



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

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To: Su Swarat, Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness

From: Claire Cavallaro, Dean, College of Education

Subject: Program Performance Review: Higher Education Programs in Department of Educational Leadership

I am pleased to submit the Dean's response to the Program Performance Review of the Department of Educational Leadership programs in higher education: the Community College Specialization of the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) program and the Master of Science in Education, Higher Education Emphasis (MSHE). Following a comprehensive self-study by the faculty, an external review team including two faculty members external to CSUF, visited campus and met with students, faculty and alumni, and submitted a report dated April 2016. My response reflects on the faculty self-study, the external review team report, and the response by the Department chair, Dr. John Hoffman, dated May 17, 2016. I have shared this memo to the Department Chair, Dr. John Hoffman and discussed it with him and the incoming Dean, Dr. Lisa Kirtman.

I would like to thank the faculty for their detailed and thoughtful report; the review team for their assessment of strengths and challenges, and their recommendations; and Dr. Hoffman for his careful analysis and recommendations that help to provide a complete picture of the program context, strengths and challenges.

Summary of Findings

The review covers the period of 2008-2015. Both programs – the Community College specialization of the Ed.D. and MSHE - launched in 2008-09 and thus this is their first review. The Ed.D. program is designed to prepare educators for senior leadership roles in community colleges. Consistent with CSU policy (Executive Order 991), this 60-unit, cohort-based program is intended to be completed in three years including summers. The MSHE program is a 60-unit Master's degree program designed to prepare entry-level professionals for professional roles that support student learning and development in higher education settings. Also a cohort-based program, it is designed to be completed in two years including summers. The self-study provides a clear description of each program's mission and goals, enrollment, structure, and assessment of student learning outcomes.

Student demand for both the doctoral and master's programs has been strong since the programs' inception, with some fluctuation in enrollments from year to year. The doctoral

program enrollment target is 20 students per cohort, which has been met 50% of the time. Enrollment in the master's degree program has averaged 38 students per cohort, which includes double cohorts (i.e., two sections) in 2010, 2011, and 2012; starting in 2013 the faculty decided to reduce the enrollment to a single cohort in an effort to improve graduation rates. It is notable that demand for the program has continued to grow, and the admission rate has steadily declined from 61.8% accepted in 2009 to 30.1% in 2015 (excluding the Shanghai cohort). The SFR in the MSHE program has fluctuated but faculty indicate a commitment to managing enrollment to achieve and maintain the program's target SFR at 18:1. Both programs have a very diverse student body and high graduation rates (83.9% overall for MSHE and 71% overall with 63% defending in three years for Ed.D.) and with no statistically significant differences by gender or ethnicity.

Prior to the launch of these two programs, the College of Education lacked faculty with the requisite experience and expertise in higher education and community college leadership. Currently, the department has seven full-time faculty members with this expertise: three tenured, one tenure track, and three full-time lecturers. An additional tenure track faculty member has been hired to start in fall 2016, replacing one full-time lecturer.

Strengths

I concur with the external review team and department chair in finding that the quality of the faculty is a major program strength. The external team commended faculty for their social justice orientation, responsiveness to student learning, work ethic, innovativeness, and approachability. An additional strength identified by the department chair is the faculty's practices related to ongoing, continuous improvement. I join Dr. Hoffman in commending the faculty for their use of data to make several program changes that have led to improvements in program performance. Doctoral student survey data also suggest that the cohort model is a strength of the program.

Challenges

The review team identified three areas of challenge, which are addressed and discussed in the department chair's report: a) faculty workload, b) revenues and resources, and c) program growth and sustainability.

Faculty workload. The external review team report concludes that the faculty undertake many extra activities outside the normal scope of teaching, research, and service. The department chair's response provides a detailed discussion of faculty workload and notes that: a) even following the 2014-15 restructuring of dissertation loads, the allocation of units for dissertation advising is the most generous in the CSU; b) workload units are allocated to graduate advising and support in each of the higher education programs; c) the department has two full-time staff members plus graduate assistants and student assistants (the most generous in the College). I would add that faculty reassigned time for advisement and

coordination is also the most generous in the College and among the most generous in the University.

I concur with the review team and chair in noting that currently university data systems do not provide the same level of data analysis to graduate programs as undergraduate programs, creating extra work demands for the department. This is an issue that needs to be addressed centrally at the University level.

I join the review team and department chair in commending the faculty for their work ethic and commitment to their students and communities. Recognizing that it is very unlikely that additional resources will become available in the near future, I encourage the faculty to reflect carefully on their goals and priorities, particularly as related to “extra activities” that fall outside faculty’s regular responsibilities for teaching, scholarship and service. Furthermore, while entrepreneurial activities and grant writing are encouraged, these activities at the discretion of faculty and should be considered within the context of overall program, department, and individual professional goals. Finally, as suggested in the department chair’s response, it appears that it would be helpful for the department to review reassigned time for recruitment and advisement, as well as the organization of staff assignments to help manage faculty workloads while assuring a high level of service to students.

Revenues/resources. The review team report accurately states that the Ed.D. program retains the full revenue generated by student enrollment including student fees and State funds (marginal costs). This revenue supports the salary and benefits of the Ed.D. faculty and department staff, as well as operating expenses directly related to this program (e.g., materials, supplies, travel). The only exceptions are Ed.D. funds that are used to support COE faculty travel, the Center for Research on Educational Access and Leadership (C-REAL) , student fee waivers for Ed.D students who are eligible CSU employees or employee dependents, and (not mentioned by the review team or department chair), and funds to the library. The costs for faculty travel (approximately \$60,000 per year) and the library (\$20,000 per years) are actually minimal in the context of the benefit that the program derives from being exempt from contributing to the overall operational costs of the university. The support to C-REAL was established initially to support the development of a research culture in the College of Education, however at this point I strongly recommend that a plan be developed to make C-REAL self-sustaining in the next three years. Fee waivers serve the professional development needs of the University and the CSU system. The fact that currently, the Ed.D. program retains the full marginal cost revenue makes it feasible for the fee waivers to be deducted from the Ed.D. budget without drawing upon student fee revenues. If at some point the program does not continue to retain the full marginal cost revenues, it will not be possible to cover the fee waivers without compromising the quality of the program and services to students.

The department chair’s response provides a clear and accurate description of the resource and revenue model, changes currently being contemplated by University administration (i.e., to “baseline” faculty salaries), and the potential threats that could be

created in the process. Two concerns identified by the department chair should be a high priority in the consideration of any changes to the budget model: 1) the need to recognize the cyclical nature of the Ed.D. program enrollment, which creates a much heavier unit demand (and concomitant resource implications) in the third and fourth years of a cohort; and 2) the need to maintain a budget model that rewards student recruitment and retention.

The College of Education has traditionally used a decentralized model for fiscal management, giving departments considerable autonomy in determining how to allocate faculty workload and other resources. Each department is given a budget allocation that is based on enrollment and revenues generated through other sources such as course fees and University Extended Education activities. Thus, the department faculty already have the latitude to strategically manage their workload, and I recommend that they work together to develop a planning process that will enable them to do so effectively, within constraints of the College and University budgets.

Program growth/sustainability. As noted by the review team, the higher education programs have earned “an excellent reputation for graduating students who are very well prepared to provide quality leadership within our local postsecondary institutions.” I support the review team’s recommendation for involving alumni in support of recruitment efforts. The department chair’s response highlights three specific recommendations that are well aligned with the self-study and with current department plans. I fully support the department chair’s recommendations in this section, related to 1) establishing consistent protocols for communication between students, faculty, staff, and external offices; 2) refinements and adjustments to the curriculum of the MSHE program; and 3) greater attention to alumni tracking and development.

Summary

The faculty are to be congratulated on a successful program review that highlights their dedication and excellence. I heartily concur with this finding and thank the faculty for their energy, passion, and commitment to their students and to College and University strategic priorities including those related to just, equitable and inclusive education. I congratulate the faculty on the excellence of these graduate programs, which have an extraordinary record of success in recruiting and graduating a highly diverse student body.

The review team made wide-ranging recommendations related to faculty workload, revenues/resources, and program growth/sustainability, and I thank the team for its careful consideration of each of these areas. I believe that the faculty and department chair will find many of these recommendations useful in reflection and planning for the future. The department chair’s summary of priority recommendations reflects those identified by the team and provides a focus on those recommendations that are both of immediate concern and feasible/actionable in the current context. I encourage the department to follow the department chair’s lead in focusing on these priorities.

Finally, with the understanding that the immediate future (2016-17) will see new leadership in the College of Education and in Academic Affairs, I strongly endorse the department chair's recommendations related to the budget model and the need for more comprehensive and efficient access to data for the purposes of assessment and program improvement.

cc. Lisa Kirtman, incoming Dean, College of Education
John Hoffman, Chair, Department of Educational Leadership and Director, Ed.D. Program
Teresa Crawford, COE Director of Assessment and Accreditation