



their occupational offerings. One major problem, however, has been that few teacher education institutions are producing professionals who can administer and/or teach a pre-specialized occupational program. This problem is most evident at the 9-10 grade exploration level.

Taking the leadership role, the Professional and Curriculum Development Unit, Division of Vocational and Technical Education, Board of Vocational Education and Rehabilitation funded a research project with Southern Illinois University/Carbondale. Project Director Dennis C. Nystrom of the Department of Occupational Education in cooperation with personnel from the Departments of Agriculture Industries, Home Economics Education and Secretarial and Business Education conducted the project.

The research project objectives were to:

1. Develop a pre-service grade 7-10 occupational orientation and exploration teacher education program based on the state of Illinois' five occupational clusters; and
2. Integrate the 7-10 occupational orientation teacher education curriculum into ongoing in-service programs.

Based on the analysis of data collected by the research staff; it was evident that two distinct options for curriculum organization had to be developed.

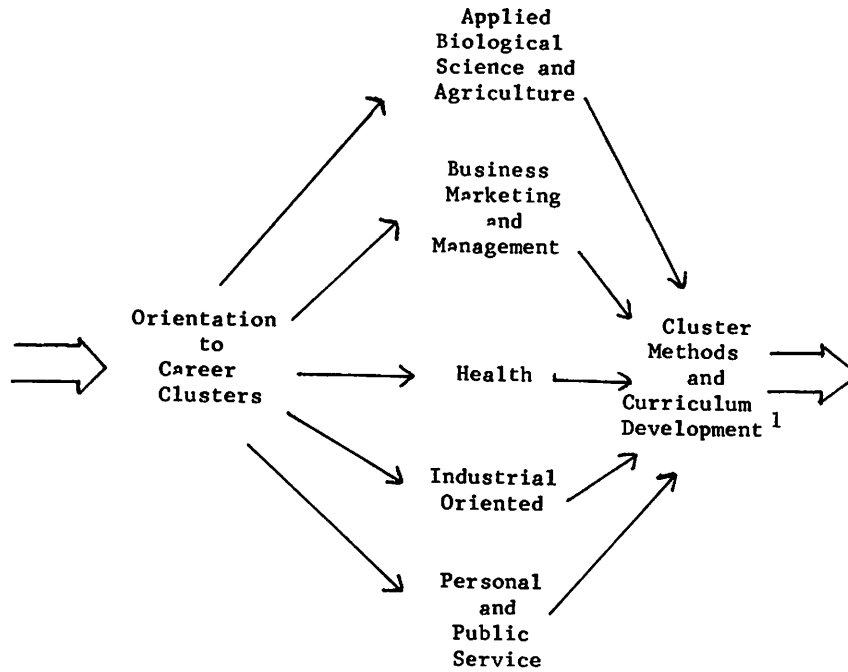
Option one, Single Cluster Experience for Occupational Orientation and Exploration--7 through 10, was designed to provide essential information and teaching expertise at the exploration level to those teachers who will also be teaching vocational preparation programs in the secondary schools. This option was developed because data indicated that most teachers of vocational preparation programs were also required to teach pre-specialized or orientation programs.

Option two, Multiple Cluster Experience for Occupational Orientation and Exploration--7 through 10, was designed for those teachers who wish to have the necessary expertise to operate occupational orientation and/or exploration programs at the grade 7-10 level in public schools.

When electing Option one, (refer to Figure 1) Single Cluster Experience for Occupational Orientation and Exploration, the pre-service or in-service teachers would take three courses. The first course is an orientation to career development and occupational clusters. A student, from any of the teacher preparation units indicated, would enroll in the orientation course. After completing the career development orientation experience, the student may select one (or more) of the cluster courses offered by respective departments. These cluster

FIGURE 1

Option 1. Single Cluster Experience for  
Occupational Orientation and Exploration--7 through 10.



<sup>1</sup>Cross listed with Agriculture Industries, Secretarial Education, Home Economics Education, Occupational Education.

courses are aimed at providing the student with basic skills and knowledges of the various occupations related to the specific cluster. Finally, the student will enroll in the jointly offered cluster methods and curriculum preparation course to develop specific teaching skills and competencies related to occupation orientation activities for the grade 7-10 level. A case study can illustrate the system utilized in Figure 1.

A student enrolled in Agriculture Education preparing to be an Applied Biological and Agriculture Occupational Teacher at the secondary level and is currently involved in completing the necessary course work, work experience, and teaching experience to assure graduation from the program, with a secondary vocational teaching certificate. This student is also interested in teaching grade 7-10 or 9-10 occupational orientation and/or exploration courses at the secondary level.

The student will enroll in the Orientation course to obtain expertise in the area of career development theory and occupational clustering techniques. In all probability, he/she will also enroll in the Applied Biological and Agriculture Occupational Clusters course since his/her background is in that area (he/she may however take any or all of the cluster courses.) Finally, the student completes the course offering in Cluster Methods and Curriculum Development to assure the necessary teaching methods competency to offer cluster orientated, pre-specialized courses.

Figure 2 is representative of Option 2, Multiple Cluster Experience for Occupational Orientation and Exploration 7 through 10. This curriculum is designed primarily for occupational teacher education students who are not pursuing the secondary vocational certificate yet desire to receive the 6-12 secondary school certification. The courses are exactly the same as for Option 1, however, each student is required to take the Orientation course, ALL five cluster courses (in any order) and then the methods course.

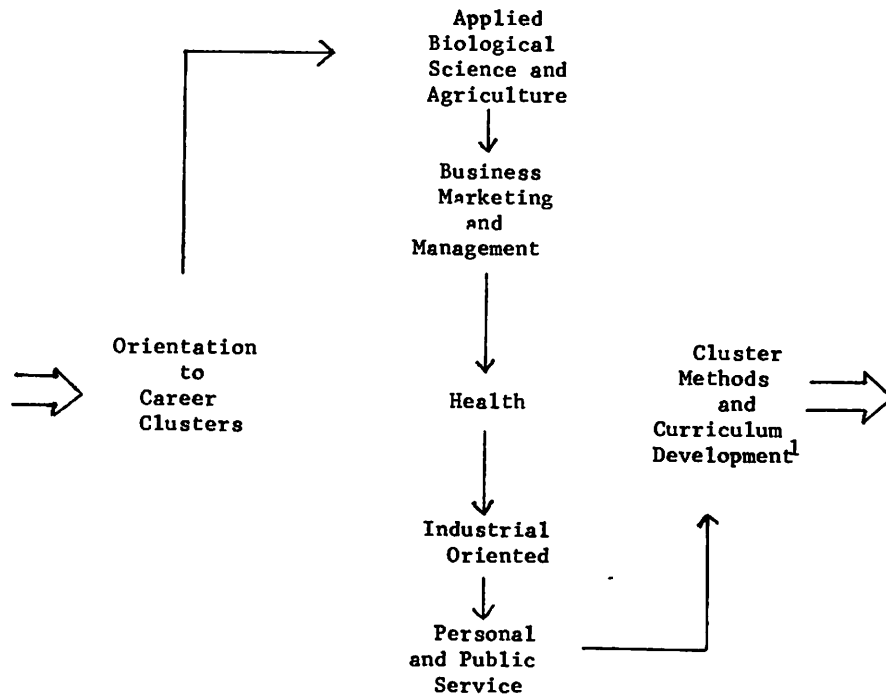
Local departments will establish the additional courses necessary to assure 6-12 certification in their particular area.

While the design of these two systems is based on Illinois' teacher certification requirements, it is transferable to other state situations.

While the primary objective of this research project was the development of a pre-specialized teacher education program, some emphasis was given to specific curriculum development activities within the parameters of the program. Both program options utilized a multiple course sequence approach to achieving the various goals.

FIGURE 2

Option 2. Single Cluster Experience for Occupational Orientation and Exploration--7 through 10.



<sup>1</sup>Cross listed with Agriculture Industries, Secretarial Education, Home Economics Education, and Occupational Education.

### Orientation Course

Under the parameters established by the two options, the primary purpose of the orientation course is to provide students instructional activities aimed at increasing their awareness with regard to vocational maturity, career education, career development theory, occupational clustering techniques, and the like.

### Career Cluster Courses

The primary function of the various career cluster courses is to provide potential teachers of orientation and exploration activities experience in representative occupations within the five occupational cluster areas. While laboratory experiences are the primary means of providing the hands-on activities, credit for work experience may be substituted where course instructors and program coordinators deem appropriate. These activities include: manipulating tools and equipment necessary for achieving specified occupational competencies; evaluating skills and abilities necessary for formulating realistic occupational competencies and career choices; perceiving the interrelatedness and interdependency of occupational areas within each cluster; recognizing the contributions and functions of specific occupations and their roles in the community and for the individual; and the evaluation of career competencies and requirements around a meaningful career development theme.

### Methods and Curriculum Course

The methods and curriculum course is designed to assist students to develop curricular organizational structures and to test instructional methods that might be used in teaching orientation level courses in the public schools. While not a requirement, it is suggested that the methods and curriculum course follow the student's experiences in the specific clusters and orientation activities. It would serve as a capstone offering designed to bring together the student's understandings and abilities with regard to the career development process and his hands-on experiences within any or all occupational clusters. The primary purpose of the methods and curriculum course is to provide the students specific instructional competencies in curriculum organization and teaching methods such as preparing a course of study designed for use at the orientation level; presenting several mini-lessons utilizing alternate methods of instruction applicable at the orientation level; describing means of curricular organization based on occupational or career clusters; describing means of coordinating audio-visual media with curricular objectives and student needs; designing laboratory and classroom facilities for use at the orientation level for instructional activities in specified cluster areas; devising alternative methods of instruction and facilities utilization within given situations and based on various target groups; and preparing evaluation system designed to assess input, process and output of his particular proposed cluster curriculum.

### Summary

Educational agencies responsible for teacher training in career education areas or occupational orientation and exploration programs must provide increased emphasis on occupational cluster studies. If instructional personnel are to enhance the career development process for public school youth, they must be providing training in the area of occupational orientation and exploration. Diluted versions of vocational preparation programs do little to provide students with exploratory experiences. Teachers must be made aware of instructional processes that are relevant to their students' needs and occupational aspirations.