Childhood  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Bilingual/ESL  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please specify)

---

Middle School

Elementary School

18. Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male

19. Age on your next birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

20. How do you describe yourself? (Optional)      21. Marital Status:

\_\_\_\_\_ Black, Non-Hispanic  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Native American/Native Alaskan  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Asian or Pacific Islander  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic  
 \_\_\_\_\_ White, Non-Hispanic

\_\_\_\_\_ Single  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Married  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Separated  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Single Parent

(turn over page)

22. Current Employment Status:

- Not presently employed
- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time

23. Commuting Distance to UMass in Miles:  
 (Please specify)

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24. Undergraduate School and Major:

- |                                  |                                |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public  | <input type="checkbox"/> B.A.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Major |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private | <input type="checkbox"/> B.S.  | (Please specify)               |
|                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <hr/>                          |

25. Overall Undergraduate Grade Point Average:

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.5-4.0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.0-2.5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.0-3.5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1.5-2.0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.5-3.0 |                                  |

26. Do you intend to relocate to another part of the country when you complete your certification work?

- Yes                       No                       Undecided

Please feel free to use last page for further explanations on any of the questions/statements.



POST-BACCALAUREATE SURVEY

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(Includes Fall '83, Spring '84, Fall '84, Spring '85)

- The twenty-six item survey was sent to 86 Post B.A. students.
- A total of 62 survey questionnaires were completed and returned. Seven students dropped out of the Post-B.A. program and returned survey with no responses.

AGE	Avg. age of all respondents =	30
&	(N=39) Female "	= 31
SEX	(N=24) Male "	= 29
	# of students under 30	= 39
	# of students between 31-40	= 17
	# of students over 40	= 06

DESCRIBE SELF:

All Post B.A. students that responded described themselves as White, Non-Hispanic.

	men		women	Total
MARITAL	18	Single	18	36
STATUS	03	Married	18	21
	03	Divorced	01	04
	00	Widowed	00	00
	00	Separated	00	00
	00	Single Parent	00	00
CURRENT	08	Not presently	14	22
EMPLOYMENT	08	Full-time	14	22
STATUS	08	Part-time	14	22
		Other		
COMMUTING	01	Living on campus		
DISTANCE	13	1-5 miles from campus		

(one way)	13	6-10	"	"	
	15	11-25	"	"	189
	12	26-50	"	"	
	00	50-100	"	"	
	01	100-200	"	"	
	04	No answer			
	04	Completed program, did not respond to question.			

UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL & DEGREE AWARDED	34	Public	39	B.A.
	29	Private	24	B.S.
	04	Both	03	Both

UNDERGRADUATE  
MAJOR

<u>MAJOR</u>	<u># of students</u>
Psychology	8
Social Psychology	1
Sociology	3
Political Science	1
Criminal Justice	1
Government	1
Public Administration	1
History	5
Cultural History/Art	1
Classics	1
Botany	1
Biology	7
Wildlife Biology	1
Vet and Animal Science	1
Geology	2
Geography	1
Chemistry	2
Physics	1
Math	2
Nursing	1
Environ. Sci., Forest.	3
Agricultural Science	1
Excercise Science	1
Recreation/Leisure Serv.	1
Hotel Management	1
Physical Education	1
Home Economics	1

English	4	190
Theatre English	1	
French	1	
Spanish	1	

---

Subtotal = 57

DOUBLE  
MAJORS

Psychology and English	1
English and Social Studies	1
History and French	1
French/Italian and Literature	1
Fd. & Nat. Resources/Leisure Services	1

---

Subtotal = 05

TOTAL = 62

Overall Undergraduate Grade Point Average

11	3.5-4.0	05	2.0-2.5
22	3.0-3.5	00	1.5-2.0
25	2.5-3.0		

Do you intend to relocate when you complete your certification work?

09    yes                      25    no                      29    undecided

LIFE EXPERIENCES

This section asks you to describe your professional experiences in and out of education.

- #1    What work related experiences have you had in your undergraduate field of study after graduation?
- #2    What other work or related experiences have you had?

An overwhelming majority of respondents (58) had prior experience in a teaching capacity and expressed

those experiences as "positive" to "very positive." 191  
 Their non-teaching experiences prior to entering  
 UMass/Amherst were rated less positively. This would  
 seem to be one of the key areas for further study. To  
 what extent have less favorable experiences in work in  
 one's major, but outside of education in contrast to  
 some more positive educational experiences influenced  
 their decision to return to school in "education."

\* others saw work experience as a way to create a base  
 for Master's studies.

When asked, "why the Post B.A. tract", students  
 responded with a variety of personal and financial  
 statements, however, the majority were positively  
 influenced by the fact that this tract would require  
 "the least amount of time." Also, students did not see  
 the Master's tract as a "helpful" process for a new  
 teacher. Many felt the need for experience before  
 going onto Master's work.

\* others saw the Master's as a hinder to getting a job;  
 might price self out of job market (employers would  
 have to pay a Master's graduate more).

Respondents were then asked to identify the most  
 significant problems they faced as older, part-time  
 students returning to college. Over 50% said that  
 managing academic, personal, and work commitments was  
 the toughest. "Relevance of academic coursework" (15%)  
 and "social and economic adjustments" (20%) were also  
 significant problems faced.

#3 How would you characterize your non-teaching work  
 experiences prior to the Post B.A. Program?

Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very Negative
06	33	13	07	00

\* Four students had one or more jobs and  
 responded positively for some, negatively for  
 others.

#4 Have you had any experience in a teaching position  
 (paid position, volunteer, tutoring) either before  
 or after completing your undergraduate study?

Yes	No	If yes, describe.
(see Chap. IV)		

#5 How would you characterize teaching you have had prior to entering the Post B.A. Program?

Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very Negative
24	32	06	01	00

#6 Did you ever change your undergraduate major from education to another field?

Not applicable	Yes	No
43	05	13

If yes, why did you do so? (see Chap. IV)

#7 Low pay, few openings, limited opportunities for advancement, the belief that teachers are poorly qualified to teach, and the lack of respect and social status given teachers by the public have been cited as criticisms of the teaching profession. To what extent have the following affected your decision to teach?

(use the 1-5 scale given)

- 1 = to very little extent
- 2 = to little extent
- 3 = some
- 4 = a great extent
- 5 = a very great extent

1.8	Low pay
2.1	Few openings
1.9	Limited opportunities for advancement
2.0	Belief that teachers are poorly qualified to teach
2.2	Lack of respect/social status given teachers by public

#8 Why have you chosen the University of Massachusetts/Amherst?

Proximity was the most popular response - students described the campus as a convenient location.

Many stated that the University was near "home." 193  
\* other responses included: "School of Education has good reputation", cost of courses reasonable, Post-B.A. program suitable to needs, flexibility, and emphasis on "practical", "relevant" experiences.

For questions 9, 10, and 11 write the number "1" beside the choice most important to you. Next, if you choose, place a ( ) beside any other statements that also apply.

#9 Why have you chosen the Post B.A. Program to acquire teacher certification as opposed to either an M.Ed.(Master's in Education) or M.A.T.(Master's of Arts in Teaching in your subject area)?

- 24 Less time commitment
- 11 Cost of courses
- 03 Scheduling and availability of courses
- 04 Faculty recommendation
- 00 Student recommendation
- 21 Other (please specify)

Other ...

- I have Master's already, most of the credits from my M.Ed transfer.
- I want specific experiences before my Master's.
- I have Master's, didnt feel necessary to get a 2nd M.Ed.
- I already have a Master's.
- I have a Master's, I want elem. certification.
- To begin now and possibly obtain a Master's later.
- I want a Master's in a subject area, not in education.
- Don't have enough education pre-requisites to pursue M.Ed
- I wanted a solid practical foundation and qualification before going on to a more specialized degree.
- I don't value M.Ed., my time is better spent on teaching.
- Master's not appropriate without some teaching experience.
- I would like to strengthen my area of concentration first.
- I'm interested in getting the certificate, not the degree.
- desire for preparation, learning the fundamentals.
- never had any education courses, do not wish to get

M.Ed.

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- I was rejected from the Master's in Ed. program.
- Given the current job market, it seemed the most practical/safest way to enter the field.
- This to me was the logical way to get into education.
- May price myself out of a job for a 1st year teacher.
- As a relatively inexperienced teacher, I didn't want to out-price myself vis-avis hiring.
- I only need student teaching to finish cert. requirements.
- It is available to me right now.
- A more stable job opportunity for a time being.
- I wish to further my education at UMass.
- I intended to be part of a B.A. program.
- All of these (given) reasons.

#10 What are the most significant problems you face as an older, part-time student returning to school?

- 09 Relevance of academic coursework
- 05 University requirements
- 00 Negative status given teaching
- 12 Social and economic adjustments
- 31 Managing academic, personal, and work commitments
- 06 Other (please specify)

Other...

- Feeling older/more experienced than classmates, my life is work-oriented, not student-oriented.
- I am 20 years older than most students (classmates). I'm H.S. certified, have a Master's, 3 children and feel that many of my non-methods (pre-ed.) courses should be waived.
- Living in Prince House (Grad Dorm)
- Lack of academic challenge.
- UMass bureaucracy, Ed. Dept. inflexibility.
- The hassle of bureaucracy which takes time and money.
- Educational costs.
- Financial.
- My student teaching in N.Y., away from UMass, less contact.
- Haven't started yet, "juggling" to be most significant.
- Child care.

#11 As you view the next five years, how would you characterize your career as a teacher?

- 32 Full-time career choice
- 06 Principal source of income
- 10 First career choice
- 04 Opportunity to gain experience to move up in the field of education
- 00 Part-time career choice
- 03 Supplemental source of income
- 01 Secondary or back-up career choice
- 02 Opportunity to gain experience to move out of education into another field
- 05 Other (please specify)

Other...

- I hope to become a school psychologist.
- Switching from day care to lower elem. school, largely for the money.
- I don't really regard myself as a teacher - mostly preparatory for career advancement.
- Career choice for now but I'm not sure it will be a lifetime commitment.
- I am presently teaching part-time and honestly don't know where I see myself in the next 5 years

#12 The following statements have been given as reasons for choosing to return to college to acquire a teaching certificate. Choose one or write your own.

- 14 I always wanted to teach even though I believe there are limited job/career opportunities in teaching as compared to other professions
- 14 I recently decided on teaching as I had never really considered teaching while an undergraduate
- 04 I am not sure about teaching as a career but I believe a teaching certificate will give me greater employment options
- 08 I always thought about teaching but never explored how certification might be part of my undergraduate program of study
- 01 I am not satisfied with my current work and I see work opportunities in areas of the country reporting teacher shortages
- 06 I recently decided to teach because the nature of the job (length of work day, summers off,



16 Other (Describe briefly)

Other...

- My decision to become a teacher is a career/work which I can feel good about and I imagine it will fit nicely with all of my other life goals and interests.
- Teaching satisfies me intellectually and creatively
- I am returning to college in order to secure a second certification making myself more marketable.
- I always wanted to teach, but I did not want to take Ed. courses as an undergraduate.
- I see teaching as a change in career which will enable me to use some of my previously acquired skills.
- Because of recent and pleasant experiences substituting, I decided to get my certification although I don't think I will do it forever.
- I plan to teach and gain experiences to be able to move on to physical therapy which I believe involves teaching others.
- I had not considered teaching others until my senior year of college and need, therefore, further coursework for certification.
- I like teaching and being with young children, but I'm tired of the low status and particularly the low pay that goes along with day care, so I want to teach K-3 when my youngest child goes to school. I know I won't get rich, but the salary is significantly better and I don't need many other credits.
- I'm committed to solid educational foundations for young people.
- I have worked as a teacher in the Leisure Services field and felt that the instruction of people was the strongest part of my job. Hence, I want to explore it more.
- I love to work with youth in Environmental Ed. or the out-of doors. Given my degree, I found that to make ends meet while doing what I'd like would be made possible by obtaining a teaching certificate.
- My own children are 14 years +. We will need more income and thus, I must work full-time. Technicians here work on soft money (grants). I never felt I could teach and rear my own children at the same time. I still don't.
- I believe teaching will give me greater in myself, poise and the ability to further my education and

career directions through the time and income provided by teaching

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- I always wanted to teach, but I believe the career opportunities were limited.
- I decided to get my certification on the way to becoming a certified school psychologist. I feel the 2 certificates will go hand in hand eventually.

### Beliefs About Teaching

This section asks you to describe your beliefs about school and the role of a teacher.

For question #13 write number "1" beside the choice most important to you. Next, if you choose, place a ( ) beside any other statements that also apply.

#13 How do you believe students learn best?

- 06 Discussion groups
- 12 Student self-discovery/self-motivation
- 01 Heavy academic emphasis
- 08 Students choose their own activities/  
experiential (learning by doing)
- 09 Emphasis on basic skills
- 25 Recognition of and planning for diverse  
learning styles and needs
- 01 Competitive activities to bring out best in  
students
- 04 Other (describe briefly)

Other.....

- a well blended combination of all of the above.
- it would depend on the population you were teaching.
- independent work with feedback from other students.
- the most important pre-requisite to learning is a healthy self-concept. When child feels good about self, learning is a joy.

#14 What do you see as the role of a teacher?

- the instructor of information, pertinent to the growth and progress of the child. By this I mean, I would be responsible for presenting information and

skills in such a manner so that it would be understood by the children so that they could take what I have taught them and build upon that if they so desired or were required to do so. And, to do this in an atmosphere of encouragement and creativity (if such a goal is attainable. 198

- to improve the student's self-image and to act as a counselor.

- role model, support (positive), motivator, resource person and classroom manager.

- to promote critical thinking on the part of the students.

- classroom manager- i.e. resource person, authority figure, director of activities, evaluator, consultant and teacher; actually involved in teaching not just supervising.

- the teachers role, primarily, is to teach students to think critically. On the primary level, however, basic skills are essential.

- the teacher is the student's guide and facilitator as the student learns how to discover things and teach him/herself. The teacher should be able to draw each student out into a pool of self-discovery and knowledge about how to explore the world. Teachers should be able to initiate students into learning process and stand back while they take off by themselves, guiding them as they need it.

- I see my role as a high school chemistry teacher as one of exposing students to new areas of knowledge, and increasing their interest and thus their knowledge of the subject matter, so that they will be motivated to study the subject further.

- A person who is well informed of their subject matter. A teacher should be able to present information to the students in a positive and meaningful way. The strategies and techniques should be varied and exciting and incorporate all levels of learning. I believe the students are actively involved and challenged in the classroom this will promote personal growth and a positive attitude toward learning. I also feel a teacher should be active in his/her professional organization. Attend conferences and receive publications which update him/her in the field.

- I feel a teacher today must be a motivator of self-discovery. For me I feel a teacher should be subject-centered as well as child-centered.

- a person that helps individuals become as fully functioning as possible.

- A most difficult question, the role is that of a creator of environments, an enabler - a person who

enables children to learn by providing all the facilities they need for doing so. Beyond that, a facilitator of self-discovery at the elementary level I think decision-making weighted toward the teacher but becoming less moving toward the students in the upper grades.

- a teacher can be an important part of a young person's education. It's so hard to try and give so much of yourself to so many individuals, but if it can be done along with a firm hand of discipline and clear objectives, the result is my ideal role of a teacher.

- a conduit and rudder, rather than Captain. A filterer of the world. A disruptive element. A person available who has thought a great deal about the topic at hand.

- I think a teacher can persuade children that learning is a pleasure and that anyone can partake. I also think a teacher can help set the mood of excitement over education in communities and families - most people need others both to galvanize learning and care that it happens.

- To help each child to do the best he can, fulfill his/her potentials in whatever they choose. Help the child to love himself and life. To teach concern for others respect. To open doors to as many experiences as possible, try to understand each child and how they learn best. To help out in a bad family situation affecting the child. Parent education courses/classes. To help the child develop a positive self image and strong ego. I have the up most love and concern for children.

- to direct children and bring them an awareness of the gifts knowledge can bring.

- a teacher should guide the students' learning. A teacher should show that learning is important and knowledge is exciting. A teacher should exhibit respect for the student as a person.

- leader, organizer to the point where students can organize themselves. Resource person, guide and confidante.

- motivator, planner and guide. A teacher can set the atmosphere, present the material to be learned in varying ways, so that as many students as possible become interested enough to learn. The student in the long run constructs his own knowledge so a good teacher presents materials in a way that allows this to occur.

- a facilitator of student learning. Somebody who guides students' discoveries of themselves and their world. A role model who makes learning come alive in an enthusiastic and practical manner. Sometimes, a

transmitter of knowledge and always a resource person who can direct students to other sources of learning.

- facilitator and motivator.
- a guide for students; teach them to teach themselves, that is , teach students to be resourceful.
- to understand each student as best as possible and realize each student is an individual. Also, to help keep motivation up by setting an example for kids.
- motivates students to be curious, acts as a resource. Is never patronizing or condescending. Most importantly, creates a positive learning experience for students.

- to help foster learning and discovery in students. (also, refers to #13)

- creating safe, encouragin, supportive environments. Giver of sparks of enthusiasm. Ensuring sensitivity between members.

- essentially all of the above (referring to Question #13 where he checked 1,2 and placed a "1" next to 6, also checks "other"). It clearly would depend on the population you were teaching. Perhaps I'll be more complete after a few years in the field.

- students learn by doing but the correct type and amount of guidance and positive reinforcement is needed for them to be successful.

- a teacher must facilitate learning by identifying students strengths and present material in a manner most apt to allow the student to be successful--i.e. a visual presentation may do nothing for a student, but actually experiencing and performing a task may facilitate learning. A teacher should be able to communicate to students, parents, colleagues and administrators and make necessary referrals. A teacher should be able to assess the level of learning.

- an individual to help stimulate a child's interest and curiosity about self and world. One who can help form positive attitudes toward learning and consequently help direct those attitudes furthering the child's general education. Learning can be a joy.

- the most important pre-requisite to successful learning is a healthy self-concept. When a child feels good about self, learning is a joy. The teacher must help to facilitate this.

- to provide guidance, direction, and prepare students to discover that education can be fun, and worthwhile. A teacher should help to self-motivate students. Help them to discover knowledge and not force it upon them. I also believe it is vital for students to learn to think. Anyone can force themselves to remeber information to be repeated on a

specific day. The hard part is having them retain that knowledge for later use. 201

- a teacher should be able to pass on the information that she/he is to teach in a factual and precise way without injecting his/her opinion. They must also be able to make a link between what they are teaching and the real world. A teacher must also be able to reflect the values most cherished by his/her society while retaining the status of an individual.

- someone to stimulate, guide and enlighten students about their world, how they fit into the overall picture and their ability to contribute on their own level of "competence."

- to create an environment for each student to develop at their own best. A good teacher can create a learning environment so the students can then teach themselves.

- works with each student individually - after deciding the overall plan of study. The teacher must have defined goals set for themselves of what is important information to get across and yet have some flexibility and creativity so that subject is presented clearly for each student. And, recognition of the students ability is important.

- set up and maintain a learning environment (physical space), maintain a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning and growing, encourage and support children as they work in this environment (and do the required paper work).

- a teacher should make learning as pleasant an experience as possible.

- to encourage each student to learn by using his own strengths. To motivate and provide opportunities for students. Do a certain amount of basic skill teaching, using "structure" when necessary.

- to motivate and excite students to learn to their best abilities.

- to motivate and organize.

- to show students how to learn, not what to learn.

- a catalyst, a spark for the fire. Obviously an educator and instructor and therefore should be a role model. Yet the teacher's most significant contribution is to inspire and show the rewards of an education--learning is an end to itself, a gift which will never fail to excite and elevate the individual.

- a motivator.

- a facilitator of learning, and a resource.

Should provide an example of someone with a curious intellect and concern and respect for others.

- to guide students through the intricacies of human knowledge by various methods, including self-discovery, Socratic discourse, enlightened workload assignment, and lectures centering around historical references; to encourage the student to evaluate problems, and to accustom the student to hardwork and its attendant positive results.

- a teacher must be able to organize and present a body of knowledge (or set of skills) in an effective (i.e. clear and interesting) manner. Then use techniques to help the student either analyze and synthesize this new knowledge in light of knowledge already acquired, OR, develop, practice and apply the skills taught. A very good (successful) teacher will have helped students to develop their own strategies to continue to learn, evaluate and apply new (and old) skills and knowledge to their own ever-changing experience.

- if the text book gives the basic facts, I'm there to make students think about those facts. We are here to teach thinking and to teach acting on the product of that process.

- NO RESPONSE FROM 4 Post B.A. students

#15 Would you be willing to participate in a more comprehensive survey and/or interview concerning your teacher training experiences here at UMass?

Yes = 45

No = 18

(21 male) & (24 female)

#16 What kinds of courses and/or experiences do you see as vital to your teacher training here at UMass?

- gaining insight to how people learn, learning more about myself so that I may better understand others.
- leadership training, instructor training.
- ed courses, developing and recognizing problem students, behavioraly and academically weak. English courses, having a more diverse background in order to teach.
- discussions on teaching, lesson planning, curriculum content, student teaching with support from cooperating teacher and professor.
- the academic disciplines program as well as my degree concentration (Psych and Eng.).

- techniques that encourage critical and synthetic evaluation of material by students, group dynamics, practicums and support.
- classroom visits and student teaching.
- coursework in English methods (instruction and content) and student teaching.
- I'll know better after I'm in the program for a while.
- I honestly don't know, I'm stumped on this one.
- hands on teaching experiences, organizational methods.
- none.
- methods courses, and only methods courses. Field based instruction and student teaching.
- courses which help me to explore different modes and methods for teaching in a classroom. Classes that encourage discussion and question not only for the instructor but for the student. Any hands on courses will be of great value, often one can only learn through doing.
- ?
- methods courses, practice teaching.
- the most important courses are the ones which will assist me with preparing specific curriculum for my field of teaching.
- those courses which will supplement my undergraduate work, the practicum, observations and student teaching is just as important as the coursework.
- review in the sciences would be ideal as well as math (for me). Also, planning the curriculum and literature access as to what is happening within the field of education. Discussion courses and seminars.
- the prepracticums and methods courses are vital and interesting.
- psych of ed., methods courses and the practicum.
- some curriculum for 5-8 year olds to add to my preschool background and some direct experiences with 5-8 year olds.

### Demographics

#17 Certification sought:

SECONDARY	04	English
	03	Mathematics
	12	Science
	08	Social Studies
		Behavioral Sciences



MIDDLE SCHOOL	05	Middle Sch.Specialist
	01	Middle Sch.Generalist

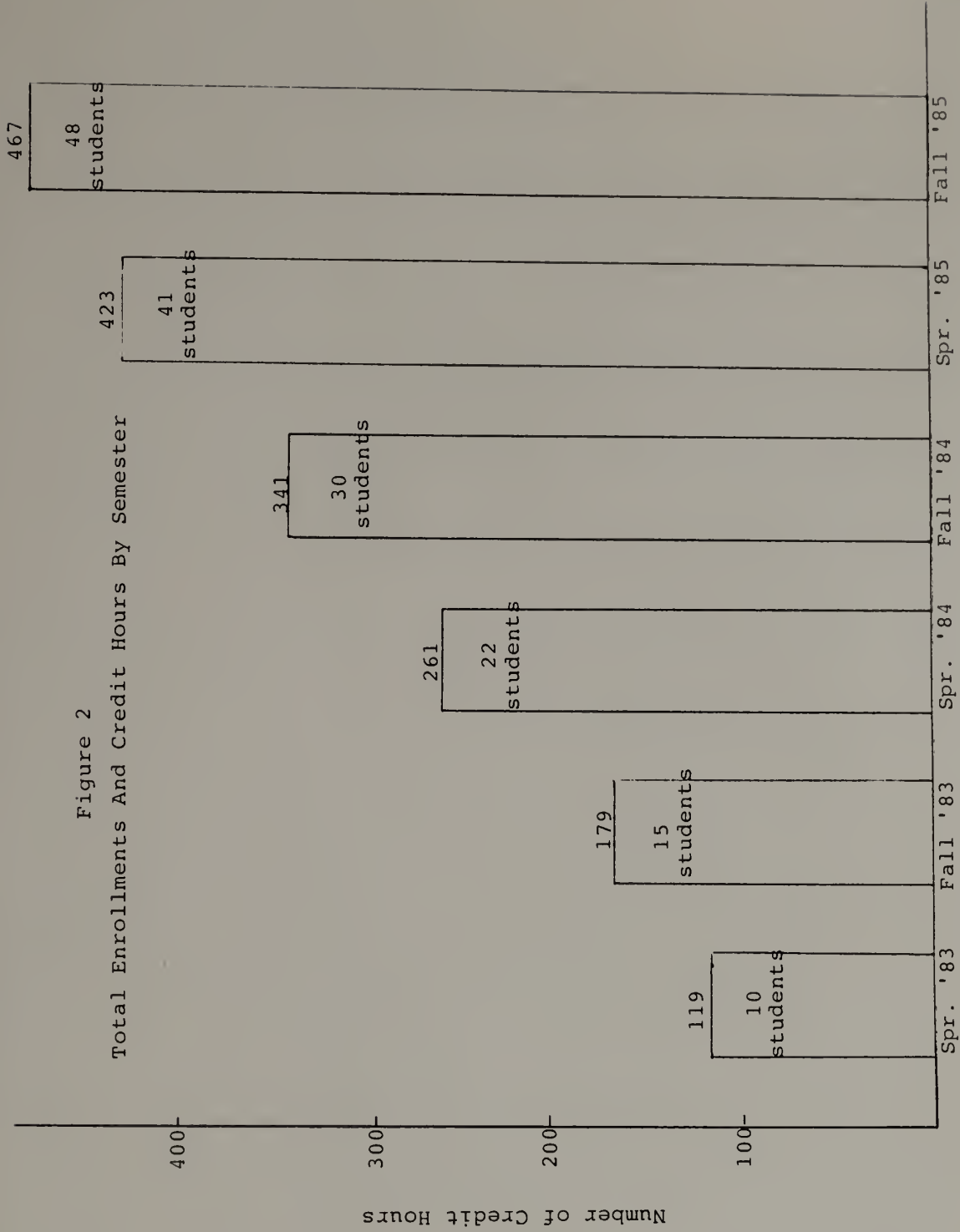
ELEMENTARY	16	Elementary
SCHOOL	04	Early Childhood
		Bilingual/ESL

	05	Undecided
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Other - (see below)

SECONDARY	01	Modern Language
	01	Vocational Ed.
	01	Home Economics
	01	French
	01	Spanish

Figure 2  
Total Enrollments And Credit Hours By Semester



Academic Semesters

APPENDIX B



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts* 207  
*University of Massachusetts*  
*Amherst 01003*

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

March 4, 1985

Dear

Thank you for participating in the Post B.A. student questionnaire last semester. I appreciate your open and honest answers as well as your comments regarding the survey.

The enclosed article "Reentering College to Enter Teaching" (to be published in the Florida Journal of Teacher Education) is the result of Post B.A. student involvement in Phase I of my research. Awareness of the Post B.A. student population at UMass grows as numbers increase and as this emerging population asserts itself.

As part of my dissertation focus, I have arranged a series of interviews over the next six months to better understand the Post B.A. student in their particular situation. A random sample from the Post B.A. student population will be contacted and interviewed at a mutually convenient meeting time. If your plans have changed as to participating in the interviews, and if your address or phone number should change within the next six months, please contact me as soon as possible. You may be assured that the survey and interview data will remain confidential.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss your academic and career pursuits in teacher education.

Sincerely,

Mark Keefe  
Rm. 215--Furcolo Hall  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, MA 01003  
(413) 545-0945

MK:mm

Returning to Teach:  
An Analysis and Profile of College Graduates Enrolled  
in a Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Education Program

I.

I, Mark Keefe am a graduate student at the School of Education, University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Massachusetts. I have been working in Elementary Teacher Education at UMass for the past 3 years, teaching methods courses and resourcing (supervising) student teachers in their field placements. These experiences have helped to shape my present research focusing specifically on Post-B.A. students pursuing teacher certification.

In the Fall of 1984 approximately 100 Post-B.A. students at UMass/Amherst participated in a written survey which asked them to respond to questions regarding their decision to return to college for teacher certification.

Having documented the preliminary findings, I am now broadening my study via in-depth interviews to better understand the experience and meaning of returning students in higher education.

II.

You are being asked to be a participant in this study. I will conduct one ninety (90) minute in-depth interview with you. The interview will center around prior teaching and non-teaching work experiences, career directions and how you came to UMass/Amherst to become a teacher education candidate. My intent in the interview will not be to seek answers but rather to stimulate discussion of your stories and recreation of your experiences.

III.

Results of my research will be available for review by February, 1986, in the Office of Teacher Certification, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Amherst, MA. 01003.  
Any questions you have concerning the research can be addressed to me at any time at: 64 North Silver Lane, Sunderland, MA. 01375, (413) 665-7131.

IV.

The interview will be audio-taped and later transcribed by me. My goal is to analyze and compose the materials from your interview (you will be one of twelve participants) for a major part of my dissertation.

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In all written materials and oral presentations in which I may use materials from your interview, I will not use either your name, names of people close to you, nor the name(s) of your previous college(s). Transcripts will be typed with initials for your name, the names of people close to you, and the name(s) of your previous college(s).

V.

While consenting at this time to participate in the interview, you may at any time withdraw from the actual interview process.

VI.

Furthermore, while having consented to participate in the interview process and having so done, you may withdraw your consent to have specific excerpts from your interview used in any printed or oral presentations if you notify me within thirty days of the interview.

VII.

In signing this form you are agreeing to the use of the materials from your interview as indicated in III. If I were to want to use the materials from your interview in any way not consistent with what is stated in III, I would contact you to obtain your additional written consent.

VIII.

In signing this form, you are also assuring me that you will make no financial claims on me for the use of the material in your interview.

IX.

Finally, in signing this you are thus stating that no medical treatment will be required by you from the University of Massachusetts should any physical injury result from participating in the interview.

-----

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the 210  
above statement and agree to participate as an  
interviewee under the conditions stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewer

## POST-B.A. INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Are you currently employed? If so, where?
2. What work have you done since your bachelor's degree?
3. What other occupations did you consider seriously as possibilities?
4. Are you now or have you ever been married?
5. Are there any children? If yes, how many AND their ages? Is child care an issue?
6. In what occupation was your father engaged at the time you began your college career? In what occupation was your mom? Sisters? Brothers? What do they do now?
7. At what point did you make the definite decision to enter teaching? What were the circumstances at the time? (Probes: financial, job, relationships, other...)
8. Why UMass/Amherst? Why certification in that area? Why that age grouping?
9. What were the major attractions that teaching held for you at the point when you decided to enter it?
10. What person or persons do you think influenced you in your decision to become a teacher? (Probes: Family; Teachers; Others...) Support for the decision?
11. Looking back today, what do you think were the most important factors in your decision to become a teacher? (Probes: disenchantment w/ present job; divorce; children leaving home; other...)
12. Can you recall what you thought about yourself when you decided to enter teaching? Can you remember what qualities you felt would fit well with teaching as a line of work for you?
13. In what ways are the present teacher education courses and/or experiences different from what you



expected. How are they better than what you  
expected? How are they worse?

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14. Have you made it a definite decision to teach? If so, for how long?
15. What do you see yourself doing in 5 years? What Occupation?

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