

**University of New Mexico
Academic Program Review, Teacher Education Department, College of Education
Final Report, December 1, 2011**

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Preface/Summary

The department's self study focuses on requests for additional resources and personnel to solve perceived problems and maintain existing programs. Our observations suggest that a more productive approach would be to rethink program design and delivery in the light of UNM's unique mission as a research-extensive institution and then to collaborate with the Dean to allocate existing and new resources to support new models of teacher education more appropriate to a the state's flagship institution.

Department's History and Mission

The Teacher Education Department (TED) expresses its mission as “to prepare and support teachers, teacher educators, and teacher leaders who support the children and families of New Mexico.” This mission statement is certainly consistent with the values of the College of Education and the strategic directions of UNM as far as it goes. But it may overstate the importance of developing the teacher workforce and understate the responsibility of a research university to lead educational practice in and beyond the state through research and modeling of best practices.

TED narrates a complex history of administrative restructurings that have resulted from efforts to “make sense” of teacher education in the context of an academic college within a research-extensive institution. The role of teacher education has often been seen as primarily a public service function, not necessarily consistent with the research goals of a flagship institution. For one period of time, teacher education was framed as “the responsibility of all,” a surefire recipe for making it the responsibility of none. Managing teacher education as an administrative rather than an academic function appears to have left teacher education programs, even after they have been largely consolidated into an academic department, with inconsistent faculty oversight and faculty members conflicted about their roles and responsibilities.

Some apparent consequences of this history include a department faculty heavy on lecturers and administrative work assignments and short on research-active senior faculty; a structural tension surrounding oversight of “content” courses in academic disciplines versus courses in

professional practice; inadequate coordination and oversight of teacher preparation programs at distant sites in Taos, Gallup, and Farmington; and limited ability to analyze the costs and benefits of various courses of action in educating teacher candidates.

Dean's Vision

Dean Howell articulated to us a clear vision for the future of teacher education at UNM.

- *Technological tools to improve program delivery*
The College is in the process of implementing TK20 software for learning assessment and data management. We understand this is a sort of field trial for campus-wide adoption of TK20. This promises to greatly simplify the collection and analysis of data regarding student progress and program outcomes, which has long been a source of difficulty at UNM. The College has designed and implemented the online Field Services Portal, which centralizes and streamlines placements for field experience and student teaching, eliminating significant paperwork and automating field placement record keeping. The Center for Student Success has initiated an online advisement tool that promises to reduce the number of pro-forma visits to advising for routine business such as lifting registration holds, freeing advisors to spend more productive time working with students about their academic progress and professional plans. And the College encourages departments to explore the benefits of offering courses and entire programs online where feasible.
- *Data driven learner outcomes assessment*
Like many colleges, COE continues to wrestle with devising independent measures of student learning and program effectiveness. The TK20 system is expected to facilitate this process, and Dean Howell is clear in his expectation that departments will aggressively collect, analyze, and report data on student outcomes.
- *Full graduate programs offered online*
Sensitive to the role of UNM as a statewide and potentially national leader in preparing educators beyond the entry level, Dean Howell points to fully online graduate programs in Educational Leadership and Organizational Learning and asks that other departments consider this approach.
- *Research-active teacher education faculty on tenure-stream appointments*
To project the faculty profile of a flagship university, Dean Howell has invested heavily in new faculty appointments, seeking to hire and retain talented and prolific researchers.

Areas of Strength

In many ways, this is a high-quality department working effectively to carry out its mission. The list that follows identifies highlights but is far from exhaustive.

- Enrollments in degree programs are robust, albeit somewhat lower than in 2005. Exceptions to this trend are undergraduate secondary education, grown from 85 to 144 students in that period, and the doctoral program, MCTC, grown from 11 to 22 students.
- UNM educates a large fraction of beginning teachers in New Mexico, perhaps as large as 45%. This is both a strength and a source of problems in the department.
- Entering students at both undergraduate and graduate levels are well qualified. On average, they present higher SAT/ACT scores, New Mexico Teacher Assessment (NMTA) Basic Skills scores, and cumulative gpa on admission than teacher candidates at other New Mexico institutions.
- UNM TED graduates score very high on the NMTA professional skills and content area tests compared to statewide averages, indicating that the licensure programs equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to enter the profession successfully.
- The demographics of TED's student population are similar to statewide demographics, suggesting the department is paying attention to the values of diversity and equal representation.
- Faculty are developing and testing innovative solutions to the problem of supervising students in their extensive field experiences. Pilot projects at Bandelier Elementary and Amy Biehl High School are based on accepted best practice in the field and if successful promise to lead change in the field.
- Using the experience and knowledge gained from the Teacher Enhancement Program, TED faculty have developed a cutting edge program for experienced teachers seeking advancement, the Master of Arts with concentration in Reflective Practice. This new program also represents research-based best practices and is aligned with COE mission and values and NCATE expectations. Students in this program see it as helping them to mature as teacher leaders and report that participating has helped them to avoid the early-career burnout that causes almost half of new teachers to leave the profession within the first five years. Graduates of this program can be a resource to their districts, to the state, and to the College of Education.
- Responding to a statewide study of the curriculum and delivery of the state-mandated six-credit-hour reading instruction block, TED faculty moved to a standardized syllabus for these courses and moved further toward consistency by offering the course online from the main campus instead of individually at the distant sites. This is a good example of the department's thoughtful and conscientious approach to curriculum oversight.
- The department includes a strong group of high quality young faculty. The 8 assistant professors, most hired since 2005, generally present substantial research agendas and good success in publication and securing external funds.
- The department's stated Mission, values and conceptual framework are appropriate to teacher education in New Mexico, and the department attempts to align assessments, coursework, and research to those values.

- The department is making effective use of the Field Services portal to match student teachers and cooperating teachers.
- The college and department participate regularly with statewide policy meetings through the Deans and Directors for Teacher Education. Exemplary leadership is provided in elementary education reading initiatives, education accountability reporting, and educational reform trends.

Areas of Concern

- The doctoral program in Multicultural Teacher and Childhood Education is not well conceptualized for a research-based teacher education program. Although the competencies (described on pp. 62-64 of the self-study) reflect desirable qualities, it is not clear, from the materials we reviewed and from our interviews with faculty and a single doctoral student, what the program's content is or how it functions to produce a cadre of professional educational leaders whose research can be expected to advance understanding of teaching and learning in the culturally diverse contexts of classrooms in and beyond New Mexico. Rather, it appears to be a boutique program that caters to the specialized interests of a handful of teachers seeking further education.
- TED's plan to revitalize the EDD program is not consistent with the vision of a research extensive doctoral program. The EDD, an advanced degree for practitioners, is available at other institutions and need not be duplicated at UNM.
- Communication and cohesion among department programs is weak. Particularly between the elementary and secondary teacher licensure programs, we observed "silos" of information and practice that seemed unproductive in a faculty with shared goals. This may be partly an artifact of the extremely heavy workloads imposed by the very large numbers of teacher candidates in these programs.
- With two members at the rank of Professor (including Florez), 8 at Associate, and 8 at Assistant, the department will be hard-pressed to provide support and mentorship that will enable it to retain and promote its junior members. This is exacerbated by the number of senior faculty whose research activity is very limited or decidedly in the past. Junior faculty spoke urgently about these concerns. It is suggested that faculty who are not research active may provide supervision in the field in lieu of teaching load. Affected faculty may redirect their research efforts by publishing "best supervision practices" in refereed journals for teacher education.
- Program faculty are unable to maintain supervision of students at student teaching sites. This is a primary concern in the department's self-study, and we think it is a legitimate one. Without direct oversight of student teaching, and relying on the supervision and reporting of (minimally trained) master teachers in the schools, faculty cannot effectively oversee the quality of teacher candidates' experience or see how to redesign programs to make them more effective. *This could compromise accreditation under NCATE Standard Three.*

- TED presents inadequate data on student learning outcomes. The approach to outcomes assessment seemed hit-and-miss, with little awareness of the need to triangulate assessment by applying independent measures of target competencies as well as course-based faculty assessments and grading. The self-study and our conversations provided only limited evidence that the department is collecting, storing or analyzing program assessments. Assessment data may come from degree completers, demographics, Title II data, dossier passing rates at Level I and II, student teaching observation data, student teaching data on student learning, exit surveys, student satisfaction surveys, purchased EBI Teacher Education Exit Survey data, employer data, etc. But to drive effective program change, such data must be collected and analyzed within a coherent framework of expectations for each program.
- We heard from students that the advisement of graduate students in the MA with alternative licensure programs is weak and inconsistent. We understand that advisees are assigned to faculty members so as to distribute the workload, but that not all faculty advisors are equally well-informed or responsive. Students used terms like “disorganized” to characterize advisement and complained of having received conflicting advice regarding program requirements. We recommend that faculty who are unwilling or unable to provide accurate and responsive advisement to students be assigned other work.
- UNM COE is a designated instructional materials center for the New Mexico Public Education Department. Such centers provide access to materials distributed for the sake of public review, charter and home school use, and public school curriculum studies. But curriculum materials formerly held in Tireman Library are now stored, uncatalogued, in a locked basement room, inaccessible to users. When Tireman was closed, Zimmerman Library incorporated the parts of the Tireman collection that fit Zimmerman’s mission, but the instructional materials function appears to have been lost in the process.

NCATE Accreditation Concerns

- The MA programs in Elementary Education and Secondary Education with alternative licensure, while offering sound preparation for teacher candidates, may not be in compliance with state law and regulation governing alternative licensure. Please refer to the Title 6, Chapter 60, and Part 3 NMAC rule. More specifically seek clarification of section 6.60.3.8 *Requirements for Alternative Teaching Licensure*, followed by 6.60.3.8.B. *Professional teacher education requirements*, followed by 6.60.3.8.B. (4). Section B. (4) implies employment of candidates under an internship licensure completing alternative licensure programs. This section states that “under no circumstance shall an individual be recommended for licensure by a local school district unless that person has passed all sections of the current PED-required New Mexico teacher test and serve as a the teacher of record for at least one full school year”.

- The Department does not appear to be upholding the statewide transfer compact between 4 and 2 year institutions. Introductory teacher education, integration of technology, and multicultural courses in the transfer compact are not included in the undergraduate elementary and secondary programs. The pre-professional 9 hour block includes the human growth and development included in the compact.
- Student teaching placements lack diversity of experience. The NCATE standard three expects each teacher education candidate to have a diversity of experience by grade level, ethnicity, students with exceptionalities, and demographics important to the institution's public school partners. While the field portal provides a unique process for placement and the co-teaching placements are exemplary models, they do not ensure the optimal opportunities for a variety of placements during the two semesters of student teaching.
- Please refer to the concern about maintaining supervision of student teachers above. This concern has implications for complying with NCATE standard three, field and clinical experiences.

Recommendations: Strategic Directions for Growth and Change

The analysis of the Teacher Education Department's strengths and areas of concern yielded six recommendations that the program review team believes will build on the program areas' strengths while addressing areas of concern. Fortunately, the department has already established an exemplary research and best-practice based pilot program, the co-teaching model at Bandelier Elementary School and a well-conceived masters program (MARF) that could form the foundation for a holistic reconceptualization of the undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs in Teacher Education.

Our recommendations are predicated on the assumption that, as a research extensive university, UNM should have teacher education programs that reflect that ranking and research orientation. This will require that the department focus its mission and vision on creating smaller and more selective undergraduate programs to prepare teachers for licensure at the K-8 and secondary (7-12) levels, providing targeted alternative licensure programs at the post-baccalaureate level, expanding the Master of Arts in Reflective Practice and marketing it across the state and region, and developing a research oriented PhD program that supports the undergraduate licensure programs while preparing the next generation of teacher educators. This shift in focus would provide a path toward the "right-sizing" the department seeks, mandating a reduction in the number of undergraduate teacher candidates admitted as resources shift toward programs more appropriate to a research extensive institution. This assumption provides the foundation for the

following recommendations which draw from the Teacher Education Department's Program Review Self-Study, interviews with students, teachers, faculty, staff and administrators, and an analysis of trends in teacher education at the state and national level.

Recommendations

1. The Teacher Education Department's self-study concludes that the existing elementary and secondary education programs are too large and need to be "right-sized" and that the existing model for supervising methods students and student teachers is dysfunctional and needs to be changed. We agree with this conclusion and recommend the following:

The faculty in TED need to reconceptualize the program to extend the existing co-teaching pilot program at Bandelier Elementary School across both the elementary and secondary education programs. This will require 8 to 10 sites (could be individual buildings or across several buildings in a district or geographical area) across both programs with each site having approximately 20-25 students at any one time. This will "right-size" the programs to around 200-250 students across both programs using the co-teaching model which has a strong research and best practice-based structure. It is also consistent with models highly recommended by NCATE and AACTE.

The secondary program should focus more on preparing math and science teachers for schools in New Mexico and less on language arts and social studies since the market for teachers in those content areas is weak. Enrollment in those content areas should be based on solid market analysis and not tradition since most program completers appear to stay in the state and/or region and the need for excellent math and science teachers is high. The program is currently under-producing teachers for math and science by a significant margin.

2. As noted above, the model currently being used for supervising students in the field is inadequate, inefficient, and unnecessarily expensive. The liaisons in the field sites appear to the students to inhibit communication between the cooperating teachers and the program faculty. This is not intentional but appears to be indigenous to the model which has the cooperating teachers communicating to the liaisons who then communicate to the methods faculty and vice-versa. This model is fairly expensive since it costs about \$67,000 for stipends per year for the nine liaisons. The individuals hired to do the actual evaluations on site as the university supervisors consume a significant portion of the college's budget for supervision, and we believe this cost is proportionally higher than the costs for supervision in other programs.

We recommend that the department negotiate an increase in doctoral level teaching assistants from the Provost to cover a significant portion of the field supervision using the

clinical supervision model inherent in the pilot co-teaching project at Bandelier. This will require approximately 10 new full time assistantships so that each of the proposed field sites has a doctoral level teaching assistant assigned to it. This could be financed as a cost share with the department by using the \$67,000 currently earmarked for the liaisons to fund four \$16,000 doctoral stipends with the remaining funding coming from the Provost's office. The return on investment from these new assistantships should be fairly high since they will generate state subsidy for coursework they take as full time graduate students.

3. Move the highly successful MARP masters degree program to an on line delivery system that is marketed across the state and region as a program that can be tailored to districts' or schools' individual needs. These school or district wide on line programs could be set up as cohorts of 20-25 students at each site, and the reflective practice model adapted to the specific professional development and curricular needs of the cohort group. Our interviews with past and current MARP students suggested to us that these students found the program to be demanding yet professionally rewarding. Given the need for teachers in New Mexico to obtain a masters degree, this would seem to be a large, generally untapped market. This could also be a significant source of revenue for the College and department if the Dean and department chair could create a formula that would return a percentage of revenue generated from the tuition paid by students in the on line program back to the college and department. The current stipend of \$5,000 paid to the faculty who teach on line classes is excellent, but the return of \$1,000 to the department for each class taught seems low given that a 3 semester hour class of 20-25 students would generate between \$15,000 and \$19,000 in tuition per class.
4. The faculty distribution across ranks in the Teacher Education Department is heavily skewed to the assistant and associate level with only one full time and one joint appointment faculty member at the full professor level. We strongly recommend that future searches for faculty in TED be advertised as "open rank" positions with preference given to senior level associate (i.e. those likely to be promoted to full professor within a 2-3 year period) or full professors. The department has made some excellent hires over the past several years, and that group is forming a strong cadre of assistant and early level associate professors. However, those faculty need significant mentoring and support from senior faculty, and the lack of faculty at the senior, full professor level is alarming. If the research productivity and program development and management is to grow in the department, the presence of senior level faculty who will conduct the research and develop and manage the programs is critical.
5. Utilize the current MARP students and recent MARP graduates more extensively as cooperating teachers and on site mentors at the co-teaching sites. It would appear that

these students are being prepared exactly for these roles. The elementary and secondary programs might also want to consider using the Albuquerque Public School's on site instructional coaches as part of the supervisory team at the co-teaching sites. Our recommendation #2 describes a potential clinical supervision model that the department might consider using. More specifically, the faculty might consider a team approach involving the methods instructor, a MARP teacher serving as mentor, a doctoral level teaching assistant serving as a field instructor and research coordinator on site, and an instructional coach from APS serving as an on-site supervisor. This would renew the former partnerships with APS somewhat, but, more importantly, it would incorporate a team of professionals in the teacher preparation process and more closely mirror the clinical model used in medical schools. We believe that this model of supervision using a clinical team approach would make the UNM teacher preparation program unique in the state and the region and represent the kind of "leading edge" model one would expect to see at the flagship, research extensive institution in the state.

6. Build the PhD program into a truly research-oriented program that is designed to develop the next generation of teacher educators for the state and region. We would recommend suspending admission to the EdD program and "mothballing" it for 3-5 years to see if it is even necessary to maintain the program. We believe that a teacher education program at a research extensive institution should be a PhD program and not an EdD program. The cadre of 8-10 new, full time doctoral students we recommend in #2 should be recruited from the population of highly qualified teachers in the state who hold the masters degree and have been recognized as National Board certified teachers, Golden Apple Award recipients, and/or Outstanding Teacher or Teacher of the Year recipients from across the state and region. The doctoral students should feel honored to be selected for study in this program and see themselves as future teacher educators who will take faculty positions at strong teacher preparation institutions.

We realize that these recommendations are bold, ambitious, and far-reaching, but we also believe that the University, College and Department of Teacher Education have the will and resources to achieve these recommendations. The faculty and the department and college leadership have exhibited a commitment to new, innovative ideas, programs, technology, etc., but we are concerned about the sustainability of these ideas, programs, technology, etc. because they tend to be personality-driven rather than institutionalized. We believe that if the department's programs are to move to the leading edge, they must be institutionalized and supported across the university.