

To: Dr. Martin Tadlock, Dr. Janet Bahr and Dr. Martin Venneman
Re: Academic Prioritization Process for programs within the College of Education
From: Dr. Kay Grant, Dean

At the Academic Affairs Council Retreat on December 6, 2010 all programs at NSU were rated and categorized. This followed a year of work to look at all programs across a variety of dimensions that included qualitative and quantitative data. All but three programs from the College of Education were placed in the maintain category. Each of the three programs that were placed in the revision category (*B.S. in Special Education, M.S. in Higher Education Administration and Services and M.S. in Substance Abuse Counseling*) came to be there for different reasons and were placed there at my recommendation, as part of our college's commitment to continuous improvement. None were being recommended for phasing out. I will address each separately.

Bachelor of Science in Special Education

Need: critical shortage area in state and nation

Productivity: steady-Has had 25+ graduates each year

Challenge: Due to changes in No Child Left Behind program at federal level, the definition of “highly qualified” as it applies to a special education teacher has now changed. In order to be the teacher of record a special education teacher must now have certification in at least one content area as well as special education certification. Our candidates can still graduate with the minimum 124 hours and a degree in SPED but are not considered “highly qualified”. Oklahoma was requiring that candidates take additional courses before taking the state certification tests to add certification areas and then legislation was passed in April 2011 to remove the requirement of taking courses and allow additional certification areas to be added solely on the basis of passing the state tests. This had a negative impact on our summer enrollments as many were going to take classes to add ECED or ELED. The result of all the changes has been confusion and frustration for SPED candidates as well as our faculty to be able to know exactly what is required.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

As with all our other education programs, SPED prepared and submitted a program review Sept. 15, 2010. That was received back Feb. 1, 2011 and the program is currently modifying course requirements in light of the suggestions received from the Council for Exceptional Children reviewers. This modified program review will be resubmitted September 15, 2011. The onsite visit for renewing the state and national accreditation for NSU’s entire Teacher Education program is October 2-4, 2011.

Some programs across the state and nation have discontinued their Bachelor’s programs in SPED and gone to a Masters only approach. School districts from across the state and region seek our SPED graduates and have encouraged us to continue our bachelor’s level program.

GOAL: Once program review is completed and approved and accreditation visit completed, to reconfigure SPED program to incorporate additional certification area to meet the definition of highly qualified. Challenge will to do so within 124 hour cap on undergraduate programs. Discussions have begun on variations in delivery and creative ways to meet the need across the state. Would expect that within two years the program would be revamped so that candidates leave “highly qualified” and enrollments would increase.

Masters in Substance Abuse Counseling

Need: Legislation requires those in the field to have Masters and get their state licensure. This is such a shortage area and programs are few that state has backed off on enforcing deadline.

Productivity: The program is less than 5 years old and has only generated graduates since Spring 2009 when 5 graduated, followed by 4 in 2009-2010.

Challenge: The program is delivered in a cohort system similar to the other graduate programs in Psychology and Counseling. It was launched face to face only on both Tahlequah and Broken Arrow campuses with limited faculty who had expertise in this area. Originally the legislation required all licensure candidates in the field of Substance Abuse to have completed a master's degree by January 2010. That requirement has now been backed up to January 2012. With changes in legislation and lack of marketing, the result was low classes.

Changes which have already been implemented:

- 1) There have been changes in the faculty leading and teaching in the program through non-renewal, shifting assignments and new hires.
- 2) Some courses have been launched in an online format to serve more students since numbers are divided between campuses.
- 3) Changes with internal data collection for the program to better monitor progress and communication of candidates.
- 4) Increased marketing efforts through development of brochures, visits to potential practicum sites and presentations at conferences at that serve potential candidates.

GOALS:

- 1) To increase the number of declared majors through recruiting.
- 2) To increase the number of graduates through better communication, advising and course schedules that meet graduate student needs.
- 3) To work with agencies to assure that the program meets the needs of the clients being served.

Considerations:

Further development of blended and online course formats

Consideration of whether the separate cohort systems on two campuses is best for this program until numbers grow larger.

Master of Science in Higher Education Administration and Services

Need: moderate

Productivity: Has had decreasing number of majors and graduates in each of the options with totals of 10, 14 and 6 over last three years.

Challenge: The program has had identity confusion from having three major name changes and program revisions in the last ten years. It started as the Masters in Junior College Teaching and then became the Masters in College Teaching. When two year schools started requiring their faculty to have Masters degrees in the content area they were teaching, the program revamped itself again. This time it completely switched its name and offered two options: one in Higher Education Administration and other in Student Personnel Services. The outside reviewer brought in as part of the most recent Program Review (2008) for the Regents recommended streamlining the program and having a clearer focus. The program was partially delivered in Psychology and Counseling and partially in Educational Foundations and Leadership and neither took real ownership. It required 42 hours and did not lead to any specific credentialing. Personnel had changed and the number of majors was dropping off significantly.

Changes that have been made:

- 1) A new program chair from within EFL was named beginning August 2010.
- 2) A task force of faculty, current and former candidates was formed. Focus groups were held to determine what the needs were and how the revamped program could better meet those needs.
- 3) Changes were proposed and taken through the EFL Dept., and on to CEPC.
- 4) Approval was received from the Regents in June 2011.
 - a. Name of program changed to Masters in Higher Education Leadership.
 - b. The two options were eliminated.
 - c. Courses were added and deleted with total number of hours reduced from 42 to 36.
 - d. Practicum and thesis hours increased.

GOALS:

- 1) To offer the majority of the program in online, blended or compressed formats to meet the needs of working adults.
- 2) To work with a wide variety of higher education institutions in the area to recruit existing employees into the program and arrange for practicum sites.
- 3) To increase the number of majors and graduates within the next two years.