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Undergraduate Program Review

Education, BEd, MEd & PhD

Executive Summaries

The Undergraduate Program review for the Bachelor of Education was conducted in October 2010.

Dr. Jean Clandinin, University of Alberta and Dr. Jonathan Young, University of Manitoba were the external consultants and Dr. Lorna Irwin, Sociology Department, York University was the internal consultant.

The Graduate Program review for the MEd and PhD programs was conducted in April 2011. Dr. Sandra Weber, Concordia University and Dr. Anthony Pare, McGill University were the external consultants and Dr. David Murray, School of Women's Studies, York University was the internal consultant.

Following receipt of the unit and decanal responses to the consultants' reports, members of the Senate Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance met with the following program/Faculty representatives on January 9, 2012 to review progress toward implementing recommendations and opportunities for program enhancement:

Alice Pitt, Dean, Faculty of Education
Sandra Schecter, Graduate Program Director, Faculty of Education
Lyndon Martin, Undergraduate Program Director, Faculty of Education

Program strengths:

The reviewers identified many strengths of the programs as highlighted below:

Undergraduate:

- the close links with the community
- a complementary staffing model that connects the university with the profession

Graduate:

- a well-crafted and maintained curriculum
- positive collegial relations
- a healthy, progressive and thriving community of faculty, staff and students with a strong commitment to diversity and social justice
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Opportunities for program enhancement:

The key recommendations are summarized below:

Undergraduate:

- the concurrent program students require enhanced and prioritized



access to required and recommended disciplinary courses (offered by other Faculties) to satisfy content foundation for teaching subjects leading to intermediate/senior certification. To this end, an enhanced and more systematic means of ensuring concurrent students have access to disciplinary courses will be explored and measures toward this end need to be sustained.

- program coherence will be enhanced through new leadership and support roles. Regular exercises will include course-based curriculum reviews and efforts toward better coordination at and sharing resources between site offices.
- while the complementary staffing model is lauded as a significant strength, efforts toward better orienting and transitioning seconded faculty members will be prioritized and clearer means of communicating workload expectations (balancing teaching loads with service expectations while at the same time offering opportunities to participate in faculty-led research/scholarship) will be explored and implemented
- exploration will be undertaken into and relationships with alumni will be strengthened, particularly as it relates to broadening student exposure to and understanding of career paths beyond kindergarten to grade 12 within Ontario.
- Exploration of opportunities to expand e-learning is a further opportunity that warrants attention.

A final further priority for the Faculty involves integrated planning across the graduate and undergraduate programs.

Dean's Implementation Plans (2) -- attached

Rhonda Lenton, Vice-Provost Academic
November 2012



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EDUCATION

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Memo

To: Rhonda Lenton, Vice-Provost, Academic
From: Alice Pitt, Dean
Date: March 7, 2011
Subject: Faculty of Education Response to UPR Consultants

Please find attached the Faculty of Education's response to the external consultants' report submitted to you as part of our undergraduate program review. I have worked with the Ad Hoc Undergraduate Program Committee that was responsible for managing the undergraduate program review in the preparation of our response. There will be no need for a separate dean's response.

Should you have questions or need of further clarification, please let me know. The review has been of great benefit to the Faculty as we continue to strengthen our undergraduate programs.

cc: Don Dippo
Tove Fynbo
Jennifer Watt
Barbara Becksted

Faculty of Education Undergraduate Program Review Response
February 2011

On behalf of the Faculty of Education York University, the Dean and the Ad Hoc Undergraduate Program Committee would like to thank the UPR team for its time and its valuable insights into our programs. The UPR process in its current form is one that encourages productive reflective dialogue and self-critique in a safe and informed venue.

The input is timely as we face a number of pressures (enrollment and financial) and as we make the transition to a new Associate Dean and Practicum Coordinator.

Subsequent to the UPR site visit and the receipt of the UPR report, the Faculty has engaged in a number of informal meetings regarding the recommendations. Below please find a summary of our intentions with regard to each recommendation.

1. *We do suggest that future UPR reviews of the Faculty are done to facilitate communication between graduate and undergraduate reviewers. (page 3)*

This would be a valuable modification to the process. Such an adjustment is not within the purview of the Faculty itself; we will forward the recommendation to the Vice Provost.

2. **The students in the Faculty of Education who are undertaking a concurrent degree appear not to be given priority in required course selection from other Faculties. 22% of students responding to the Student Questionnaire reposted that they were unable to register in a required course in the year that they wished to. This could have the very real consequence of lengthening student programs and delaying graduation for students in the concurrent program. Any time this occurs, it is a serious concern. We recommend the University attend to this concern. (page 3)**

This exercise would be of significant benefit to Education students. To accomplish this increased level of communication a series of Dean-to-Dean conversations will be undertaken. We will also undertake a review of our internal list of required and recommended courses that satisfy the content foundations for the teaching subjects leading to intermediate/senior certification.

3. **The Faculty of Education undertook to obtain detailed survey results from their field partners, and these were very helpful to us. The survey was in addition to what was required for the University Program Review (UPR). We recommend that a similar survey become a regular feature of UPRs in professional faculties. (page 4)**

We agree to take this recommendation to Vice Provost for consideration.

4. *We recommend a more formalized way of enhancing program coherence through subcommittees of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee at each site and in each program. (Page 6)*

The Faculty is currently engaged in a review of the leadership and support roles and responsibilities in the Preservice Office. We have created three new Curriculum Lead positions. Tenure stream faculty members will assume these roles beginning in 2011-2012. Curriculum Leads will be responsible for reviewing course outlines annually and convening meetings of course directors to review courses, plan and share resources, discuss issues, etc. Additionally, the roles of all personnel within the Practicum Office are being reviewed and clarified. This is being done in consultation with the newly appointed Associate Dean.

5. *Of central importance to the effective operation of a complementary staffing model is a well-developed transition/orientation planning process for seconded faculty members, particularly in the consecutive program where student time in the program is so short. (page 6)*

We concur with this recommendation and are taking steps to ensure that improvements are made. Steps are being taken to clarify secondees job descriptions and to make time for a more comprehensive orientation to the Faculty. We will investigate the possibility of changing the terms of secondment appointments with school boards so that contracts run from July 1 - June 31 instead of a start date of Sept 1. This will enable the Faculty to schedule orientation activities in the summer before the beginning of the fall term and will allow new secondees to schedule their vacation time with these expectations in mind. For 2011-2012 appointments, we have added information about expectations for participation during the summer months prior to the current Sept. 1 start date. Additionally a series of orientation meetings will take place in the spring so that new secondees will have the opportunity to learn about Faculty processes and procedures. As well, it will afford them the opportunity to meet with colleagues, staff and school contacts.

6. *It would seem to us that (i) it would be useful to have a clearer statement of the normal seconded faculty workload expectations, and (ii) if there is not to be an explicit and substantial research/scholarship expectation, then some increase in seconded faculty teaching loads might be in order. While this might allow for some reduction in the programs' dependence on contract staff, we also think that it is important to sustain and strengthen the overall involvement of tenured faculty members in the Bachelor of Education programs. (page 6)*

Adjustments have been made that will increase secondee teaching load and reduce the load equivalent allocated to practicum supervision duties. Normal secondee teaching load is now 2.5 courses plus supervision of 25 teacher candidates. The change represents an additional .5 course to historical assignments. Additionally, job descriptions will more clearly indicate University service and professional responsibilities. We will endeavour to support seconded faculty members' research interests and to provide opportunities to participate in faculty led inquiry into teacher education and practicum supervision. (see #7 for further comment)

7. *(We recommend that the University Central Administration consult closely with, and support, the Dean and Associate Dean as they consider ways to increase the proportion of continuing, tenured faculty supporting the Bachelor of Education programs. This is of central concern if the faculty is to attempt to raise the current level of tenured faculty involvement in the Bachelor of Education programs. (page 7)*

This recommendation is being considered by the Dean with a view to achieving the optimal balance between graduate and pre-service teaching on the part of the tenure stream faculty and between their research and teaching commitments. The creation of Curriculum Lead positions serves to provide support for seconded faculty (as well as contract faculty) to participate effectively in university-based professional education. An ad hoc working group has also been struck by the Dean to develop, among other things, innovative ways to deliver core curriculum content across the pre-service (concurrent and consecutive) programs.

8. *We recommend that the Dean and Associate Dean continue to monitor any concerns about the accessibility of advisors during interview times. (page 8)*

The Associate Dean meets with OSP staff regularly to ensure that students receive adequate advising.

9. *The proposal, contained in the Faculty's self-study report, to give some priority to the concurrent program makes sense to us. In addition the suggestion made during our on-site interviews that some thought be given to initiatives that would prepare graduates to consider a broader range of career options than kindergarten to grade 12 teaching within Ontario seems appropriate. (page 8)*

We now offer or are developing a number of concurrent initiatives that broaden career opportunities. These include B.Ed. (French); B.Ed. (Technological Education); Indigenous Teacher Education (ITEP); Summer Science; and B.Ed (International). Alternative careers can be explored through the BEd program through the creation of an Other-Than-Boards Night where NGOs, arts organizations, businesses and industries, government departments,

etc. recruit B.Ed. graduates. A Faculty priority is to strengthen our relationship with our alumnae, many of whom have pursued careers beyond classroom teaching.

10. *It is not clear to us how the organization and on-going work of each site is maintained. We were unable to ascertain who was the main contact at each site for instructors and students to contact when needed, who called meetings and coordinated ongoing curriculum coherence at each site. (page 10)*

In future, the Faculty will more clearly identify a seconded faculty member whose primary teaching responsibilities are at the site and who takes on the coordinating role as Cohort/Site Lead. The explicit responsibilities of Site Lead (curriculum, program, safety, emergency, etc.) are being reviewed and clarified. As well, the Faculty will undertake to articulate clear expectations for all faculty members teaching at a site. Both tenured and seconded faculty members are expected to attend staff meetings called by the Site Lead.

11. *We would also suggest that with the possibility of hiring new tenure stream faculty that the Faculty considers building into their hiring plans at least one new faculty member with expertise, both scholarly and practical, in teacher education. (page 10)*

This suggestion will be considered as part of the Faculty's regular process for determining hiring priorities.

12. *We also see the possibility of developing other means to encourage tenure stream and tenured faculty as well as graduate students to expand their research agendas in teacher education . . . Working as a Faculty, the Dean could encourage faculty members to focus their research on the innovative practices in the Faculty and create internal forums for sharing their research and writing internally as they work to strengthen the national agenda in research in teacher education. (page 11)*

The Faculty of Education is proud of its historical and continued innovation in the field of teacher education. The Dean's Office will undertake to identify ways to encourage more faculty (tenured, seconded and contract) to become more active in researching and presenting in the field of teacher education. At the Dean's initiation, a study group on teacher education research and scholarship is in its second year. While membership in the group is fluid, over time we can expect that self-study and action research projects will emerge that will deepen interest in teacher education research and practice. The Dean is committed to supporting the development and dissemination of knowledge relating to our own programs and the wider field of teacher education. The ad hoc working group (see # 7 above) will develop research activities that situate and monitor the curricular and pedagogical interventions that are proposed under its leadership.

13. *At the UPR Faculty retreat this (more systematic oversight and support) was seen as a long term Faculty consideration that might see the creation of two leadership positions that would facilitate increased Faculty oversight and communication. The suggestion was that these positions could be divided either between (i) the consecutive and concurrent programs; (ii) practicum administration and course content; or, (iii) elementary and secondary programming. Given the size and complexity of the undergraduate programs this suggestion would seem to make good sense to us. (page 11)*

See point #4.

Alice Pitt
Dean, Faculty of Education &

Ad Hoc Undergraduate Program Committee

Don Dippo, Associate Dean, Pre-Service

Tove Fynbo, Coordinator, Ad Hoc Undergraduate Program Committee

Jennifer Watt, Practicum Coordinator

Barbara Becksted, Manager, Pre-Service Office

February 2011