

Date: July 15, 2014

To: Su Swarat, Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness

From: Claire Cavallaro, Dean, College of Education

Subject: Program Performance Review: MSIDT

I am pleased to submit the Dean's response to the Program Performance Review of the Master of Science in Instructional Design and Technology (MSIDT) program, dated August 25, 2013 and the Team Response, which I received in May 2014. The review covers the period of 2007-08 through 2011-12. The PPR process was somewhat delayed by changes in personnel and other factors. Please note also that the founding Director, Dr. JoAnn Carter-Wells is ending her FERP assignment this summer and I have appointed Dr. Cynthia Gautreau as Director for the 2014-15 academic year.

MSIDT is a cohort-based Master's degree program that is offered in five 16-week special terms, with minimal breaks between terms, enabling students to complete the degree in approximately 20 months. Since its inception, the program has accepted a new cohort of students each fall (with the goal of 25 new students per cohort), and therefore it has two cohorts (approximately 40 to 50 students) enrolled at any point in time. The enrollment ranged from 16 to 22, with a mean of 18.2 full-time equivalent (FTES) students per academic year during the five-year period from 2007-2012 and has not changed significantly since then.

I would like to thank Dr. Carter-Wells and the entire MSIDT faculty team for preparing a detailed report on the program, and for their dedication to building this unique, high quality program. Overall, the Review Team report provides an accurate appraisal of the program, and I thank the Team for the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of their review. The MSIDT program, which was established in 2002 as the first fully online program at CSUF, has maintained and improved a strong design that incorporates several innovative features including Boot-Up Camp, Midpoint Symposium and Cohort Co-Captains. These features and others facilitate the development of a cohesive community of learners that is maintained after graduation with through a connection with the MSIDT Alumni Association. As noted in the review, the program has attained a national reputation and was ranked in the top three programs by one source.

I. Program Mission, Goals and Environment

This section of the report addresses primarily the role of the Director and the adequacy of the reassigned time for this position. I concur with the recommendation that the Director should be compensated for work in the summer. While Dr. Carter-Wells was in her FERP position, she was not able to take compensation during the summer but this should not be an issue in the future.

The PPR report discusses the role of the program Director as it was conceived and enacted by the founding Director. The team accurately notes that the Director gave very generously of her time. The team recommends 1) uncompensated time should not be the expectation in the future, and 2) the "College of Education should investigate the relationship between the work of the Director and the assigned time granted this position to see if the assigned time is adequate."

I greatly appreciate the dedication and extraordinary commitment that Dr. Carter-Wells displayed during her tenure as Director. However, I would not expect that future program Directors would give so generously of their time and therefore, I concur with the review team's first recommendation. I have given the new Director a set of basic expectations that are outlined in her letter of appointment (attached).

Any decision to grant additional reassigned time to the Director would need to be made within the context of the size of the program and resources available to support it. As noted on the previous page, the average size of the MSIDT program enrollment over the five year period of review was 18.8 full-time equivalent students. This generates an allocation of less than one full-time faculty position, using the Student Faculty Ratio (SFR) currently in place for the program. It simply would not be feasible to give additional reassigned time to the Director, except in unusual circumstances, such as transition of a new faculty member into the Director role.

My expectation is that the new Director (and those who may succeed her) work in collaboration with the faculty and with the Dean to identify ways to achieve these expectations within the course release time that is available. For example, the PPR report identifies leading research projects as one of the Program Director's responsibilities. This is a worthy endeavor, but it falls under the domain of scholarly and creative activity, and I would not identify it as a responsibility of the program Director. The MSIDT team may wish to rotate the leadership of research projects that they undertake collaboratively, as is the norm with most research groups.

The MSIDT program is of value to the University and the College, and the College will continue to assure that appropriate resources are available to support it. The workload of the Director and roles of faculty must be defined in a manner that is sustainable given the resources that can be allocated to it.

II. Documentation of Student Academic Achievement/Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

I appreciate the detailed PPR report, as well as the Review Team's careful review of the curriculum and student learning outcomes. The faculty team has responded adequately to each of the concerns raised, and I would recommend that they continue to discuss the issues that were raised, including alternative/more contemporary texts, more extensive treatment of statistics, expanded use of new media formats, and authentication. The PPR document prepared by the Program Director includes an extensive Assessment Plan and Timeline. I look forward to implementation and refinement of this plan as part of a cycle of ongoing program improvement.

III. Faculty

Cal State Fullerton aims to recruit and retain a high quality and diverse faculty and staff, and this goal applies to the MSIDT program as it does to all College of Education programs. Academic background and experience should also be diversified, and so I agree with the Review Team's recommendation that the program recruit additional faculty with diverse academic preparation.

The MSIDT PPR Report by Dr. Carter-Wells notes that, "Our current budget plan is adequate including online course fees, special fees under EO857...and campus miscellaneous course fees" (pp. 23-24). Faculty who teach in the MSIDT program benefit from resources that are not typically available to faculty. These resources are provided through special fees that MSIDT students pay. The Program Orientation fee (Executive Order 857, 944) provides funding for faculty participation in the orientation and midpoint symposia, as well as student housing, meals, and materials. The Distance Learning Fees (Executive Order 944) provide funding for special hardware, software, technical support, and specialized training for faculty and staff. Fee revenues in 2011-12 included the following:

MSIDT Online Distance Fee	\$21,462
MSIDT Orientation Program Fee	\$11,385
MSIDT Symposium Fee	\$7,524
Total, MSIDT Student Fee Revenue	\$40,371

From these fee revenues, MSIDT faculty members have received computer upgrades, current software, and support for travel to participate in professional development. There is nothing to preclude use of these fees for part-time faculty, and in fact the MSIDT program has recently supported the travel of part-time faculty.

The report is accurate in stating that participation in the MSIDT program involves some activity and service that is outside the home departments of full-time faculty. However, contrary to the Review Team's conclusion, MSIDT faculty members receive additional compensation for participation in some activities including the Boot-Up Camp and Midpoint Symposium. Other MSIDT activities such as meetings and retreats may be considered University service, or may be part of faculty scholarship as this team works on collaborative research. In addition, I recommend that the new director and the faculty team carefully consider the way that they structure their meetings and organize their work, to determine whether there are more efficient ways of operating the program with resources that are currently available.

IV. Student/Alumni Support

It is important to assure that students have support that they need, to learn new software and for other technology needs. I believe that program faculty are aware of this need and address it with assistance from the IT division.

The Alumni Association is bound to protect the privacy of its members, as required by federal law. Faculty work with the Alumni Association to assure facilitate student and alumni understanding of the benefits and appropriate role of the Alumni Association.

V. Long-term Plans

The five-year plan described in the PPR document identifies the following goals: offer a 9-unit certificate on mobile learning; explore development of a doctoral program in IDT; nurture sites with employers for professional projects; continue to analyze the effectiveness of the boot up and midpoint and refine each year; and coffer multiple executive/professional certificates.

The Review Team identifies an additional goal, to increase the number of Master's degree cohorts to two per year. I concur that this is an important goal, and in fact I believe that this goal must be addressed prior to any others.

I have encouraged the program to take steps necessary for program expansion. The College of Education supports funding of promotional materials and advertising, though on a modest scale, and this has been offered to MSIDT as well as other programs. MSIDT has been featured in promotional materials such as the Impact newsletter that is emailed to more than 6,000 individuals three times each year, as well as in annual advertisements in the program of Computer Using Educators (CUE) and other publications. While these publications target a more general audience, we could advertise in specialized publications or websites if the program would make a specific request, within a budget that can be accommodated.

Due to the unique interdisciplinary nature of MSIDT, program growth depends not just on increased enrollment, but on a strategy for building the capacity of the faculty. As in any graduate program, students should be exposed to diverse faculty with different specialized expertise and varying points of view, and it would be unwise to engage in a hiring pattern that would require students to take all coursework with just one or two or three faculty members. Therefore, I urge the new director and the faculty team to carefully plan a strategy that would support program growth. Contingent upon development of such a plan, and a clear indication that sufficient enrollment growth is imminent, the College will seek to launch a search for a new tenure track faculty member to teach in the MSIDT program.

A final consideration for the long-term success and growth of the program is its administrative structure. The Review Team in several places notes that the challenges associated with operating such a small program and the demands placed on the director. Even if the program expands to two cohorts per year (doubling its FTES from approximately 19 to 38, and faculty allocation from 1 FTE to 2 FTE faculty), the size will not justify the resources needed to establish a new department. Therefore, the new director and the faculty team are encouraged to reflect on their needs as a program, and to give consideration to the possibility of affiliating with an academic department. Such an arrangement could free the Director from some administrative tasks and allow more focus on the instructional program and students. At least two departments in the College (Reading and Educational Leadership) have programs that focus explicitly on adult learners, and others have strengths in educational technology. Of course such a decision would require careful consideration, consultation, and planning to assure that the strength and identity of the degree program would be maintained.

The MSIDT faculty team – and the University - were fortunate to have in Dr. Carter-Wells a visionary and dedicated leader, who gave very generously of her time and expertise to develop the program into the outstanding model that it is today. In the coming years, the team will be challenged to maintain program excellence, while ushering the program into the next phase of its development. Each leader brings different perspectives and different strengths, and therefore this will be an opportunity for new program leadership and faculty to consider different ways of operating, while honoring the past and continuing strong traditions that have proven to be effective.