



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

*The Graduate School*

*G-1 Communications*

*Box 353770*

*Seattle, Washington 98195-3770*

*Telephone: (206)543-5900*

*Fax: (206)685-3234*

April 3, 2007

To: Phyllis Wise, Provost  
Ana Mari Cauce, Executive Vice Provost  
Office of the Provost, Box 351237

From: Suzanne Ortega, Vice Provost and Dean  
Melissa Austin, Associate Dean for Academic Programs

RE: Review of the UW Tacoma Education Program

At its meeting of February 1, 2007, the Graduate School Council met with members of the team that reviewed the UW Tacoma Education Program (Julie E. Brines, Associate Professor, Sociology (Committee Chair) and Stuart A. Sutton, Associate Professor, Information School; Bruce Burgett, Professor, Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW Bothell was not able to attend), and with Ginger L. MacDonald, Professor and Director, UWT Education Program, Jose Rios, Associate Professor, UWT Education Program, Alan Wood, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UWT, and Jane Wood, Administrator, UWT Education Program.

Currently, the Program offers the Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree, an Educational Administrator (EdAd) Program, and a Professional Certificate Program. In addition, the Program offers a Teacher Certification Program (TCP) that is being transitioned from a post-baccalaureate certificate to a Teacher Education option of the M.Ed. degree. The M.Ed. program began in 1992, the TCP program was added in 1994, the EdAd certificate program started in 2001, and the Professional Certificate program began in 2002-2003. The last review of the Program was completed in 1999. Although the Program was granted continuing status at that time, the Graduate School Council requested that the Program be re-reviewed in 5 years. The current review committee, including its external members (Phyllis J. Edmundson, Professor and Dean Emerita, Graduate School of Education, Portland State University; and Gail Schneider, Professor and Chair, Department of Administrative Leadership, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) held its formal on-site review on February 28 – March 1, 2006.

The Review Committee was impressed by the unit's success in building a very strong academic program "from scratch," and credited the program's leadership in this accomplishment. Because the committee views the program as being in a time of transition and of less rapid growth, it recommended that the unit would be well served to step back and consider the future of the program and how to include its faculty in that process.

The Review Committee expressed concern with the Program's plans to offer 17 focus areas within the 5 study options of the M.Ed., as shown on Page 11 of the committee's report (note that there was a typo in the review committee report referring to these as options rather than focus areas). The committee questioned whether the planned expansion of course offerings could be appropriately covered by limited faculty resources, even taking into account new hires. Although the number of proposed focus areas has been scaled back from 17 to 12 since the site visit, this has not diminished the committee's concerns about the teaching burden.

The committee found strong support for the long range planning process among faculty and staff. They noted that program's response to review committee report addresses the recommendations made by the review committee, and encouraged continued self-evaluation of the program. In its written report, the review committee made a series of additional recommendations regarding capacity of the program, its governance, the design of the curriculum, support and development, and diversity (please see pages 12 to 14 the Review Committee written report for a full listing of the recommendations).

In addition to the program review, the review committee was also asked to evaluate the transition of the TCP to an option within the M.Ed. Dean Austin reported that the Graduate School approved this option after receiving review committee recommendations. However, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) subsequently viewed the proposal as a new degree program, rather than a degree option. As a result, they required a formal review process. The external review committee members were then asked to serve as reviewers of the new M.Ed. option for this purpose. At this writing, the proposal has been approved by the Education Committee of the HECB, and full board approval is expected next month.

The Director of the program expressed her appreciation for the review process and the feedback from the review committee, noting that the site visit occurred at a time of significant changes in the program. She reported that the new M.Ed. program option is functioning well after the first 3 months of implementation. The program also just completed the State accreditation process, and was commended for its connection to, and delivery of, the UW and UWT missions, as well as for its rigor in teaching and scholarship.

During the Council discussion, there was concern raised about whether there are enough faculty for all of the focus areas. The Director responded that there have been recent faculty hires in special education, multicultural education, and science education, and that they are anticipating a hire in math education (this hire has now been made for August, 2007). She also noted that a facilitator has been hired to assist the program in developing a strategic plan. It was noted that governance has been informal, and that the program plans to develop more structure to facilitate discussions of the future. These discussions will include consideration of the best practices for student inquiry vs. the teacher-centered approach. Within the field as a whole, there are

diverging opinions about these approaches, and these are reflected among the program's faculty as well.

The Council asked whether the tuition expense of the masters will decrease minority enrollment. The Director noted that the tuition for the TCP is the same in Tacoma as the Seattle campus, and that the program now has its first endowed scholarship for minority placement. Further, UWT is still the least expensive option in the South Sound area because all the others are private institutions. In addition, the UWT campus has just added a Vice Chancellor for Diversity to facilitate the recruitment of faculty, staff, and students.

The Graduate School Council recommended that the UWT Education Program be reviewed again in 5 years, during the 2011-20012 academic year. They also requested that an interim report on the M.Ed. program be submitted to the Graduate School at the end of this academic year. This report should outline the status of changes made to the TCP Program and should explicitly address the effect of these changes on the student experience and student composition. We concur with these recommendations.

cc: Alan Wood, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UWT  
Ginger L. MacDonald, Professor and Director, UWT Education Program  
David Canfield-Budde, Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School  
Kimberly Friese, President, Graduate and Professional Student Senate  
UWT Education Review Committee  
Graduate School Council