

**TO:** Claire Cavallaro, Dean, College of Education  
**FROM:** John L. Hoffman, Chair, Department of Educational Leadership  
**DATE:** May 17, 2016  
**RE:** Department Chair Response to the PPR Self-Study and Extern Review Report

### **Process Overview**

During the 2015-2016 academic school year, the higher education faculty within the Department of Educational Leadership conducted a comprehensive self-study following the guidelines laid out in UPS 410.200. In early April, the final self-study document was sent to the following three individuals who had been approved as members for the external review team:

- Dr. Alex Jun, Professor of Higher Education, Azusa Pacific University
- Dr. William Vega, Distinguished Faculty in Residence, California State University, Long Beach
- Dr. Jennifer Yee, Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies, California State University, Fullerton

On April 20, 2016, the review team conducted a 10-hour site visit at Cal State Fullerton. Site visit activities included separate interviews with the higher education faculty, current students in the Master of Science, Higher Education (MSHE) emphasis, current students in the Community College Leadership specialization of the Ed.D., alumni of both programs, and the department chair. The site team additionally reviewed a range of program documents and materials. Following their site visit, the review team completed their evaluation, which they submitted on May 2, 2016. In what follows, I summarize key findings and recommendations, and I present my response.

### **Strengths**

The external review team identified the higher education faculty as the program's primary strength. More specifically, they identified following five characteristics of the faculty as key strengths: (a) social justice orientation, (b) responsiveness to student learning, (c) hard-working, (d) innovativeness, and (e) approachability.

I additionally commend the faculty for their practices related to ongoing, continuous improvement. For both the MSHE program and the Community College Specialization of the Ed.D., faculty routinely collect multiple forms of quantitative and qualitative data related to student learning, student satisfaction, student progress, and degree completion (including time-to-degree for Ed.D. students). These data are disaggregated by gender and race and reviewed through regular program and department meetings as well as during an annual faculty retreat. The program further was able to identify multiple examples of having used data to inform changes in practice that led to measured improvements in program performance.

In order to maintain programmatic strength, the external review team recommended that the faculty continue to focus on (a) faculty development, (b) access, equity, and opportunity, and (c) evidence-based student development. I would expand upon the latter recommendation noting the importance of continued routine collection, analysis, interpretation, and use of assessment and program performance data to improve program quality. Additionally, the external review team noted a shift in organizational development from initiation and establishment phases to the phases of growth and

maturation within an organizational life cycle<sup>1</sup>. Thus, the faculty will need to monitor the balance of human and fiscal resources to ensure that current program quality is maintained and enhanced while faculty also continue to pursue new and innovative endeavors.

### Challenges

The external review team identified three challenges facing the higher education programs: (a) faculty workload, (b) revenues and resources, and (c) program growth and sustainability. For each area of concern, the external review team provided recommendations. I will respond to each separately.

**Faculty workload.** In addressing faculty workload, the external review team first noted the restructuring of dissertation loads that occurred beginning in the 2014-2015 academic year. As context, the Ed.D. originally provided faculty with 2.0 WTUs per student per term for as many terms as the student required to complete a dissertation. For students who completed in three terms (typical), faculty members received a total of 6.0 WTUs; however, some students required in excess of six terms (12.0 WTUs) to finish. Facing projected budgetary shortfalls of nearly \$250,000, faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership proactively agreed to restructure this load to 1.0 WTU per student per term with a cap of three terms (3.0 WTU) beginning in 2014-2015. Though this new load is still equivalent to the most generous dissertation advising load within the CSU system, it has had a significant impact on a number of faculty. Speaking to this, the external review team noted the following:

*The prior formula for compensation allowed faculty to engage in “unarticulated” work, e.g. innovations, program, curriculum and partnership development, maintenance of considerable annual program responsibilities including recruitment, admissions and assess, follow-up with mentoring alumni in evolving careers, travel, risk management, paperwork, travel, etc. Articulating this “hidden” faculty work could provide the basis for compensation structures that allow for the sustainability of the faculty’s high-quality, high-touch efforts to mentor and advise students from recruitment through their career evolution.*

I emphatically agree with the assessment of the external review team that the higher education faculty are hard-working. To a person, they devote considerably more time and effort to their jobs than what is required according to their contracts. That being said, the allocation of duties does not reflect well the allocations of service units (3.0 WTU per term for tenured and tenure-track faculty; 0.0 WTU for lecturers) and release units for graduate advising and support (3.0 WTU per term for Ed.D. advising, 3.0 WTU per term for recruitment, and 3.0 WTU per term for MSHE advising). Higher education faculty will need to revisit the distribution and allocation of units and/or the distribution and allocation of “unarticulated work” in order to ensure a better balance between ongoing program growth and innovation with continued program maintenance and quality assurance.

Among the additional recommendations provided by the external review team were two recommendations related to staffing and infrastructure. Staffing in the Department of Educational Leadership (one full-time SSP II, one full-time ASC I, graduate students, and student workers – hereafter “staff”) is currently the most generous within the College of Education. Additional support is available from C-REAL, which is subsidized by funding from the Ed.D. program. It is unlikely that the resources necessary to expand staffing support will be available within the foreseeable future. That being said, the Department has not afforded sufficient attention to supporting its current staffing or to ensuring that they work in an organized and efficient manner, especially within the last calendar year. This in no small

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<sup>1</sup> This is a reference to one of a number of organizational life cycle theories. See for example Kimberly, J., & Miles, R. (1980). *The organizational life cycle*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

way reflects significant over-reaches by the Department within the past year related to (a) accreditation, (b) program performance review, and (c) multiple grant and contracted projects. The first two of these should not demand as much time from faculty in the next several years. In terms of grant-writing and contracted projects, the Department needs to develop a strategic plan to guide the prioritization of these projects. Additionally, future grants will need to provide greater fiscal support for staffing to ensure that grants do not encroach upon the work of Department staff. Lastly, as noted by the external review team, the Department and higher education faculty would benefit in significant ways from greater attention by the University to making data available to graduate programs as they are for undergraduate programs (e.g. the advising dashboard). Currently, a disproportionate amount of time is allocated to manually transferring data from University systems into multiple datasets managed within the Department in order to analyze and disaggregate data for the purpose of data-informed planning and decision-making.

**Resources and revenues.** The external review team recommended that, to the degree possible, “the [Department/higher education] faculty retain oversight and allocation of the full revenue generated by the Ed.D. program.” They further noted that this will enable faculty to “support CSUF’s Strategic Plan, contribute to the health of the College of Education, and reinvest in their programs.” As context, the Ed.D. program currently serves as an independent cost center that both retains all fee and marginal cost revenues while paying for the full expenses of the program (including faculty salaries and benefits). This process requires greater attention to budget management and forecasting, but also allows for flexibility necessary for the development and delivery of a high-quality doctoral program. The Department anticipates that the University will “baseline” faculty salaries from the Ed.D. in order to secure greater fiscal support from the state. This process will require the University to establish ongoing operating expenses and equipment (OE&E) budget for the program. Whereas this move will help to maximize the level of subsidy to Cal State Fullerton from the CSU System, it presents two potential threats.

- External to the Department, there is a risk that future OE&E budgets may be cut or managed in a manner that does not reflect the cyclical expenses faced by the Ed.D. program. For example, during the typical four-year cycle of a doctoral cohort, the Ed.D. is more profitable in years two and four than in years one and three. This is because new cohorts begin during the second of three budgetary terms in their first year (thus reducing revenues), and a larger portion of units are allocated to dissertations during the third year (thus increasing instructional costs). As Department faculty have already proactively taken significant steps to enact cuts resulting in nearly \$250,000 in savings, further cuts or limits would have a negative impact on faculty morale and productivity.
- Baseline OE&E budgets can serve to remove recruitment and retention incentives. Under the current budget model, strong recruitment and retention efforts over the coming years could lead to restoring funding to strategically support faculty and student research and travel. Under a baselined model, it is possible that strong recruitment and retention outcomes would not lead to increased OE&E budgets and that poor recruitment and retention outcomes would not lead to decreased OE&E budgets.

In light of these concerns, I believe it is imperative that any future budgetary model retains incentives for recruitment and retention outcomes. Further, consistent with recommendations in the prior section, I recommend that faculty be given sufficient latitude to more strategically manage their workload. In support of this, note that the external review team stated the following: “To manage faculty workload, faculty need to determine who, when, and how they will allocate resources to maintain program responsibilities, initiate projects, and support program innovations.”

**Program growth and sustainability.** The external review team provided a number of more specific recommendations related to program growth and sustainability. I highlight three of these that I believe align well with the self-study and within current planning efforts within the Department.

- The external review team recommended the establishment of consistent protocols for communication between faculty, staff, and students as well as with external areas such as the Office of Graduate Studies and the Division of Student Affairs. In response, I note that the Department of Educational Leadership made a number of revisions to the job description of the Student Affairs Advisor (SSP II staff) for the Department of Educational Leadership. In short, these changes will increase the authority of the Student Affairs Advisor to work as a partner with faculty and in a manner that retains greater responsibility as related to student advising and cocurricular educational programming. The revised job description should also help to lessen some of the advising and cocurricular planning load carried by faculty.
- Though students raised few concerns regarding the programs' curricula, students in the MSHE program requested greater attention to "applying law (e.g., Title IX), budgets, finance, economics, [and] grant-writing" as well as to "understanding the job search and preparing them for the work of work (e.g. resume development, cover letters, interview preparation, job negotiation and timelines, etc.)." In response, the *EDAD 503: Organizational Leadership* course was revised in Fall 2015 to give greater attention to legal and fiscal matters. Even greater attention to these matters may be warranted in years to come. As for questions about job search processes and transitioning into careers as new professionals, this should be central to the content of *EDAD 595: Professional Development Seminar*. Greater attention to preparing students for job searches and career transitions in this course may be warranted.
- Lastly, the external review team reported that alumni of both higher education programs were quite interested in being more involved with the program. The review team provided a series of excellent recommendations related to this. Seeing as the Department of Educational Leadership has set alumni tracking and development as a goal for 2016-2017, I strongly support these recommendations from the external review team.

### **Summary of Priority Recommendations**

In summary, I recommend that the higher education programs within the Department of Educational Leadership include the following as strategic priorities in their ongoing Departmental planning efforts.

1. Higher education faculty should strategically assess and—if necessary—re-allocate service and release units and/or redistribute workload duties. Higher education faculty should consider the timing of this effort to fit with onboarding efforts with a new Student Affairs Adviser slated for hire during the upcoming months.
2. P-12 and higher education faculty should jointly assess systems and processes related to distribution of work among the students, graduate assistant(s), and the administrative services coordinator for the Department. Any resulting revisions should be articulated in job descriptions.
3. P-12 and higher education faculty should work together to establish a strategic plan for grant-writing that serves to prioritize collaborative endeavors as well as those that align with the strategic plans of the College of Education and the University.

4. Higher education faculty—in collaboration with P-12 faculty—should set clear goals for alumni development. These should begin with generating a current database of alumni contact information, and then should quickly follow with intentional outreach efforts aimed to make greater use of alumni through a variety of curricular and cocurricular efforts.
5. The Department Chair should continue to negotiate for changes in University infrastructure systems to ensure more comprehensive and efficient access to data for the purposes of assessment and continuous, ongoing improvement.