

February 7, 2012

Summary of Findings and Response to Recommendations
Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership at Fresno State (DPELFS)

This report is in response to the external reviewers' report that was prepared by WASC external reviewers in October, 2012. This summary report outlines the commendations and addresses each of the recommendations made by the reviewers.

First, the program was very appreciative of the number and depth of the reviewers' commendations and recommendations. We believe the reviewers were thorough and fair in their evaluation of the DPELFS program and pleased they recognized the hard work and progress made by the faculty and staff in offering this new doctoral program at Fresno State.

Summary of Commendations:

1. The reviewers commended the program faculty and students for their expressed enthusiasm and pride in the Ed.D. program. The reviewers expressed that they were impressed with the loyalty and dedication the director and faculty have for the students in the program. The reviewers noted that the students overwhelmingly appreciated the rigor of the program and the students described the faculty as competent, accessible, and caring.
2. The reviewers commended the program for its involvement with the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) and noted that DPELFS has gained national recognition through participation in CPED. They also noted the external review of DPELFS by a panel of CPED participants gave the doctoral program a glowing review.
3. The WASC team commended the doctoral program for the vast resources supporting the program including fiscal support, physical support, and faculty support and also commended the staff for their dedication to and support of doctoral students.
4. The reviewers commended the program for its Signature Pedagogy – Embedded Fieldwork, citing it as a hallmark of the program. (Embedded fieldwork is a site-based service learning doctoral project that is directly related to the curriculum content of the course.)
5. The review team commended the program for its partnerships with students in publishing and presenting at conferences, and in providing a Center for Research and Publication to assist students in publishing their research.
6. The reviewers commended the program for its community outreach, collaboration with school districts, and its engagement with the region.
7. The reviewers commended the program for the redesign of their Student Outcomes Assessment Plan and the part the plan plays in the 5-year review process.

8. The team commended the program for the responsiveness to needs that had emerged through various assessments (closing the loop) and that the program had taken seriously and acted upon concerns raised by students, faculty and external partners and addressed them in a timely manner.

Summary and Response to Recommendations:

1. **Assessment and Program Review.** The reviewers correctly pointed out that the CPED principles had not been included in a singular framework to guide future assessment activities. A new assessment plan is currently being developed including the CPED principles as well as other changes that emerged as a result of the actual review process. That plan will be presented to the Graduate Group during the spring 2013 with implementation following adoption of the new plan.

2. **Program Review – increased external data.** The reviewers noted that the current review process did not have abundant assessments of the embedded fieldwork assignments that are the “Signature Pedagogy” of the program. The Graduate Group has formed an ad hoc committee to redesign data gathering procedures for embedded fieldwork activities and will implement those new processes and measures during the spring 2013 semester.

3. **Capacity – ability to offer 3 programs (Fresno, Bakersfield, and Online with Channel Islands).** We are not sure the reviewers correctly understood that the Bakersfield program was a transition program that would be moving fully to Bakersfield and offered solely by Bakersfield in a planned transition. Bakersfield administration is currently in the process of building faculty capacity at Bakersfield so that the Fresno faculty can be phased out of teaching and serving on dissertation committees. That process is going as planned. The new online (hybrid) program with Channel Islands is not slated to commence until the Bakersfield program has transitioned to Bakersfield.

4. **Range of Quality of Dissertations.** The evaluators noted that “many, if not most of the DPELFS student dissertations are excellent.” However, they did note that 6 dissertations were shorter than 100 pages, and recommended that we relook at our rubrics to be sure that all dissertations meet a minimum acceptable standard.

To address this recommendation, and ad hoc Graduate Group committee has been assigned the task of reviewing the current rubrics to see how these issues might be assimilated into those assessments. The work of the committee is expected to be completed by the end of the spring 2013 semester and implemented as soon as the changes are adopted by the Graduate Group. In the meantime, faculty members have been made aware of the concern, and are making concerted efforts to address this recommendation even before the ad hoc committee has made their recommendations.

5. **Diversity of Core Faculty.** The external reviewers noted that the doctoral core faculty members are not as diverse as the general population of faculty within the Kremen School of Education and Human Development. While the core faculty members of the doctoral program are interdisciplinary and are often faculty members selected to be part of the core faculty based on their expertise, there is agreement that more effort to recruit diverse faculty should be a priority when searches are conducted. Two searches are currently underway and there appears to be diverse candidates in both pools who

February 7, 2012

could be appropriate additions to the core faculty. Diligence needs to be top priority in all future searches to ensure students are being taught by diverse doctoral faculty.

In summary, the program review recommendations have been discussed with the doctoral faculty and school administration and steps have been taken to address each recommendation. We are sure these adjustments and changes will enhance the learning experiences of our doctoral students.

Submitted by:

Dr. Sharon Brown-Welty

Director, Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership

February 7, 2013