

**PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION UNIT QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE – YEAR THIRTEEN**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2016**  
**1:15 PM**

**Members Present:**

Allison Anders, EDST Representative  
Mary Anne Byrnes, Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
Shana Harper, Alcorn Middle School  
Tommy Hodges, ITE Representative  
Jim Mensch, PEAT Representative  
Nicole Spensley, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment  
Cindy Van Buren, Assistant Dean for Accreditation & Professional Preparation  
Regina Wragg, Coordinator for Office of Assessment & Accreditation  
Lisa Peterson, Accreditation Coordinator, Office of Assessment & Accreditation  
Craig Wheatley, White Knoll High School  
Christian Anderson, EDLP Representative (Representing for Doyle Stevick)

**Program Representatives:**

Christine Distefano – Educational Psychology & Research (MEd & PhD)  
Lucy Spence – Language and Literacy (MEd & PhD)

**I. Call Meeting to order**

Chairman Mensch called the meeting to order at 1:20 p.m.

**II. Welcome and Approval of Minutes**

Mary Anne Byrnes moved to approve the minutes. The minutes were subsequently approved. The committee then had a brief discussion of QCom and its purpose.

- Jim Mensch questioned Tommy Hodges on his thoughts on the process since his program area was the last to present. He contributed that the rubric is the most helpful part of the process. When you got through the rubric, it informs the best way to speak to each component.
- Cindy Van Buren: we are now sending a PowerPoint template to program areas up for presenting based on Tommy's PowerPoint from November. She is glad that diversity is a part of the rubric since diversity is a cross cutting theme of CAEP Standards, and being able to pull any information related to this area will be helpful.
- Tommy Hodges: questioned the "employment data" area of the rubric since you do not want each program to believe they have their own separate system, and we want uniformity on this process throughout the college.
- Christian Anderson: a pre-meeting with the Office of Assessment & Accreditation should be included as part of the process for those that are presenting to QCom. When HESA presented in August, a rubric and template were not provided and they were not clear of the purpose of the committee.
- Jim Mensch: defining expectations is necessary and we have improved our processes.
- Cindy Van Buren: We do offer pre-meetings with program areas prior to QCom, and we created the rubric in hopes of improving the process. This Committee is especially important for those program areas that do not have SPA Reports because this is the only way they receive feedback.

### III. Review of Educational Psychology & Research (MEd & PhD) – Christine Distefano

- Two intertwined areas (Educational Psychology & Research):
  - Curriculum & program of studies are meshed
  - Psychology – research concentration; Research – psychology minor
  - Students were leaving without taking an educational psychology course and we have become more intertwined, we have asked those in the psychology track to have more of a research connection; research must have a psychology minor
- Program Demographics
  - Number of students – PhD. = 46; M.Ed. = 6
  - Number of faculty – Psychology: 4 & 1 instructor; Research: 4
  - Graduates are highly sought after and have found jobs in school district offices, government agencies, SDE, universities, and testing companies.
- Highlights from Assessment Data:
  - Positive Criterion Scores - high passing rates for many of the indicators
  - Enrollment is increasing
    - Both programs/degrees have had an increase in applications and students admitted...advertising has increasing especially for the Master's program.
    - Moving largely to a full-time student body. Out of the 46 PhD students, 2/3 are full time.
- Perceived Strengths & Challenges:
  - Strengths
    - Integration of MEd & PhD coursework
    - Popularity of courses (especially research) across campus...program has many research courses that students across all degree areas want more experience with
    - Gaining students in MEd program
    - Moving largely towards a full-time student body
  - Challenges
    - Graduate funding/support – full-time students wish to have more support
    - Heavy reliance on adjuncts
- Using Program Data for Changes
  - Examine data at monthly program meetings – Christine noted that they have not recently received this data, so she wants to go back and reexamine their assessments/when they are offered.
  - Future Plans
    - Examination of comprehensive procedures – qualify exam and doctoral comprehensive may change – they are looking toward moving to a portfolio based comprehensive exam. The comprehensive exam is currently a 3-4 day testing process. It is very stressful and students do not anything to show at the end of it.
    - Jem Mensch asked about statistics on the pass rate of the comprehensive exam. Christine replied that typically there are students each year that have to retake,

but it is rare that someone fails all areas or does not pass the second time. It is a good mechanism to ensure students know necessary information related to the degree, but a portfolio would allow them to show potential hires of what they have accomplished.

- Resources Needed
  - Additional Faculty – reduce reliance on adjuncts
  - Space & Resources for Graduate Students
    - Encourage graduate students and faculty to be on campus as the program grows to full time so that students can have more research experiences and a community to work with
- Questions/Comments
  - Craig Wheatley: At the high school level, students are moving to a portfolio. He also added that he received his Master's in Educational Technology and they also created a portfolio at the end which was beneficial.
  - Tommy Hodges: With courses taken through this program for the EdD in Curriculum & Instruction, are those service courses? Christine: The courses are service courses, such as the 700 Introductory to Research course and the Classroom Assessment Course. The courses that are for EdD are rotated courses so that faculty do teach these courses, but every semester full time tenure track faculty are not able to teach. The courses that are taught by adjuncts are uniform so that adjuncts are given a syllabus to work from.
  - Mary Ann Byrnes: How are graduate students funded now? How many are funded/how many are not? Christine added that all of the full time students in the program are funded and many work as research assistants...it is hard to do, but they have maintained this.
  - Jim Mensch: Is there a diverse population of students? Christine: The program has a very diverse student body with a large international population with students from Korea and Romania to name a few.
  - Christine added that if grant funding were no longer available, then there would be additional opportunities. There are provisos written from SDE that gives the program money and they hope that this continues.

#### **IV. Review of Language & Literacy Programs (MEd & PhD) – Lucy Spence**

- Faculty – Four people make up the faculty for the two programs:
  - Dr. Julia Lopez-Robertson, Associate Professor and Program Chair
  - Dr. Diane Stephens, John E Swearingen Professor of Education
  - Dr. Lucy K. Spence, Associate Professor
  - Dr. Yang Wang, Assistant Professor
  - Additional literacy faculty in Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Level, and Secondary sometimes teach classes in the programs and advise doctoral students.
- MEd Review
  - International Literacy Association
  - Completed CAEP Assessment in 2015
  - National Recognition from ILA
- MEd Program of Study
  - Lucy presented the courses that are required as part of the 36 credit hours and noted that a diversity cognate was added since the last QCom review. She also noted that Dr. Yang

Wang is teaching the online Read to Succeed course which is becoming very popular because everyone is now required to take this across all program areas.

- PhD Program of Study
  - Lucy presented the courses that are required as part of the 69 post master hours and noted that at the end of the program must complete a take home comprehensive exam and that a required core of Language & Literacy courses are taken prior to the qualifying exam.
- PhD Assessment Plan
  - Lucy focused on the PhD program since the MEd recently received national recognition from their SPA and went through several charts showing all of the assessments that are a part of this plan. With the PhD program, candidates are required to have three years of classroom experience before enrolling.
- Questions/Comments
  - Cindy Van Buren congratulated Lucy on Language & Literacy receiving National Recognition on their SPA Report and asked if there were any changes that she would like to make. Lucy replied that there have been many issues with implementing the diversity cognate into the MEd program since some of the students want to graduate in one year. With the lack of flexibility with required courses, this has caused some issues, so they are meeting as a program area to decide on how to proceed.
  - Regina Wragg: Can students go straight into the MEd program without classroom experience? Lucy replied that they are not required to have experience since many complete the program in a year directly after receiving their undergraduate degree.
  - Tommy Hodges: how many completers does the PhD program have each year? Lucy: There were 4 completers two years ago, and 2-3 last year. It takes differing times to complete because most are full time teachers that can take longer to finish. There has been a difficulty in recruiting full time students, but they would like to obtain more of these students and ensure they can get a graduate assistant position. Students in this program are generally teachers throughout the entire state and may take 5-6 years to complete the program. There is currently about 20 students in the MEd program.
  - Cindy Van Buren: Are you also working with groups that are trying to get the Read to Succeed endorsement/requirement met? Lucy replied that there is a blended model of distance delivery, and they can provide those five required courses for literacy teacher certification around the state. There are a lot of literacy teachers throughout the state that act as facilitators – it is not distance in terms that are online, but they are cohorts in districts in classrooms in the district.
  - Jim Mensch: challenges for PhD program? Strengths?
    - Challenges: Scheduling is a challenge since teachers are coming from around state. They do not currently have any courses online, but Saturday classes are offered where students spend all day Saturday in class several times a semester. They have been talking about how to get input from students on what they need/want with scheduling and are thinking of piloting an online course. Typically the doctoral students love meeting face to face and collaborating, but they may possibly want some courses online.
    - Strengths: Professors in the program are well known throughout the state and people want to be in their classes.
  - Tommy Hodges: Would there be any benefit to combining the PhD program with the Teaching & Learning degree with a Literacy focus – would this assist with scheduling, hurt, or make no difference? Lucy: The strength of Language & Literacy as it is that faculty present with students at national conferences and allow them to get to know people in the field and make connections and she is unsure if it was combined with another program if these strengths would still be there.

- Jim Mensch: Do you have data on staying in touch with graduates? Lucy: Most stay in the state, a lot go to different universities throughout the state – they work with them to make them strong scholars here and they often do the same thing in other universities throughout the state.
- Has there been any push back from the diversity cognate requirement? Lucy: They have received really good feedback on courses themselves, and students overall like the courses and learn new information. For example, 796 – Teaching Reading/Writing to ELL, often students say that they never learned any of this information until this course is taken and it is valuable information.

## V. Committee Consensus on Programs

### Committee Discussion

- Tommy Hodges felt that we could not successfully decide on recommendations for the program areas of Educational Psychology & Research (MEd & PhD) or evaluate based on the rubric since they did not provide sufficient data.
- Cindy Van Buren wondered if the lack of data was due to the fact that these program areas do not have a SPA and are not required to write a SPA Report. Christian Anderson (HESA) added that from the perspective of a program that also does not have a SPA, they were never clear what QCom was, so he understood why they may not have a clear idea on what to present. Jim Mensch added that even if you do not have an accreditation report to submit, you should still be meeting requirements. It is an institutional expectation.
- Cindy Van Buren: The template and instructions that are sent to each program coordinator are not changing, but for those that do not have SPAs, OAA will need to work with them on having an outcome based assessment plan. QCom needs to know about the outcomes/data on the assessments.
- Christian Anderson: What are the benefits of program areas submitting this report to this department? If it could be seen as more developmental/helpful, then this would help. Nicole Spensley added that this ties directly to SACs accreditation which affects the entire college. Mary Ann Byrnes then added that we should explain to program areas that they should present to us the data that they have along with student outcomes...what is it that you want me to do? People will get the message that you have to do this. She understands the SACs argument, but not everyone will understand this argument. You can demonstrate your need for additional resources. What is your potential? It could be framed this way.
- Jim Mensch: We ultimately need deans' and chairs' support – if the chair treats this as a chore, then we will not be successful. We need to be specific for these program areas.

### Educational Psychology & Research (MEd & PhD)

- Strengths of the Program were noted and include:
  - All full-time students are funded
  - Partnerships with outside units
  - Collaboration with the COE EdD program in providing service classes
  - Graduates are highly sought after
- Recommendations:
  - QCom will send a letter to the program area asking to meet and develop an assessment plan with OAA and then present additional data to QCom at a later time (possibly in 18 months). There was not enough information provided for the committee to properly reach a consensus on recommendations.

## Language & Literacy (MEd & PhD)

- Strengths of the MEd Program were noted and include:
  - The program provides a service to the state in providing literacy coaches/teachers
  - Several courses are delivered through service contracts with districts.
  - They have a small number of faculty providing many services and are receiving national recognition.
  - Diversity cognate was created based upon QCom's previous feedback, ELL class is much needed and students expressed gratitude on this course.
- Recommendations:
  - Utilize technologies broadly to assist with scheduling challenges and possibly provide some online courses. OAA will provide feedback on how we collect data and what exactly we would like to see. They will then present again in 3 years.
- Strengths of the PhD program were noted and include:
  - Assessment plan is clear, but we need additional data
  - Graduates are highly sought after
  - Cohorts have a strong sense of collaboration
  - Students are able to present at national conferences and make connections
- Recommendations:
  - Possible merger with PhD in Teaching & Learning with a Literacy focus. QCom will send a letter to the program area asking to meet and develop an assessment plan with OAA and then present additional data to QCom at a later time (possibly in 18 months). There was not enough information provided for the committee to properly reach a consensus on recommendations.

## **VI. Input from the Field**

There was not any input from the field to be noted.

## **VII. Schedule for Future Meetings**

- Middle Level Education (BA/BS) – March 2016
- Early Childhood Special Education (MEd) – March 2016
- Secondary Science (MAT/MT) – April 2016
- Secondary English (MAT/MT) – May 2016
- Secondary Social Studies (MAT/MT) – May 2016

Chairman Mensch adjourned the meeting at 3:25 p.m.