

**PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION UNIT QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE – YEAR TWELVE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2015**

Members Present:

Laura Aboyan, Office of Assessment
Katie Barber, Richland School District 2
Mary Anne Byrnes, Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Wendee Evering, Richland School District 2
Zach Kelehear, Associate Dean Academic Affairs
Carrie Linder, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
Lisa McAlpine, Richland School District 2
Jim Mensch, PEAT Representative
Nicole Spensley, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
Doyle Stevick, EDLP Representative

Program Representatives:

Ed Cox, EdS Ed Administration
Joe Flora, MEd Ed Administration
Peter Moyi, PhD Ed Administration
Phil Young, EDLP Department Chair

I. Call Meeting to order

In Dr. Greer's absence, Ms. Aboyan called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

II. Introductions, Overview of Meeting, and Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the January 2015 meeting were unanimously approved.

III. Review of the MEd, EdS, and PhD in Educational Administration

Dr. Flora gave a brief overview of the MEd program. There are three trends that have contributed to recent changes within the program. In the past 18 months, the MEd has worked with Academic Partnerships to recruit and enroll new students. Through this partnership, there have been approximately 100 new students enrolled each year. The program has also increased its use of technology. The MEd is now available fully online through Blackboard and Adobe Connect, which allows them to reach students across the state. Professors are working to make the online experience as personal as possible through lectures and discussions and interaction between students. Finally, new standards for accreditation have allowed the program to reevaluate their key assessments. In the SPA review in 2014, the MEd was nationally recognized with conditions. The program will address those conditions by collecting additional assessment data and making a few minor adjustments to the key assessments over the next year. Additionally, the new standards hold program graduates to a higher level of preparedness, which will likely prompt further changes within the program. The new standards specify that program graduates must have the skills to become principals immediately following graduation, and the burden is on the program to demonstrate it is providing ongoing leadership skill practice for current students. The program has already begun to address this by implementing changes to the practicum experiences. The program is moving from a model designed for observing, shadowing, and interning to a model where students are actively participating in and performing leadership tasks within the schools.

Dr. Barber asked how the program determined which tasks needed to be included in the practica so graduates would be more prepared to enter the field. Dr. Flora said that the process centered on school improvement. Working with their mentors, students determine what specific tasks need to be completed

to address issues of school improvement in their specific school. Mentors must be licensed principals or assistant principals, and are often administrators in the students' school.

Dr. Mensch about the challenges the program is facing in accurately assessing students because of the dramatic increase in enrollments. Dr. Flora said the program is revising assignments and assessments to be more efficient. He said the program will need to evaluate staffing issues within the next few years as well, in order to address the capacity issues they currently face. Dr. Mensch asked how the increase in enrollment would impact the program's ability to track graduates. Dr. Flora said this is an area they needed to work on even before the increase in enrollments because the response rates on current survey instruments are very low. He also said that some graduates are not fully committed to a career in administration. Some are only pursuing the MEd in order to increase their pay or as a way to have more options later in their careers. Dr. Flora said that in some cases this is beneficial. Teachers who also have the perspective of an administrator benefits the overall health of the school district.

Dr. Mensch asked how the quality of the practica are ensured. Dr. Flora said the program is experimenting with new practices because of the increase in enrollment. Previously, the course instructor had overseen the process and hired supervisors. Now the program wants mentors to be supervisors, because only the mentor has continuous exposure to the student. The program plans to compare the new model to the older system to see which is most effective. The quality of sites varies because students are typically placed at the school where they work.

Dr. Byrnes asked about the difference between the MEd and the EdS. Dr. Cox said that the MEd is for those who wish to become school principals, while the EdS is for those who wish to become district superintendents. The MEd feeds into the EdS program. In both programs, students are required to have practicum experience in multiple types of schools and at different levels. Dr. Stevick asked if there was any tension between summative and formative assessment levels. Dr. Flora said there is not, as they are currently integrated.

Dr. Cox gave an overview of the EdS program. The EdS is 33 hours beyond the MEd and feeding into the PhD. Upon completion of the program, graduates are eligible to be licensed as district superintendents. Coursework in the EdS comprises the first 33 hours of the PhD program. Students are typically principals and assistant principals from across South Carolina. Occasionally teachers and current superintendents also enroll. Students are almost exclusively full-time practitioners. The EdS strives to provide students with a more scholarly bent to increase success within their districts. Despite being a relatively small program, it is extremely diverse. The practica follow the same format as the MEd, and are spread over two semesters. Based on anecdotal evidence, the program believes graduates are successful in their field, but it lacks the data to prove it. Roughly half of the annual graduates progress into the PhD program. After the 2014 SPA review, the program was Nationally Recognized with Probation. The program will spend the next 18 months revising and editing their report for resubmission. The majority of the issues cited in the initial submission were due to the small number of enrolled students and the inability of the program to offer courses as often as the MEd, which lead to a lack of data. In the future, the program would like to be able to offer joint programs with other institutions around the state, particularly those that have an MEd but do not have an existing EdS program. They would also like to follow the path of the MEd and make the EdS available as an online program. Implementing these types of plans would require updated facilities in order to increase outreach, training sessions with local and state-wide administrative groups, and updates to the available technological resources.

Ms. Evering asked about the success of using the EdS as a pipeline from the MEd and PhD. Dr. Cox said at the EdS level it has worked relatively well because of the cohort model and the small enrollment numbers. There are some issues as students move into the PhD because of a lack of faculty to teach and

supervise dissertations. As the MEd continues to grow, the EdS will need to decide how the existing model will work with larger numbers.

Dr. Moyi presented a brief overview of the PhD program. The PhD is a research program that does not lead to an additional licensure. It requires 69 hours, 33 of which are the same as the EdS program. The PhD has gone through several different phases. In 2011, enrollments were so high that there were not enough faculty available to supervise dissertations. At that point, the program stopped admitting students for two years. When the program resumed admissions in 2013, they began accepting far fewer students. Admission requirements are now more stringent, and even those who have come through the EdS are not guaranteed admission to the PhD. Along with the changes to admission policies and procedures, there have also been changes to the faculty and to the emphasis of the program. The program has moved toward more of a research focus as new, more research-oriented faculty have arrived. Students must transition from practitioners to researchers. The program is moving toward a P-20 system, so PhD candidates in both the higher education and K-12 tracks will take classes together. The program hopes this will increase the efficiency of research and broaden students' knowledge base. As the program shifts its emphasis from preparing practitioners to preparing researchers, it is strongly encouraging all students to complete a cognate in research. The biggest challenge the program faces is the number of enrolled students. There are 44 students currently enrolled, and 39 who are currently writing dissertations. Each faculty member is supervising approximately ten students. Faculty capacity is an ongoing issue for the program.

Dr. Mensch asked how PhD students were funded. Dr. Moyi said almost all students pay for themselves, as they receive little to no support from the schools or districts they work for. Dr. Mensch asked how the enrollment impacts program quality. Dr. Cox said unlike a typical PhD, there is not a huge need for publication, because students are going into school administration. Despite this, roughly 75% of Dr. Cox's students publish. Students pursue the PhD because they want to be superintendents, and most superintendents have a PhD. As it stands currently, the program is a sort of practitioner/research hybrid. The program is trying to move away from the practitioner role and focus on research. Dr. Moyi said the challenge is to get full-time doctoral students. Most are part-time, and some are current superintendents. Dr. Mensch asked how the admission criteria have been tightened. Dr. Moyi said the program no longer accepts MAT scores, and is looking for higher GRE scores. There is also less emphasis placed on experience, and more placed on the writing sample and research goals. The program hopes to be able to increase faculty and improve facilities to contribute to the success of the program.

Ms. Aboyan asked on behalf of Dr. Hodges what prompted the changes to the admission process. Dr. Moyi said as the program increases its research focus, it has incorporated a research-focused essay into the admission process to help attract only high quality students.

Dr. Mensch asked if the program had considered alternate cognates to the PhD, such as one for researchers and one for practitioners. Dr. Young said research is the broad focus, but there are several areas within research that students can choose from.

IV. Committee Consensus on Programs

The committee discussed the assessment materials for the MEd Educational Administration program and came to the consensus that the program is performing at the **"Meets Expectations"** level.

Strengths of the program were noted and include:

- Recruitment methods and increases in enrollment
- Meeting the needs of the state through technology including Blackboard and Adobe Connect
- Changing to experiential learning during the practicum

- Access to students in remote areas of the state, contributing to the diversity of enrollments
- Relevant, current, and practical practicum experience

Areas for Improvement were noted and include:

- Collection and review of post-program assessment data
- Develop method for ensuring quality of mentors and sites beyond just the level of licensure

The Committee Further Encourages:

- Review evidence to evaluate success of reaching those in remote areas of the state
- Collect and review data to establish balance between serving large numbers of people across the state and ensuring quality of program through faculty resources

The committee discussed the assessment materials for the EdS Educational Administration program and came to the consensus that the program is performing at the **“Emerging”** level.

Strengths of the program were noted and include:

- Superintendent endorsement
- Transition into the PhD program
- Vision for the program and continuing to build it
- Diverse population of students
- Use of technology to meet students around the state

Areas for Improvement were noted and include:

- Collection and review of post-program assessment data
- Address issues cited in the SPA report response

The Committee Further Encourages:

- Explore ways to increase use of technology to meet students around the state, possibly in a manner similar to the MEd
- Adjust frequency of course offerings if resources allow
- Collect evidence to demonstrate impact of graduates

The committee discussed the assessment materials for the PhD Educational Administration – CD-12 track program and came to the consensus that the program is performing at the **“Emerging”** level. PhD – emerging b/c of lack of data, changes to program.

Strengths of the program were noted and include:

- Tightening of admissions to seek more quality candidates
- Plan to merge P-12 track with Higher Education track to broaden student experience
- Shift of focus to research, particularly with the cognate requirement
- Increase in the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty

Areas for Improvement were noted and include:

- Collection and review of post-program assessment data
- Establish a clear vision of program focus on developing practitioners or researchers
- Collection and review of program assessment data

The Committee Further Encourages:

- Exploration of additional resources to continue to improve program quality and address capacity
- Align resources to student enrollment trends
- Disconnect between demand and capacity
- Determine if the research status aligned with the needs of the population

V. Schedule for Future Meetings

Programs to Review 2014-15

- Athletic Training (BS/MS) and Physical Education (BS/MAT/PhD) – March 2015
- Museum of Education & Educational Foundations of Inquiry (PhD) – April 2015
- Special Education (MAT/MEd/PhD) – May 2015

VI. Other Business

Ms. Aboyan adjourned the meeting at 3:22 p.m.