

Chatham College Receives Pennsylvania Department of Education Approval

In April 2006, the review team from the Pennsylvania Department of Education visited our campus and examined every aspect of the Education program, undergraduate and graduate. We are happy to report that they approved our offerings for another five years. The review team led by Dr. Diane Polachek from Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania and Mr. Clifton Edwards, PDE liaison led the team. They congratulated Chatham on our "...fine programs and people who bring them to life." In addition, they noted that our program is "...solid, school-focused, and integrated with the liberal arts." We were commended for our admissions processes, field experience component, collaboration with other institutions of higher learning and school districts, advising and mentoring program, and outstanding scores on PRAXIS I and II.

The review process is a self-study process. While we are pleased with the results of our self-study, we are already engaged in ways to get even better. Among the improvements we're implementing are the following:

- ✓ Establishing remediation for at-risk candidates,
- ✓ Developing a rubric to enable systematic evaluation of portfolios,
- ✓ Expanding the evaluation process of adjunct faculty, and
- ✓ Raising the expectation of research and publication among the faculty.

We are also applying for a Benter Initiative in Global Citizenship grant award to help fund future travel and study projects. According to the prospectus for the grant:

"The endowment will provide grants to faculty members . . . who are working with students in experiential learning projects that promote international citizenship and engagement. It is the donor's belief that one important contributor to peace is interaction among different peoples and that prejudice is often caused by lack of personal acquaintance with people. Therefore, any project that is funded through the Benter Initiative for Global Citizenship should have or lead to personal interactions between representatives of Chatham College and people of different nations and cultures. Projects should lead to sustained relationships among the College and organizations, projects, or institutions in other countries where both students and faculty may become involved on an ongoing basis, or otherwise lead to significant internationalization for the College."

Another area of professional growth for us will involve classroom-based research. This is a way of systematically examining the culture of a class and the student learning taking place—to determine what is working and what is not.

Currently, we are involved in developing a strategic plan for the Education Department. We are mapping out our vision for the program, determining new opportunities, and finding ways to get better. In addition to the strategic plan, we will also develop a 5-year operating plan that will chart our course for ongoing improvement and growth.