A Final Test of education majors get a good view of a classroom career in some on-the-job training.

By CONNIE RUGGLES

Colleges of education throughout the country are turning out hundreds of certified teachers every year. But merely graduating education majors is not enough; these colleges must be able to guarantee that each of these teachers is qualified to do the job and do it well. Each college has its own formula for achieving this guarantee; some are more successful than others. At the University of Oklahoma the acid test of teacher preparedness is a program of on-the-job training called practice teaching.

The education major has already had 3½ years of concentrated classwork before entering this extended laboratory in which each prospective teacher takes part in actual classroom situations. After completion of a semester in the classroom, the student-teacher has had a taste of teaching and can decide whether to go into this career or chuck it all and sell insurance or keep house.

Yet, the decision on who will teach and who will not does not rest entirely with the individual student. Throughout the teacher training program detailed reports are compiled on each student, and from these reports the final evaluation is made.

"Not just any student can become a teacher," George McCutchan, coordinator of certification and placement, emphasizes. "The College of Education is not a place for someone who couldn't make the grade in another college."

Each student goes through a screening process during his course of study. He must be cleared by his academic dean, the dean of student affairs and his education adviser with reference to grades, discipline record and overall achievement. Such a report is vital to teacher evaluation since O.U.'s teacher training program differs somewhat from other systems in the state.

At other state colleges teachers are trained entirely within the colleges of education. For instance, each college of education has its own English teachers, history teachers, mathematics teachers, etc., outside the regular English, history and mathematics faculties. Such an arrangement makes it comparatively simple for the education faculty to evaluate each student's progress in his work, but it also necessitates costly duplication of courses and faculty.

At O.U., however, teacher training is a campus-wide project, especially for majors in secondary education (junior high and high school). These students take regular English courses in the English department, history courses in the history department, and mathematics courses in the mathematics department. To coordinate what could be a hodgepodge system, there are teacher education advisers in the various academic departments. For instance, if a student is working in the language arts (English) program, then his adviser is in the English department.

Elementary education students, on the other hand, follow a more limited course of study. They still take courses within the various departments, but many of those courses are specifically designed for teachers. Too, elementary majors have their advisers within the College of Education.

Each student receives his professional training within the College of Education, which offers courses for certification for all students in the teaching program as well as offering a range of courses for electives and for special interest or graduate study. Certification requires a 2.0 overall average.

By the time a student reaches his last semester and enrols in his
The kindergarten class at University School gives undivided attention to the story being told to them by O.U. student-teacher Linda Martin.

nine credit hours of practice teaching, he has had basic courses in the role of the school in American culture, psychology and curriculum planning and evaluation besides courses in his teaching field.

Elementary education majors have also studied the teaching of reading, speech, art and such things as library work and designing books and materials for children. They are assigned to teach full days for eight weeks. The other eight weeks of the semester are spent in classes on psychology, methods, demonstrations, illustrations and other tools that will help them become better teachers.

Secondary school teachers are usually assigned on a half-day basis for the full semester. They are allowed to schedule six hours of University classes for the half day when they are not practice teaching.

Student-teachers from O.U. are placed in Oklahoma City, Midwest City and Norman exclusively, thus keeping transportation problems to a minimum. The College of Education fills as many specific requests for teaching assignments as possible, and considerable assignment juggling takes place before the final list is made. Adjustments are made for students who must be on campus for required courses at a fixed hour or for similar schedule conflicts. However, the College makes no exception for students without cars. They must find their own transportation to their assigned schools, and they are expected to be there every day, on time, even if the University has a regularly scheduled vacation.

University vacations pose a real problem for student-teachers. During extended holidays such as spring vacation, the University

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Linda Martin might have her own opinion of the merit of this work of art, but she would have to give her pupil an "A" for serious effort.
the job of the student-teacher involves more than just sitting passively at the back of the classroom.