BACKGROUND: In September 2002, in cooperation with the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the University of Illinois formed a steering committee to develop Associate of Arts in Teaching degree models. Representatives of public universities, community colleges, and the three state education agencies (IBHE, ICCB, and ISBE) came together to undertake this task. The primary focus of the steering committee’s work has been to:

Develop Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree models that will attract students into high need teaching disciplines and facilitate the transfer of lower-division students desiring to become teachers in those disciplines into upper-division teacher education programs. Students obtaining an AAT degree in the identified shortage areas should have equal status with university native students at the beginning of the junior year.

The steering committee identified three high need areas on which to focus its initial efforts - secondary math, secondary science, and special education. Subcommittees were formed to address recommended curricula for each of the three discipline areas. A fourth committee addressed general education and the selection of appropriate lower-division professional education courses. After initial work by the Special Education Subcommittee was completed, the steering committee decided to postpone further work in that area until changing requirements at the state and federal levels have been clarified.

In late June, workgroups comprised of approximately 100 community college and university faculty met at the University of Illinois in Springfield to link professional teaching standards to the models, identify appropriate artifacts demonstrating mastery of the standards, and develop sample course syllabi for the selected education courses. Detailed guidelines that identify standards, indicators, and artifacts for general education and the professional education courses in the AAT degree models, as well as sample syllabi, were produced by the workgroups. The guidelines and sample syllabi are available on the ICCB website. These materials, along with a draft report of the steering committee, were widely disseminated to faculty and administrators at all the public community colleges and universities for review and comment. The decisions and recommendations included in this report incorporate revisions based on comments that were received by the steering committee.
RECOMMENDATIONS:

**General Principles**

Based on the work of the steering committee, its subcommittees, and the faculty workgroups, the steering committee developed a set of general principles regarding the development of AAT degree models and recommendations for specific degree models in the areas of secondary mathematics and secondary science.

The following principles should guide the development of AAT degree models:

1. A degree model provides a general framework within which community colleges may develop specific degrees in accordance with institutional policies and priorities.
2. For most teaching specialties, the IAI General Education Common Core with one additional mathematics course will be appropriate. For some teaching specialties, it may be necessary to identify specific courses within the general education core, or the core may need to be modified.
3. Core language arts standards and standards related to global diversity and multiculturalism should be met through the general education component of the degree. Core technology standards may be met with an educational technology course, or may be infused throughout the general education component. Every college will be responsible for addressing the core technology standards, whether through a specific course or infusion in the curriculum.
4. Passing the Enhanced Test of Basic Skills will be a requirement for program completion. It is recommended that the test be administered no later than the point at which students have accumulated 45 semester hours and that remediation be provided for students who are not successful in their first attempt to pass the test.
5. Alignment of Illinois State Board of Education and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education standards with AAT degree models will be done by groups of community college and university faculty.
6. Early field experiences need to begin in the first two years of a future teacher’s preparation, regardless of whether a student begins at a community college or a university.
7. Community colleges should adopt a process for admission to AAT programs for purposes of advising and career development.
8. It will be critical that close communication is maintained between community college and university teacher education programs in order to provide smooth articulation and address problems as they arise. Each institution should formally identify a contact person to ensure that there is a clear pathway for this communication to occur.