

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
TACOMA BRANCH TEACHER EDUCATION
PROGRAM REVIEW**

**Review Committee Report
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Douglas Simpson
December, 1998**

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA BRANCH
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM REVIEW, December 6-7, 1998**

The U.W. Tacoma Education Program Review Committee was charged with responding to three general questions: Do both the Master of Education and the Teacher Certification Program offer adequate quality for students? Are there significant obstacles for faculty in seizing opportunities for distinctiveness and quality in both programs? Do both programs merit a move from provisional status to continuing status or should they remain provisional or even be terminated?

Having interviewed faculty, students, staff, and representatives from the community we conclude that TCP offers outstanding quality for students. Due to numerous factors, the M.Ed. program is less fully developed than TCP; however we find that it does provide adequate quality for graduate students.

There are significant obstacles for faculty; however we find that faculty have been diligent and conscientious in making TCP distinctive and of excellent quality. Given the concerted effort in mounting two separate programs, this numerically small faculty has been conscientious in striving for equal excellence in the M.Ed. Program.

Based on our observations, review of print materials, and interviews, the committee recommends that both programs be granted continuing status. Continuing status for the M.Ed. does, however, require meeting specific recommendations found at the conclusion of this report.

For ease in reading we have organized the report with specific reviews of the Tacoma Teacher Education Program (TCP and M.Ed.), faculty contributions, student perspectives, institutional connections, and community relations.

TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Teacher Certification Program

The UWT Teacher Certification Program is excellent. In our shared opinion, the program is well conceptualized and provides a superior education for future teachers. Examination of course syllabi, interviews with faculty, and discussions with students suggest the program is rigorous and intellectually challenging. Faculty and students embrace unusually high expectations for an initial teacher licensing program, which undoubtedly contributes to the high retention and placement rates the program enjoys. Students were unanimous in their praise of the TCP faculty and their high levels of student support. Upon completing our review, the committee felt that stronger support needs to be given to the science education component of the program. In addition, we noticed a lack of clarity about the program mission on part of the students. Although the faculty are clearly aware of the interdisciplinary mission of the certification program, most of the current students and graduates spoke only of the utilitarian, technical, and instrumental parts of the program rather than about the intellectual, critical, and reflective aspects of the curriculum. Perhaps the faculty could bridge these perceptions by continually and specifically relating the liberal arts components to the more practical parts of their courses.

Masters of Education Program

The Masters Program, by design, does not have a singular focus as does the Teacher Certification Program. Designed to complement the Teacher Certification Program, the Masters Program provides a range of study options that allow students to gain an in-depth knowledge of areas such as Multicultural Education, Integrated Curriculum, At-Risk Children and Youth, etc. Rather than organizing study options around more traditional areas such as Mathematics Education, Testing and Measurement, Curriculum Development, Educational Foundations, and so on, this program attempts to integrate all such areas around important themes. This has allowed the program to develop in a very flexible manner which students and graduates thoroughly appreciate; however, it has also stretched a small faculty beyond reasonable expectations.

The program faculty have not undertaken a comprehensive and reflective review of the curriculum since its inception; the

committee recommends they do so--especially in terms of reexamining the study options, and clarifying the criteria for the design and completion of the culminating projects. Concomitant with this process, we recommend that the faculty adopt explicit and consistent guidelines for the culminating project. At the present time, students report that there is extensive inconsistency in expectations for these projects. In some cases they have been the equivalent of an M.Ed. thesis while in others the projects have been curricula for the immediate classroom. We would not suggest that either is better or worse than the other, we simply recommend that faculty develop consistent criteria for these projects. In addition, the faculty is well aware that if new state requirements for professional certificates are implemented, additional curricular modifications will have to be made.

As suggested in the above comments made about the Teacher Certification Program, the committee found that many students and graduates of the M.Ed. Program found it difficult to articulate clearly the connection between the interdisciplinary/liberal arts components of their programs and the practical, more technical parts of their training.

FACULTY

During the site visit, interviews of faculty were both formal and informal. As is noted throughout this report, the Teacher Education Program is graced with an incredibly hard working and scholarly faculty. Students describe them as "flexible and stimulating educators who provide an application of research to teaching." They are also credited with being accessible when students need advising, help in understanding assignments, or in finding scholarly print resources.

Review of individual faculty vita reveals a faculty that is attempting to keep pace with teaching, community service and scholarly productivity. In our conversations with faculty, however, it became clear that scholarly productivity is difficult to sustain due to diverse responsibilities. For example, in the past year one highly praised professor advised 49 graduate students, developed and helped implement a highly successful recruiting program,

served on numerous UWT committees, and has taught in both the TCP and M.Ed. program. When one peruses this individual's vita, there is also a clear effort to maintain a record of publications.

UWT is fortunate in the two relatively new faculty who are energetic, articulate and willing to dedicate many extra hours to support and improve the Teacher Education Program. This, however, leads to another concern of the committee and current faculty. How long can faculty sustain their current enthusiasm and industry? Pressures on faculty have at least contributed to what has, apparently, been a schism in working relationships. It is beyond our charge or our certain knowledge to comment on all of the causes for the uneasy relationships we heard described. Staff and faculty did state that whatever the source of the conflict, the advent of Frank Brouillett as temporary Program Director has helped facilitate a less stressful environment.

The committee recommends that the new Program Director be selected with particular attention to her/his communication and human relationship skills. Faculty and staff seek a cohesion within their unit. That is not to say that we recommend conformity to a single philosophy; it is to say that a healthy environment encourages the free exchange of opinions, expertise, and perspectives without undue acrimony. We further suggest that UWT administrators consider asking Dr. Brouillett to aid the new director during his/her first year at UWT. Dr. Brouillett has extensive and valuable knowledge of the education system that can serve the new director well.

Revisiting and revising study options can, if facilitated well, further cohesion within faculty and staff. At the present time, it appears that each faculty member is responsible for at least one study option. This, in turn, creates inequity in advising loads.

STUDENTS

The committee interviewed all of the current Teacher Certification Program (TCP) cohort (53 students), about 20 of the current M.Ed. students and about an equal number of folks who have graduated from the M.Ed. program. Uniformly, students and graduates alike rate both the TCP and the M.Ed. programs as

excellent. Faculty and staff in the Teacher Education Program are credited for this excellence.

Accessibility of faculty has been key in the strong support students and graduates give to UWT. Faculty members are always willing to take time to work with individual students whether in answering questions about class or in helping students plan their culminating projects. Interestingly, several TCP students commented that while the reputation of their certification program is growing they consider this both good and bad news. They are proud of the growing repute; they are concerned that if this results in an expansion of the program access to faculty will diminish. They are loath to see this happen.

Those M.Ed. students who worked as cohesive groups in designing, implementing, and putting into written form their individual projects were particularly appreciative of the advisers' skillful planning and support. One student mentioned the stringent expectations that her graduate adviser had for her and her classmates. Other students emphasized and expressed satisfaction with the practical nature of their projects.

Stringent expectations for culminating projects is an issue with many of the current and past graduate students. While the one student reported stringent, explicit expectations, this was not a shared experience across study options. The graduate students and recent graduates as a whole strongly recommended that faculty develop at least a set of baseline criteria that are stronger and more consistent than those currently in place. The committee concurs with this recommendation.

Students in the TCP and M.Ed. Program expressed confusion and/or dissatisfaction with the liberal studies requirements in their studies. There appear to be two sources for this. While some M.Ed. students clearly use this requirement to provide both depth and scope to their studies, others saw it as merely an inconvenient obstacle. For some, the problem lies in accessibility of suitable courses; for others it lies in simply understanding the connection between liberal studies and their pursuit of either certification or an advanced degree. The solution to this is not easy, for while faculty and staff can make the connection between the requirement and intellectual development explicit, they face a greater obstacle in

insuring that suitable courses in liberal studies are actually available at times of the day when students can take them.

All students commented on their satisfaction with the dedicated, flexible and stimulating classroom instruction provided by faculty. They also commented on the extraordinary demands on faculty time. These are demands not just from students but from what is perceived as unusually high numbers of commitments that faculty are expected to meet.

INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

We would like to address two areas in which further support from the administration of UWT and UWS could strengthen the UWT Education programs. These areas are faculty workload and issues of general coordination between UWS and UWT.

Faculty Workload

It is the unanimous position of the review committee that the current workload of faculty of the Education Program at UWT is unreasonably high. Currently, faculty teaching in TCP teach four courses each quarter (while also sometimes having additional responsibility for supervising interns in their field placements). Teaching loads in the M.Ed. program require teaching three courses per quarter. Since the faculty is small, the professors often crossover from TCP to graduate courses. At the present time, there is no explicit policy providing a consistent procedure for determining workloads for those teaching in both programs. According to our information each professor must negotiate his or her workload individually. The uneven allocation of teaching assignments leads to inequity in teaching assignments and workloads.

Responsibilities beyond course assignments weigh heavily on faculty. Advising loads are uneven and exceptionally high. Faculty have been heavily involved in the work of building their programs and their campus as well as planning and implementing student recruitment strategies. These overloads threaten the sustainability of the programs and make it difficult for faculty to lead the

scholarly lives that are necessary to maintaining currency in their fields and the quality of their programs.

We find that this overload is grounded in at least three institutional factors.

The funding of the education program appears to be less than funding for similar programs on either the Bothell or the Seattle campuses of the UW. Unlike programs at the other UW campuses, funding for Education at UWT appears to be based on the assumptions that less faculty effort is required for teaching in a preservice teacher education program than in M.Ed. program. This assumption is manifested both in department policies concerning the assignment of courseloads (and the use of the metric of credit hours, rather than preparations in assigning courses) and in campus funding formula that assumes higher student-to-faculty ratios for the TCP program than for other clinical programs at UWT, including the M.Ed. program. All members of the committee dispute these assumptions.

The committee recommends that the administrators of UWT compare their funding levels with those in similar programs at the other UW campuses (and at other institutions) and make appropriate adjustments as soon as possible.

The state and University's funding formula, based on FTE students, is inappropriate for the UWT M.Ed. Program, which is explicitly designed for **part-time** students. Funding on FTE formula assumes that students generate work within a program primarily via course enrollments, but students also require individual advising, support from the program office, and access to support services such as the library and computing. The program must enroll between two and three students for each student FTE; thus, faculty and program staff are supporting the work of two to three times the numbers of students for which they are funded in all areas outside of course enrollments. More appropriate funding formulae should be developed.

Few resources for program start-up have been available. The creation of new curriculum and program infrastructure, and the dissemination of information about new programs is resource intensive, yet state and university budgets have not been available

for these endeavors. Faculty and staff have borne most of the responsibilities for program start-up.

The committee was both impressed by and very concerned about recent recruiting efforts undertaken by the faculty and program. These recruiting efforts have been effective, yet are extremely labor intensive. Faculty and staff spoke convincingly of the difficulties of sustaining these efforts.

Recruiting students to Education Programs differs from recruiting to many other academic programs in important ways: potential students must be informed about complex and shifting state requirements for certification; there tends to be more competition for students from other institutions in the region (many of which are entrepreneurial and are in the state only to recruit Education students) ; application processes are more complex than in many programs; and potential students have questions about professional, as well as academic concerns.

Given the unusually specialized functions of recruiting for Education programs and the already heavy workloads of the faculty, the committee recommends that UWT fund at least a .5 professional staff person to assist the program in student recruitment.

Coordination Between UWT & UWS

The mission of UWT and UWS are different. Thus, policies that may serve students and faculty on UWS campus well are sometimes inappropriate for the circumstances at UWT. The committee recommends that UWT and UWS engage in further discussions about modifications of policy in the following areas:

The Mission of the Education Program at UWT is to serve preservice and inservice educators. Students in these programs reasonably expect to make significant progress toward degree during Summer Quarter, when their professional responsibilities are much lighter. Yet current funding structures, under which programs lose FTE generated in Summer Quarter, discourage the programs from offering the courses students are seeking.

We understand that the entire UW system is considering alternatives for Summer Quarter. The committee recommends that rather than waiting for University-wide policies to be developed, administrators of UWT and UWS explore short-term solutions for the UWT Education Program that would support the program's mission

of serving part-time students. These policies might include modified faculty appointments, alternative funding structures, or other experimental arrangements.

Many routine support services are available to UWT staff and faculty only if they travel to the Seattle campus. UWS and UWT should explore alternatives for having some of these services more readily available on the UWT campus. Some UW services (the Ombudsman's office, CIDR) have already begun supplying part-time staff on-site, while others send staff to UWT on an as-needed basis. As the UWT campus grows, more such services are needed. Specifically, the committee recommends exploring alternatives for grant support services for faculty and professional development opportunities for staff.

Grant support for faculty, including the routine processing of grant applications (travel to Seattle is apparently often required to submit applications to the office of Grants and Contracts) is needed. Faculty also need access to support for budget development, editing, and identification of funding sources.

Staff noted the awkwardness of personnel functions being housed in the unit that also manages the budget; there are concerns about the lack of advocacy for staff needs in such a model.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Prior to the on-site review, the committee requested the opportunity to meet with representatives from the school communities and community service agencies either served or supported by the Tacoma Education Program. In fact, the committee met with two superintendents from Auburn and Puyallup and two assistant superintendents or personnel directors from Kent and Tacoma. Auburn and Kent school districts are not involved with the Teacher Certification Program, consequently, they were not familiar with either the students or the certification program. Although equally unfamiliar with the M.Ed. Program, the superintendent from Auburn had sought and received excellent consultantship services from the professor of Special Education.

Comments by this group of school district personnel indicates that the activities, programs, and professors of the Education

Program are viewed as key contributors to the well-being of the Tacoma area and its schools. In particular, the desire of the superintendents and assistant superintendents to have student teachers placed in their districts is a clear indication of the value they place upon cooperation with the university and its Education Program. Likewise, their interest in employing program graduates is a positive indicator and suggests that graduates are well prepared.

Several interests of school district administrators may merit examination and, if appropriate, response by program personnel. First, all school personnel interviewed indicated a strong interest in being able to recruit teachers who are certified in special education. Presently there is a great demand for special education teachers, and this need is expected to increase in the foreseeable future. While considering this demand seems well-advised by program personnel, community interest in special education graduates should not be allowed to aggravate the already pronounced problem of the faculty workload. Second, it was stated that the Tacoma schools are in need of teachers who are prepared to teach students of color and other urban school populations. This need seems to fit well with the mission of the Education Program and offers the opportunity for nearly all TCP students to have rich experiences in culturally diverse schools. On the other hand, other districts did not see an immediate need for urban teachers but commented that such preparation would enable them to better serve diverse students as their districts become more multicultural. Other than the emphasis on preparing students for multicultural populations, school personnel seemed very skill-oriented and desired teachers with technical (rather than intellectual) competence. While this approach to employing first-year teachers is somewhat understandable, the philosophy expressed by the faculty and in the program literature seems better balanced, namely placing emphasis on both practical and intellectual aspects of the reflective professional educator.

District personnel also raised several other questions that suggest that they could profit from more interaction with program faculty. For instance, they wondered why there are no B. A. and B. S. degree programs available for beginning teachers and questioned

why the TCP is separate from the M. Ed. Program. These comments suggest that they were not well informed about the TCP philosophy.

In terms of how UWT could serve the community, they agreed that education faculty could or should deliver courses on school district grounds. A note of caution is merited, however. An already overworked faculty probably would not be able to deliver such courses without additional personnel. In view of these and other comments, program personnel may wish to have occasional or annual meetings with area superintendents to keep them apprised of curricular offerings, collaborative opportunities, and student employment interests.

The committee finds it difficult to make meaningful and valuable recommendations concerning service to communities for any such comments would, of necessity, be based on a limited representation of these communities. We offer the above commentary as a possible indication of directions the Teacher Education Program could pursue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our interviews and review of the pertinent materials, the UW Tacoma Education Program Review Committee suggests that representatives from UWT and UWS meet during the next three year period to review progress made towards incorporating the following recommendations that there be:

- stronger emphasis in and support for science education in both programs,
- explicit clarity concerning each program's mission,
- explicit information relating liberal studies requirements to each program,
- examination and reconfiguration of current study options and development of consistent, baseline criteria for culminating projects in all M.Ed. study options,
- alignment of workloads so that teaching assignments between the TCP and M.Ed. programs are not only equivalent but are also consistent with the other Branch Campus clinical programs.
- immediate attention given to funding issues (align with similar

- programs at other U.W. campuses),
- adjust of the FTE formula to reflect a mission of UWT- to provide quality education for part time students,
- funding of at least a .5 professional staff person to assist with recruitment,
- more readily accessible support for grant preparation, processing and submission,
- improvement of professional development opportunities for staff.

“The faculty holds such high expectations for us as students; these are exceeded only by their expectations for themselves.”

The student who spoke these words represents the judgment of both past and present students whether in the TCP or the M.Ed. Program. Clearly, UWT is a student centered university and serves its community well. Faculty is largely responsible for the growing reputation of this campus, for faculty designs and implements programs, advises students and supervises interns in the field, and models excellent teaching in the classroom. Our suggestions for improvement are intended to provide the well deserved support for the well-being of faculty, programs, students, and the UWT campus.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

5 January 1999

Dr. Marsha Landolt, Dean
The Graduate School
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Dear Dr. Landolt:

As a follow-up to my recent visit to review the Education Program at the University of Washington, Tacoma, I am writing to provide an overview of my impressions of the unit and its staff, students, and faculty. My comments fall into two general areas. First, I want to stress that I think program personnel have done an outstanding job in many different areas since the inception of the program. Everyone, as far as I could tell, has been fully committed to developing new programs that meet the needs of present-day teachers and other educators. Likewise, the energy and enthusiasm of faculty, staff, and students is obvious. People are clearly taking advantage of the opportunity to be both rigorous and creative in their preparation programs. When discussing the imaginative programs and experiences that have been designed, faculty, staff, and students provided ample evidence that their hard work and study are productive and practical as well as characterized by intellectual and professional integrity.

Second, I should note that past progress will probably be difficult to sustain and future enhancements will be more arduous if several

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matters are not addressed successfully in the near future, e.g., workload assignments, faculty tensions, and program options. Heavy workloads and numerous program options seem to commingle to tax the resources of the faculty. In part, this challenge appears attributable to the newness of the university and the willingness of the faculty to overextend themselves. But there are institutional characteristics that seem to exacerbate the matter, namely, funding does not take into consideration two important variables: (1) student headcount and FTE and (2) the professional nature of the programs. Another factor that may contribute to the faculty's being overtaxed is the lack of desirable interpersonal relationships by some personnel. This problem, of course, affects other faculty too. Personnel tensions were mentioned by several faculty members. These tensions seem to limit faculty discussions and, thereby, hinder collaboration and promote unnecessary programmatic discreteness. While no one needs to be blamed for these funding, programmatic, and personnel problems, there is the need to address them if the Education Program is to attract and retain outstanding faculty. The personnel unease may be best addressed after the new director is in place. I think she or he will need to be especially careful not to aggravate the problem and to work impartially to ameliorate present tension.

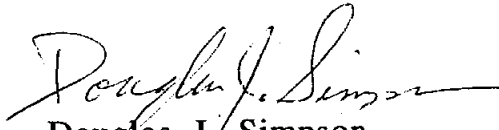
In closing, I would like to mention that the opportunity to work with the evaluation team and the University of Washington was a decided pleasure. University personnel were accessible, cordial, and informative. Moreover, the team was particularly fortunate to have Nancy Hansen-Krening as chair. Her thoughtful, fact-finding, and focused approach kept the committee on task and enabled us to complete our assignment. Jane Van Galen was superb, especially in clarifying questions about contextual and institutional matters and in providing information regarding state regulations, pending legislation, and comparative information. Stamatis Vokos' knowledge of science education and probing questions added tremendously to the committee's work. Toby Edson contributed to

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the committee's work in a commendable fashion by constantly delving beneath initial answers and information and raising broader historical, theoretical, and conceptual concerns. For me personally, the experience was an engaging, refreshing learning experience.

Thank you much for the opportunity to serve on this committee.
Best wishes in your work and in the New Year.

Cordially,


Douglas J. Simpson
Dean

DJS/lis



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

January 11, 1999

Dean Marsha Landholt
The Graduate School
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Dear Dean Landholt:

Now that the Program Review Committee for the University of Washington, Tacoma Campus Education Program has finished its report, I turn to the task of writing you directly about my personal impressions of the Education Program and of the review process.

To begin with, the Education Program, the Tacoma Campus, and the University of Washington should be commended for the excellent Education programs offered in Tacoma. The joint accomplishments of these three entities to conceptualize, implement, and sustain such high quality programs is impressive. The sheer energy that seemed to fuel faculty, staff, and student efforts was palpable during my visit.

That said, let me turn to three areas that, from my perspective, need attention: (1) Faculty loads/Faculty friction; (2) Conceptualization of programs; and (3) Articulation of program mission.

Central to much of our committee's report, faculty workloads need immediate and close examination. Without repeating many of the findings in our committee report, I would like to add that I believe that much of the reported "cancer," and "friction," amongst some faculty members stems from the fact that demands on faculty time are and have been extraordinarily high. Likewise, the small size of the initial faculty placed the first Director in an untenable position of being both mentor to and evaluator of the two junior faculty members. With the increase of faculty numbers and an improved distribution of faculty members across the academic ranks, I suspect that some of the initial and structurally-inherent tensions among faculty will be reduced.

A second observation, not unconnected to the issue of faculty tension, concerns the issue of how the faculty conceptualizes teacher education programs. From my observation (and others on the committee) there seemed to be no intellectual consensus on how to best approach teacher education. Although mission statements suggest that the UWT

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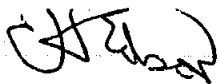
Education Programs have adopted a “reflective/critical” design for teacher education, some faculty members seemed to champion a “collaborative model,” and still others, a “research-driven or positivist model.” One could conclude that the faculty is not in agreement as to the mission of the program which, in turn, might contribute to faculty tensions. Whatever the case, I couldn’t help but notice that there seemed to be very little sense among faculty about “other ways of knowing.” Lacking a central dialogue between faculty members on various ways of knowing results in an unwanted Balkanization between subject areas, confusion among students as to intellectual direction, and an undermining of the interdisciplinary mission of UWT. Possibly an introductory, team-taught Master’s class on “Ways of Knowing” could provide a valuable forum for faculty and students alike to explore together the different ways knowledge is constructed in the field of education.

The third area, that of clearly articulating the program mission, is closely related to the issues of conceptualization mentioned above. I would like to expand briefly on this subject, as I believe it is exactly this mission which serves to make the UWT Education Programs unique and distinctive. From my point of view, an interdisciplinary approach that seeks to integrate liberal arts components directly into the degree and preparatory programs is sorely needed. Professionals need to have technical and practical skills, but they also need to be able to question the institutionalized assumptions upon which these skills are grounded. Likewise, while much attention continues to be directed to the utilitarian and instrumental aspects of professional training, one wonders about the glaring lack of intellectual, critical, and reflective components that should serve to guide professional practice. The Education Programs at UWT have an excellent blueprint for doing this; however, I believe that faculty members need to better understand and support this mission. Perhaps more active and committed participation on the part of liberal arts faculty would provide the needed catalyst. Finally, instructors in each class, whether masters or certification, should explicitly make clear the relationships between liberal arts and professional components of their class content. As it now stands, my sense is that students remain wholly unconvinced about the value and importance of the interdisciplinary approach, and that some faculty pay only lip service to the intellectual goals found in the mission statement.

Two final notes: I am sorry that during our site visit we were unable to interview any of the liberal arts faculty at UT, nor did we have an opportunity to talk with the Program Advisory Committee. I trust that your own review includes input from these two important groups. Second, I would like to personally commend the efforts of the University of Washington faculty that served on the review committee. Nancy Hansen-Krening did a masterful job chairing the committee; Jane VanGalen was an invaluable resource and a patient teacher who explain numerous institutional issues to us; and Stamatis Vokos’ keen insights and questions helped to broaden our inquiry beyond the narrow confines of the field of education. Dean Douglas Simpson was an excellent outside representative given his extensive knowledge of teacher education and program administration.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to visit the University of Washington, Tacoma Campus. Although the days were way too long (a three-day review should be considered for future reviews), I did enjoy myself and was glad to have been able to meet so many talented and interesting professionals.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. H. Edson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and "H".

**C. H. Edson
Associate Professor**