

REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

February 22, 2015

CONFIDENTIAL

Submitted to the Dean, Faculty of Education

by:

Dr. Sally Thorne

***Chair, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, & Special Education
(ECPS) Review Committee***

Executive Summary

On February 4-6, 2015, four external reviewers were welcomed to the University of British Columbia Faculty of Education's Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education (ECPS). The department provided a thorough Self-Study Report as a reference document, and access during the review period to a range of faculty, staff and students, as well as representatives of the faculty and university.

The reviewers were:

Dr. Julia O'Sullivan
Dr. Anne Marshall
Dr. Sally Thorne
Dr. Vianne Timmons

Strengths

The following strengths were highlighted during the review:

1. The Self-Study Report demonstrated that there has been significant reflection on the strengths and areas for improvement by faculty and staff.
2. Having nationally accredited programs in Counselling Psychology and School Psychology brings prestige to the department.
3. The faculty are viewed by all as hard-working and committed. A number of faculty have strong national and international reputations.
4. Students are proud of their programs and hold the faculty in high esteem.
5. There is a high regard by students for the quality of teaching and supervision.
6. Faculty are committed to research and professional engagement.
7. The staff are committed and dedicated and very supportive of each other.
8. Staff have articulated and relevant areas of expertise.

Key Recommendations

In addition to these significant areas of strength, the review team focused its attention on issues around which the department might benefit from our observations and recommendations in relation to various aspects of departmental function and activity. The Review Committee's key recommendations are summarized here, with more detailed recommendations described below in the context of the findings from which they were derived:

1. The Review Committee sees the tension between individual programs and the collective whole as a structural source of distrust and competitiveness and therefore as a significant barrier to progress. To help resolve this, the department is encouraged to begin active efforts toward surfacing and agreeing

- upon the ingredients of a coherent collective identity, set of goals, and future plan.
2. Efforts to achieve a more widespread appreciation for the fiscal realities being managed by the Dean's Office generally, as well as the implications for planning at the level of the department and its programs, might also serve to reduce the sense of competitiveness between programs within the department that arises from misunderstandings of how decisions are made.
 3. The department is encouraged to continue involvement in and expansion of BEd cohort themes in order to strengthen ECPS presence in the teacher education program.
 4. The department is encouraged to develop a faculty renewal plan with a focus on diversity.
 5. Junior and mid-career faculty members would benefit from a well-thought-out mentoring program with a focus on career development and progression.
 6. The department would benefit from a discussion on a collective approach to cross-cultural understanding, indigenization and internationalization.
 7. It seems an appropriate time to move beyond the current model of silo academic units and explore the potential benefits of expanded interactions, collaborations and synergies between units and across the department.

Detailed Findings and Recommendations:

I. Objectives, Priorities and Activities

A. The unit's goals, objectives, and priorities.

The Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education was formed in 1999 as an academic arrangement of five major graduate program areas that had previously been configured as two independent academic departments within the Faculty of Education at UBC. It locates its mandate within the broader UBC strategic plan *Place and Promise* (2010-2020) and the Faculty of Education strategic plan (2011-2016), "helping UBC achieve its stated mission ... by providing professional programs for pre-service and practicing teachers, and by conducting collaborative research in educational settings and communities" as well as fostering "the construction of knowledge with and for the community, leading to improvement in the quality of life for children, parents, practitioners, and other community members." Its specific contribution to the Faculty of Education's mandate, per section 1.4 of the Self-Study Report, is "offering leading-edge programs for professional preparation (e.g., Counselling Psychology, School Psychology and Special Education), and across all department areas by fostering the development of innovative scholars who advance the construction and dissemination of knowledge in academic, professional and broader community settings."

Although objectives are clearly stated for the individual academic programs, the Review Committee detected considerable variability across programs as to whether future planning had occurred in any formal manner, and no evidence that a coherent and distinct objective, goal or set of priorities had as yet been articulated for the Department as a whole separate from that of the broader Faculty of Education. The reviewers were told that, although the issue of a collective vision had been raised from time to time over the years, there had been little appetite for pursuing the discussion within the department, primarily due to strong individual program allegiances and minimal recognition of a potential benefit.

Probing the faculty members with the question of whether common values across programs might exist, and if so what might they be, the reviewers found responses ranging from resistance rooted in historic conditions to overt enthusiasm for opening up the conversation. Our impression was that, although such a conversation might be difficult within the current culture of the department and the weight of history may remain an impediment to change for some members of the faculty, there was also considerable opportunity at this time for moving beyond the past and looking forward.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. The Review Committee sees the tension between individual programs and the collective whole as a structural source of distrust and competitiveness and therefore as a significant barrier to progress. Toward resolving this, the department is encouraged to begin active efforts toward surfacing and agreeing upon the ingredients of a coherent collective identity, set of goals, and future plan.
2. The Review Committee expects that within the common values and intersecting areas of expertise, faculty members would find considerable opportunity for both mutual understanding and also synergies across academic and scholarly programs. There seems considerable will and talent within the department both to support the passion that drives the individual program identities and to break through the resistance that may be impeding the thoughtful collective dialogue needed to anticipate and respond to change.
3. The Review Committee sees considerable opportunity for a new leader to support the department in moving to a more coherent and strategic valuing of the collective whole, while still maintaining program identities.

B. The unit's current strengths and barriers to moving forward

In the Self-Study Report (section 1.1), the department makes the following claim as to its stature and reputation: "The department is known nationally and internationally for the scholarship of its faculty members and the excellence and societal relevance of its graduate and undergraduate programs." The reviewers found this statement to

accurately reflect a widely held perception among department members. While it was readily apparent that there are areas of excellent scholarship and academic programming within the department, the reviewers were also struck by the absence of benchmarking to substantiate this general sense of credibility and relevance.

A parallel data gap was also apparent in relation to such fundamental planning factors as program design, student numbers, distribution of teaching activities, and graduate outcomes. The Review Committee observed what seemed to be a rather passive approach to student recruitment, in some instances allowing a larger applicant pool to drive program size decisions, and in others recruiting what seem to be insufficient applicant pools to serve recognizable societal needs. The reviewers found it difficult to pinpoint a coherent justification for the relationship between program size, configuration and demand across programs. In the absence of a more strategic analysis, historic practices and preferences (such as preferred teaching modalities), as well as structural factors (such as minimum class size) seemed to be functioning as primary drivers. Because the department is perceived by the wider university community to take in an excessive number of graduate students relative to the overall faculty complement, it will be important to ensure a rational basis for admissions decisions going forward, as well as a data-informed understanding of student experience and progress.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. The department should consider moving toward a more shared understanding of and commitment to relevant performance metrics, such that more transparent planning and resourced allocation processes could emerge over time.
2. It may be helpful to develop strategies through which faculty members responsible for the various academic programs can achieve a more meaningful understanding of the fiscal implications of their academic planning and delivery decisions.
3. Efforts to achieve a more widespread appreciation for the fiscal realities being managed by the Dean's Office generally, as well as the implications for planning at the level of the department and its programs, might also serve to reduce the sense of competitiveness between programs within the department that arises from misunderstandings of how decisions are made.

II. Scholarly and Professional Activities

Overall, faculty members are actively involved in research, publish in both academic and professional outlets, and regularly present their work at academic and professional conferences¹. As well, they inform the public dialogue in education through regular

¹ The review committee was unable to evaluate the level of co-authorship with graduate students from the information provided on the faculty CVs.

appearances in the media. This balance, contributing to disciplinary and professional knowledge, is extremely important for a faculty of education. That said, the research expectations for faculty (especially for promotion and tenure) need to be clear. This is especially critical given that 50% of the faculty members hold the rank of full professor.

Faculty members have secured funding for their research from a variety of sources including organizations and governments at the provincial, national and international levels. Much of the funding is for specific applied projects and funding amounts are relatively small. Funding from the Tri-Council (where a faculty member is the Principal Investigator) seems quite low relative to the size of the faculty and the number of full professors, especially at a research-intensive institution. Some faculty members are collaborators on Tri-Council grants held at other universities. Such collaboration is a strength and, if extended to the community partners the faculty members have, could support successful Partnership and Partnership Development grants from SSHRC.

Faculty are active in relevant scholarly and professional associations. They are represented as editors and on editorial boards of scholarly and professional journals, and regularly review for refereed journals and conferences. Some have been recognized internationally for their research contributions, for example, by being appointed as fellows of the American Educational Research Association and the American Psychological Association, the two leading international scholarly organizations in the field.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. Establish expectations for research and scholarship that balance disciplinary and professional contributions, and ensure appropriate supports are in place (including mentoring) especially for junior and mid-career faculty.
2. Provide incentives to encourage interdisciplinary collaborations (involving faculty members across programs as well as community partners) to support successful large-scale proposals for Tri-Council funding.

III. Academic Programs, Teaching and Learning

A. Undergraduate education and/or BEd program and student learning

The TEP program in the Faculty of Education is delivered across all departments, and ECPS is responsible for teaching four required undergraduate courses (EPSE 308, 310, 311 & 317) as well as two elective courses (EPSE 432 & 401). This represents a reduction when compared to previous and historical involvement; the number of ECPS courses was reduced in the re-imagined BEd program of several years ago. Two undergraduate Diplomas are offered: one in Guidance Studies and one in Special Education. Some of

the Diploma courses are available online, though the distinction between “available” and actually “delivered” was not made clear. Seven faculty members are currently teaching and coordinating or supervising undergraduate TEP and Diploma courses. In 2013-14 a total of 187 courses were delivered (including 37 PDCE courses).

Those faculty members who teach in the BEd program and who attended the Review Committee sessions were enthusiastic about their interest in and contributions to the program. Two described their proposed organizing concept of “Inclusion” as the basis for BEd program re-imagining, which was not taken up. Nevertheless, ECPS faculty were commended by Faculty Associate Deans for their “significant leadership” in designing and coordinating two particular BEd elementary cohorts in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Self-Regulated Learning (SRL). Doctoral students and other sessional/contract instructors teach many of the ECPS undergraduate courses. The Review Committee heard from some of these instructors, all of whom appeared to be knowledgeable and dedicated to their teaching. A few noted, however, that they would like more consultation with or supervision by tenure-track faculty with regard to curriculum and assessment.

In the Self-Study Report it was noted that a variety of instructional and assessment methods are used and that all courses are evaluated by students (per UBC policy). No specific or summary evaluation data were provided for BEd courses. In a survey of undergraduate Diploma students (51 of 168 students responding), 84% agreed or strongly agreed that the ECPS teaching quality was good (p. 39) and 90% reported that academic expectations were clear. Without more extensive and specific data, it is difficult to assess the quality and strength of the undergraduate programs and courses or offer suggestions for improvement.

Almost all students are from the lower mainland area (98%). A high proportion of undergraduate Diploma students are part-time – 85 to 90%. The number of Aboriginal students has ranged from 1 to 6 in any given year, with a total of 16 during the past 5 years. No figures were given for international students, however the numbers were acknowledged to be “low”. No undergraduate students attended the Review Committee sessions, so the reviewers were not able to obtain any direct comments or feedback. It was noted, however, that “No specific means of recruiting Aboriginal or international students are utilized by ECPS” (p. 29 in Self-Study Report). This was surprising, given Faculty of Education and overall university emphasis on increasing enrolment among these student populations.

British Columbia funds post-secondary institutions based on undergraduate enrolment numbers. For Faculties of Education, this situation poses a challenge because of a number of factors: declining K-12 enrolments, an overabundance of BEd programs, an emphasis on BC-specific curriculum in undergraduate programs, and the requirement that most aspiring teachers take their first two undergraduate years outside of Education Faculties. This situation limits the provincial transfer payments to universities

and, in turn, limits the resources available to departments such as ECPS that have very large graduate program enrolments.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. Continue involvement in and expansion of BEd cohort themes in order to strengthen ECPS presence in the Teacher Education Program.
2. Gather and/or access more specific undergraduate ECPS course evaluation data and ideas for curricular development. Utilize technology and innovative methods.
3. Develop and implement recruitment strategies to increase Aboriginal and international student enrolment.
4. Since post-secondary funding is tied to undergraduate BEd enrolments, ECPS could consider options for increasing undergraduate course development and delivery as well as involving more faculty members in instructional delivery.
5. International and adult students are often interested in educational skills and principles not specifically tied to provincial school curricula. Undergraduate courses, certificates and diplomas could be developed in these areas to ladder into an international education degree that would attract international and other students.

B. Graduate and postdoctoral education and training

The predominant focus in ECPS is graduate teaching and research. Each of the five main program areas (CNPS, HDLC, MERM, SCPS, and SPED) offers MEd, MA and PhD programs; the Counselling Master's and doctoral programs and the School Psychology doctoral program are accredited at the national level. Faculty members are proud of the high quality and popularity of their programs. Students are similarly enthusiastic about the high quality of instruction and supervision.

The number of graduate students² is very high relative to the number of faculty members. Although a significant proportion (approximately just under 50%) are MEd students who do not require intensive research supervision, some administrators who spoke to the Review Committee did not consider this high number prudent or sustainable. ECPS faculty members are strongly invested in their identity as a graduate department and the Review Committee noted significant resistance to reducing the number of students admitted. Faculty members often observed that high numbers were needed in order to fulfill the minimum class size of 10, although it appeared that a number of courses did not meet that minimum.

² At various points in the report this is listed as 452 and 462

A strength of ECPS is the department's commitment to accredited professional graduate programs. Faculty members and students appreciate having department and Faculty support for these designations, since considerable time and resources are needed to maintain them. The extensive course and supervised clinical practice requirements for accredited professional programs also make them more costly to deliver. The CNPS programs need sessional and contract instructors in addition to tenure-track faculty.

ECPS reports a total of over 450 graduate students across five program areas. The Counselling and Special Education programs have many more applicants than could be admitted, yet other programs appear to be in need of more applicants in order to fill class size requirements. It was observed, for example, that the School Psychology field needs many more practitioners (especially from minority and Indigenous populations) but there were only 7 students admitted to the current Master's cohort and there does not appear to be a recruitment plan to attract more applicants.

Increasing diversity is acknowledged to be a Faculty and department goal, however the number of Aboriginal and international students in ECPS is rather low. Several faculty members observed that cultural concepts are addressed in program courses and there is an elective cross-cultural course in the CNPS program, however graduate students and some instructors recommended more extensive curricular coverage of diversity concepts and issues. A few comments noted a predominance of Eurocentric views and values in ECPS (although specific examples of successful culturally focused individuals and research were shared), and a need for more support for Aboriginal students. An Indigenous faculty member has been hired this year and there is a search for a CRC in Indigenous mental health and wellness that it is hoped will be successfully concluded soon. These are positive steps, although it was also acknowledged that there is unevenness across the department and that an Indigenous and diversity-friendly culture is the responsibility of everyone. One faculty member observed: "We have a long way to go."

There is a strong focus in ECPS on graduate research supervision, although not all of the students are doing thesis or dissertation research. Just under half of ECPS's 462 graduate students are MEd (some in off-campus cohorts). They have an advisor but this does not require a lot of supervision time since most of their program courses are pre-determined. There are 106 PhD and 122 MA students. The reported faculty-to-student MA supervision ratios range from 1.18 (SPED) to 5.18 (CNPS), with PhD ratios from 1.27 (SPED) to 3.71 (HDLC). However, it was widely acknowledged that student supervision loads vary considerably, and there appears to be some inequity among faculty members with regard to numbers of student supervisees and committee memberships. Disparities such as this would affect workload.

Within the professional programs (CNPS, SCPS, and SPED), there is also a requirement for clinical skill development and supervision. Some of this is accomplished with contract and sessional faculty in CNPS, especially in the MEd programs.

On the whole, students are very positive and enthusiastic about their programs. The ones who attended our session used the term “department” when talking about their programs, which was an interesting reinforcement of our perceived autonomy of the five programs (although they came together more than 15 years ago). There were some suggestions about possible improvements: one student observed that they would like to be able to give feedback to supervisors (other than course evaluations) and others said that they would like more space for study and clinical work. This appears to be similar to the feedback reported in the Self-Study Report.

There is no guaranteed financial support for graduate students. Instead, there are some fellowships for incoming applicants with high GPAs, and some faculty members offer research assistantships or other support to selected students, especially at the PhD level. For the size of the department, the number of student external and internal fellowships in ECPS seems low.

There appears to be a discrepancy between the department and central administration figures for Graduate Research Assistant and Graduate Academic Assistant support, with the department figures being much higher. Figures from UBC administration indicated many fewer students involved and much lower levels of monetary support. Financial support is a key aspect of recruitment success, and students indicated a strong desire for additional support.

The MERM group is relied on for research methods, measurement and assessment courses and expertise. These courses are typically part of program requirements. There was general agreement that these courses are central to the department and the MERM faculty expertise is widely appreciated, including for faculty and student research projects.

The Review Committee was told that there are three research post-doctoral fellows currently in ECPS, as well as one post-doctoral teaching fellow, however the members did not meet any of them or hear specifically about their work.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. The Review Committee strongly recommends an immediate and significantly increased attention to diversity principles and concepts across all programs, particularly to Indigenous views. Increased graduate student and faculty recruitment and support for Aboriginal, international, and other diversity groups is also suggested.
2. A review of student financial support could assist in identifying additional funding sources as well as procedures and policies for consistency across the department.

3. ECPS could consider options for additional space to help increase clinical and research training capacity. Updated equipment is also needed that could be used for research studies and shared among colleagues.

IV. Faculty, Staff and Other Personnel Matters

A. Faculty:

The faculty members have clear areas of expertise, with minimum overlap between them. There is a proportionally large number of full professors, many of whom are near retirement. This is a vulnerability for the department, so it will be important to have a clearly developed faculty renewal plan with priority hirings identified for the department.

The reviewers also observed that there seems to be little ethnic diversity among faculty members. Diversity can bring richness in views and experience to the faculty complement, so it is advisable that the recruitment plan for priority hirings aim to increase diversity among the faculty members.

The faculty are viewed by others as hard working, passionate, and productive. They are very involved in their profession, and contribute to the larger community in many ways. The students with whom the reviewers spoke hold the faculty in high esteem, and were very positive about the teaching and supervision they receive.

The recent hirings in the department present an opportunity for mentoring and collaboration, particularly because there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the senior ranks which would benefit others in the department. The junior faculty show great potential, and would benefit from formal and informal support and guidance from their more senior colleagues. Junior faculty members expressed a desire for more information on funding opportunities, processes and decision making. Mid-career faculty members also would benefit from collaboration opportunities with senior faculty.

The number of administrative buyouts in the department seems high, and as a result, the varied administrative responsibilities take tenured faculty away from teaching and supervision duties. Further, a culture of negotiating for teaching buyouts may serve as a disincentive to meaningful leadership development over time. Structurally, it may be beneficial to lay out all the administrative roles and responsibilities in the department and review potential synergies and overlap. Some of the administrative tasks could be assigned as staff responsibilities or packaged to be more economical. A departmental overview would be important rather than one by program.

The importance, value and use of sessional faculty, including practicing professionals in the field, vary from program to program. Some programs use few sessionals as they believe the teaching and research need to be undertaken by faculty to ensure quality control. In professional programs, a more balanced instructional staff (i.e., continuing faculty and qualified professionals) is important to ensure program rigour and relevance. Programs should consider the benefits of having qualified practitioners contributing to their activities. Thus in some instances, there may be sound pedagogical and economical reasons to consider utilizing sessionals.

The sessional instructors with whom the reviewers spoke are committed to the programs and students, and hold the faculty in very high regard. They expressed a desire for more opportunities for collaboration and information, and also indicated that there was inconsistent peer review of their teaching.

B. Staff:

The staff in the department are dedicated and committed, but do feel significant workload stress. They indicated that they would like the opportunity to provide faculty with a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The current staff complement seems small in comparison with comparable departments in other Faculties of Education.

Because each staff member has distinct responsibilities, there is not a natural back-up plan, so there can be a void when one staff member is away. As a result, there is a need for cross-training and professional development for staff. Staff members are interested in increasing their knowledge and skills, but find it difficult to commit time during the work day to professional development. There does not seem to be overlap or duplication in the department, but there may be opportunities for coordination faculty-wide.

Staff indicated they have appreciated the focus that is being placed on respectful work place, but that at times they feel their views and expertise are not valued. They indicated frustration with having tasks assigned that were time-consuming and not efficient, such as excessive minute-taking or preparing food. They feel they add more value when they are treated as professionals.

There seems to be under-reliance on technology to support the workplace. Staff indicated that they were expected to fill out things such as travel forms for faculty, but that this might be better done online by the individuals themselves. These types of tasks for forty faculty members can be time-consuming for the staff, and may not be the best use of their skills. It will be important to look at staff members' workloads and assess whether changes in processes could relieve significant work stresses. There is the perception that there is duplication of processes between the department and the

Dean's offices, but that other faculties have been able to streamline processes and achieve efficiencies.

There needs to be a collective view and ownership of the departmental work processes, and the staff feel they can contribute to this initiative. They are interested in being perceived as part of the team, and expressed a desire for more cohesive approaches to departmental planning where their input could be sought and considered.

There is concern in the department about job security – something that was expressed by both staff and faculty. Discussions around plans for staffing as part of the renewal process would be well-received.

C. Equity:

As mentioned earlier, there seems to be little diversity among the faculty complement. The Review Committee heard a concern from multiple sources that the curriculum and culture were somewhat Eurocentric. There is a genuine interest in cultural issues in the Faculty, but little evidence of a coherent plan. Living in a community with a rich multi-cultural focus is a positive resource for the department, and there would seem to be ample opportunities upon which to draw to support development in this area.

A concern mentioned by some members of both staff and faculty was that staff are not consistently treated as professionals with special expertise. At times, their conditions of work are compromised by faculty expectations that they should function as “secretaries” or personal assistants. The negative impact of this dynamic is heightened by a recognition that the current staff complement is all women, many from diverse ethnic backgrounds. This situation has the potential to erode the respectful departmental workplace environment. While the staff recognize many members of the faculty as highly supportive of their expertise and commitment, there may not yet be a sufficiently collective commitment to respectful communication to fully address this issue.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. The department is encouraged to develop a faculty renewal plan with a focus on diversity.
2. Junior and mid-career faculty members would benefit from a well-thought-out-mentoring program with a focus on career development and progression.
3. A department-wide review of administrative tasks may provide for better allotment of administrative buyouts for faculty members.

4. A department-wide discussion on the challenges and benefits of sessional use in programs may assist in increased program offerings in high-demand programs.
5. Staff roles and responsibilities across programs and support for faculty needs could be better aligned and understood.
6. More discussion on respectful workplace and team-building opportunities could enhance the work environment.
7. The department would benefit from a discussion on a collective approach to cross-cultural understanding, indigenization and internationalization.

D. Interactions within the Department:

The faculty members in the department are held in high regard by the Faculty's Dean and Associate Deans. The importance of the programs in serving community needs is well understood, and at the same time, there is acknowledgement of the workload in such a large department.

The communication within the department and with the Dean's Office could be enhanced. Faculty members expressed a desire to learn more about the budget and decision making in the department and the Faculty.

There is also an opportunity to enhance communication between programs. The reviewers heard a great deal about common issues and concerns as well as a lack of awareness about these in other programs.

E. Interactions outside the Department:

There are a number of collaborations with other units in the university, in particular in the area of research. The faculty members are very involved in the community, especially with their professional organizations and non-government organizations. This is very positive and has contributed to the strong reputation of the department.

In the Self-Study Report, the faculty members identified the need for a shift in developing more institutional collaborations so that they can access larger grants. This collaboration will be important given the Tri-Council focus on collaborative ventures.

One particular area that the faculty members highlighted was indigenization. The faculty members are generally committed to it, and there are pockets of programmatic and scholarly expertise. However, there seems an overreliance on hiring another Aboriginal scholar to lead this initiative, rather than a collective will to assume responsibility that effective indigenization requires. Beyond focusing on student, faculty and staff recruitment, indigenization requires attention to

curriculum revitalization and an awareness by all of the culture, history and social perceptions of Indigenous peoples. There is expertise in the university and community to support the faculty in this department in developing a robust understanding of indigenization and the inherent benefits to all students. The program areas would be richer with this infusion and a collective ownership.

Internationalization in the department is also focused primarily on individual faculty members' work, so this is another area in which the department may wish to consider expanding. Internationalization looks at curriculum, mobility opportunities for domestic students, community outreach and fostering global citizenship. The department may wish to explore how to internationalize its programs and provide opportunities for students to develop global perspectives on issues.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. Communication between programs and with the Dean's Office in the areas of decision making and budget will be important in these fiscally challenging times.
2. The department would benefit from a discussion on a collective approach to cross-cultural understanding, indigenization and internationalization.

V. Governance, Organization and Administration

A. Quality and effectiveness of governance:

The current department head assumed leadership in 2008, during a period in which tensions resulting from a somewhat forced departmental reorganization had brought together a number of disparate academic and scholarly programmatic areas. His priority has been humanizing the bureaucracy and reducing impediments to the success of the faculty and program areas.

As has been mentioned, the organizational structure of the department is characterized by five relatively discrete and autonomous program areas, each with its own history, culture and working tradition. With the exception of the impetus of a common threat, the units rarely engage on collective priorities.

Most strategic and operational interactions occur within program areas. The faculty perceive that there have been few opportunities to come together to work on issues as a whole, and for the most part, departmental meetings have focused on reporting and information transmission rather than facilitating dialogue. The size of the faculty complement seems to have been understood as an inherent barrier to effective discussion of difficult issues.

The formal governance structure is comprised of members of the leadership team who meet once or twice monthly as the ECPS Council, and a monthly departmental meeting. Although this seemed reasonably structured to facilitate communication, the Review Committee noted a perception that the primary purpose of the Council was to report up from the program areas rather than to filter information down. In particular, the reviewers sensed a significant disconnect between strategic directions at the Dean's Office level and implications for the department overall.

A particular example had to do with the university budgetary situation, which some faculty recognized as one of fiscal restraint while others perceived a situation of business as usual. The Review Committee sensed considerable passivity with respect to budgetary understanding, perhaps associated with a longstanding culture of waiting to be given information rather than taking the initiative to ask. Faculty seemed to have little understanding of how resource allocation decisions were made, including decisions about hiring opportunities. There was a shared assumption that resources were more likely to go to the programs most successful in advocating on their own behalf, and that decisions were made behind closed doors. They recalled few occasions on which they had come together toward understanding one other's needs or the collective good.

With respect to opportunities for leadership, while the Review Committee sees clear evidence of leadership capacity, there seems little culture of enthusiasm for formal leadership across the department. For the most part, leadership seems tied to administrative duties incentivized by teaching buy-out rather than for reasons of professional advancement and enacting influence.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. There seems an opportunity to revisit the governance structure of the department to enhance more meaningful opportunities for engagement, dialogue and strategic planning across program areas.
2. Although the department may have come through a period of time following the forced merger in which it was appropriate to avoid difficult conversations in order to stabilize the department and manage the tensions, the Review Committee now sees evidence of emerging enthusiasm among the faculty for re-opening dialogue on issues of vision, values, governance, resource management and strategic planning.
3. It seems an appropriate time to move beyond the current model of silo academic units and explore the potential benefits of expanded interactions, collaborations and synergies between units and across the department.
4. In the context of current fiscal challenges at UBC, it seems imperative that the department take steps to ensure that faculty are better informed around budgetary realities so that they can make informed decisions with respect to program and curricular planning.

5. In keeping with the impending departmental leadership transition, there may be new opportunities to consider strategies to develop, mobilize and support leadership activities at all levels develop an expanded leadership culture that supports enthusiasm for leadership.

B. Infrastructure and resources:

Although the Faculty of Education is on the brink of expanding its available space with the new building currently under construction, concerns remain across the department that this will not benefit those who remain in the old building. In particular, the Review Committee heard concerns about the shortage of clinical training lab space and the outmoded forms of technology (such as video equipment) that remain in use due to resource limitations.

In terms of staff complement to support the activities of the department, the reviewers heard from both staff and the leadership team that staff were working at maximum capacity, and continually striving to improve workflow systems as well as and role integration for optimal efficiency. As a benchmark, the Review Committee is aware of similar units of comparable size requiring a complement of about 25-30% more than the current staffing level.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. Consideration should be given to a review of the staff complement. A 25-30% increase would bring it in line with comparable departments at other Faculties of Education. This could be addressed through the addition of new positions or consolidating selected activities across departments or between the departmental and Dean's Office levels.
2. Increased attention to the professional development aspirations of support staff, including the conditions that would support their taking advantage of existing opportunities at UBC, would be a welcome recognition of the contribution they are making.

C. Recommendations from previous review:

The Self-Study Report indicates confidence that significant progress has been made with respect to several of the recommendations (made over a decade ago). With respect to sessional faculty involvement (section 10.1.1), some progress has been made in converting a few sessional instructors to 12-month lecturers and tenure-track instructors. In terms of graduate teaching (section 10.1.3) there seems to have been increased support from the Faculty with respect to maintaining accreditation requirements and the School Psychology PhD program has now become accredited. A

revised articulation between the MA and PhD programs has been planned and is slated for implementation in 2015. With respect to governance and administration (section 10.2) a new administrative structure was developed in the form of the ECPS Council.

The department also acknowledges that insufficient progress has been made in relation to several of the previous recommendations. In particular, with respect to faculty recruitment and progress (section 10.1) the Self-Study Report suggests that mentoring of new faculty has been limited to pairing with a senior professor. There seems recognition that this is inadequate, and acknowledgement that retention of promising younger faculty has been an issue in recent years.

With respect to service and outreach roles (section 10.1.4) there has been some movement toward registration of faculty members in the School Psychology area with the BC College of Psychologists, and recent hires are contributing to this linkage with one already registered and two registrations in progress.

With respect to such issues as internationalization, Aboriginal engagement, diversity and inclusion, and multidisciplinary scholarly collaboration, the department remains – as it was in the previous report – on the brink of making inroads in this direction. As has been made evident throughout this report, the Review Committee sees tremendous opportunity to mobilize the very real potential that resides within the exceptional team of people who comprise ECPS beyond the narrow focus of the current context and into a truly broad and shared ambitious vision.

D. Future plans:

The Review Committee sees remarkable consistency between the message of the external review of a decade ago and observations of today. Although progress has been made in removing some impediments to individual and program area success, and there is a general commitment to a respectful environment, the reviewers see pockets of strategic direction rather than movement toward a collective identity, vision and sense of purpose. The reviewers anticipate risks to the department if it continues to focus on successes at the level of individual students, faculty or curricular elements rather than on the broader achievement capacity of the whole. Said differently, the reviewers see excellent opportunities that could be realized across both scholarly and academic activities in the context of a new organizational culture of collective engagement, collaborative partnership and strategic priority setting.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. The previous review noted “little evidence of enactment of a clear and unified department-level vision” and the need for a “unified mission and culture” in the post-merger organization (section 10.4). While the Review Committee can

- appreciate the historic resistance, it seems time now for ambitious action to galvanize a strategic collective capacity moving forward.
2. The Review Committee encourages the department to accelerate its processes of identifying common values, articulating a common vision, and developing processes and capacities for strategic priority enactment.

Other advice:

The Review Committee recognizes that the department is poised to recruit a new Head in the coming months. A planned leadership change such as this provides an important opportunity to set the stage for the future and to capitalize in a new capacity for action.

Review Committee Recommendations:

1. In the interim before a new Head arrives, the department, with the assistance of the current Head and the Dean's Office, is encouraged to set the stage for the future. In particular, the Review Committee encourages efforts to expand dialogue across and between program units, across the various historic divides, so that the remnants of distrust and tension are put to rest and the community is as ready as possible to embrace exciting new opportunities.
2. The Review Committee supports concerted efforts to fill the position of Head with an individual who demonstrates proven leadership, a strong understanding of organizational management, a record of commitment to diversity, excellent communication and human resources skills, and an enthusiasm for strategic action.