

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

*The Graduate School
200 Gerberding Hall
Box 351240
Seattle, Washington 98195-1240*

*Telephone: (206) 543-5900
Fax: (206) 685-3234*

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To: Lee Huntsman
Provost

From: Marsha Landolt
Dean and Vice Provost



Re: 5-year review of the Education Program at UW-Bothell

Recommended Action:

At its meeting of December 3, 1998, the Graduate School Council recommended conversion of the MEd program at UW Bothell from provisional to continuing status. It is my distinct pleasure to concur with this recommendation. The review committee was extremely enthusiastic in their comments, particularly citing the originality of the program, the quality of the faculty, the dedication of the faculty to the program and its students, and the place of this program at the forefront of graduate education of teachers. UWB is to be commended on the outstanding success of this inaugural graduate program. The self-study, report of the review committee separate letters from the outside reviewers and the response of the program faculty are attached.

Background:

The MEd program at UWB was initiated in Autumn of 1992. The first time the three founding faculty met was in August of the same year. New students arrived just six weeks after the faculty's first meeting. The State of Washington seems to be unique in requiring new campuses to admit students to programs before the faculty have quite had a chance to consider just what to do with the students. In contrast, Christine Sleeter, one of the external reviewers of this program from California State at Monterey Bay, is the head of a new education program at that campus. She and her colleagues had two years to plan and prepare prior to the entry of the first student. She and the other external reviewer, Kathleen DeMarrais from Northern Arizona University, were amazed at the accomplishments of the UW Bothell education faculty. The combination of the success of the Bothell education program, and the enthusiasm of students and graduates is particularly worthy of high praise given the conditions under which it was developed.

At the exit interview and at the Graduate School Council meeting, several members of the review committee stated that they were skeptical at the outset of this review. They had anticipated that the large numbers of part time students (a ratio of 3/1 headcount/FTE, compared to 4/3 at UW Seattle), and the very large number of courses taught by individual faculty (one individual has taught 14 different courses in 4 years) would be reflected in a litany of complaints of lack of access to faculty, impersonal interactions and the usual problems of overburdened systems. They thought that the number of courses offered would lead to redundancy. At the end

the committee reported that they found a rigorous, innovative and non-traditional program that serves its students very well. Students and graduates were full of praise for the program, the way in which one course builds on the last, the accessibility of faculty and their enthusiasm in the classroom as well as in advising students during the course of their education including the projects required for the degree. The high degree of praise suggests that this can only be viewed as a model program.

Nevertheless, the rapid growth, severe demands on the faculty and ambitious FTE targets lead to several issues in need of attention.

1. It must be recognized that an FTE generated by 3 part-time students requires more infrastructure and faculty time than an FTE comprised of a single student. Each part-time student requires advising, repeated contact to ensure continuation with the program and campus resources. That this fact is ignored in state funding of the Bothell campus trades on the good will of the faculty to an extent that may be unprecedented even at the Seattle campus. The enthusiasm with which the faculty initially approached their tasks cannot be relied upon to continue without these issues being resolved. The strain it has placed on junior faculty is of particular concern and is addressed below. We hear of this problem when new programs are proposed from the Tacoma campus and suspect that WSU branch campuses have the problem as well.
2. Due in part to the original view of the independence of the new campuses, the education programs were established independently from one another. Both the review committee and the Graduate School Council thought that the lack of communication among what should be complimentary programs was detrimental. It is strongly recommended that ways be sought to enhance communication and a spirit of collaboration among complimentary programs across campuses. The UWB education program has entered into discussions with the Seattle College of Education to share expertise in quantitative methodology and to participate in one another's invited speaker programs. A Tools for Transformation proposal is to be developed to initially fund the effort. This effort should lead to specific goals for communication and collaboration and a plan for achieving them.
3. As the Bothell campus seeks to define its own culture, looking over its shoulder at its more established counterpart in Seattle, the junior faculty are uninformed and therefore confused as to what is expected to achieve tenure and promotion. They desire to be scholars in the traditional sense, but the demands placed on their time by rapidly developing programs, new physical plant and new hires preclude them from fully accomplishing this goal. The campus presently is engaged in a discussion of promotion and tenure criteria. However, much could be done to improve the morale of the junior faculty in this specific program if the senior faculty initiated their own discussion of what they will support as a record that deserves tenure.

The review committee recommends the Boyer model, with consideration that the template for promotion evaluation be allowed to mature over time just as the campus will. The scholarship that the faculty have brought both to the design of this innovative program and to the classroom itself deserves recognition at the time of the tenure decision. This view was strongly endorsed by the Graduate School Council.

The Bothell campus should confidently continue to define the appropriate mix of teaching, research and scholarship for its faculty. The outstanding success of this program in the eyes of its students, local school districts and the reviewers demonstrates that the culture

developing at this campus is successful.

4. This program has been able to attract very capable faculty. They are characterized by their imagination, energy, productivity and dedication. However, the campus faces a considerable test in attracting people of the caliber it has so far been able to recruit. New faculty need the opportunity to develop an identity outside their university. To be secure in their profession, they need to be able to develop the sort of record that will make them desirable members of the faculty at other universities. Professional security, in part, comes from demonstrating that one is good enough to leave one's current university. If the faculty at UWB cannot, through lack of time and resources, make themselves visible to the outside professional world through their scholarship, they will not establish such a record. Failure to do so is likely to erode morale and greatly diminish the likelihood of continuing to attract the fine caliber of faculty that so far have accepted positions at UWB and specifically in this program. Attention to this issue cannot be delayed.
5. The review committee is of the opinion, and the program appears to agree, that the need for the development of new courses is substantially abating. This should allow more time for the faculty to provide scholarly evidence to the community of the innovation they have designed into their programs and classes.

Enclosures

c: Stanley Slater, Acting Chancellor, UW-Bothell
Allan Wood, Associate Dean, UW-Bothell
Kathleen Martin, Director, Bothell Education Program
Debra Friedman, Associate Provost for Academic Planning
John Slattery, Associate Dean for Academic Programs, Graduate School
Graduate School Council
Review Committee
Augustine McCaffery, Assistant to the Dean
Linda Richter, Assistant to the Vice Provost