

Academic Program Review

MUN - Faculty of Education

Report of the Review Panel

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The panel members of the Review Committee would like to acknowledge the work undertaken in preparing for the Academic Program Review (APR). We thank most sincerely everyone who prepared written submissions or participated in the on-site consultations, for their openness in sharing information and their thoughts and experiences about the Faculty. We very much appreciate the contributions of the external stakeholders, the English School District, Department of Education and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA) for their input in the process. We would also like to acknowledge the input of the Dean of Record, Dr. Doreen Neville. Finally, we are also very appreciative of the work of Ms. Kim Myrick from the Centre of Institutional Analysis and Planning (CIAP) in overseeing arrangements for the review process and for her support throughout the process.

INTRODUCTION

The on-site assessment for the Academic Program Review (APR) of the Faculty of Education took place on November 20-21, 2014. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers, Dr. Fiona Blaikie, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Education, Brock University and Dr. David Mandzuk, Associate Professor and Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba and two internal reviewers from Memorial University, Dr. Scott MacKinnon, Professor and Associate Dean, Human Kinetics and Recreation and Dr. Linda Hensman, Associate Professor and former Dean in the School of Pharmacy.

BACKGROUND

There are a number of important contextual factors that we were made aware of during the review activities. Some of these are external factors such as declining enrollments and others are internal to developments at Memorial University of Newfoundland. These are important to identify as they not only influence some of the issues facing the Faculty of Education but a number of recommendations will be made in light of these factors.

External Factors

Declining School Enrollments and Graduates

The declining school enrollments impact not only the potential intake of students to the university but also the demand for teachers within the system. This has the potential to affect enrollments in the Faculty of Education. While some adjustments have been made in program offerings and the numbers of students accepted into the different programs, further adjustments may be required in order to ensure an appropriate balance of graduates to meet the demands of the profession.

Internal Factors

There are a number of important developments that have taken place within Memorial University which will have impact on all academic units including the Faculty of Education.

Memorial University Strategic Directions and Frameworks

After broad consultation both inside the University and with external stakeholders, three major frameworks were developed and endorsed by the Senate of Memorial University which guide and support development of major university activities. These complementary frameworks have the potential for a number of changes within the university environment and how it engages the broader community. The three frameworks are:

- *Research Strategy Framework* (Endorsed by Senate September 13, 2011) including strategic research themes.
- *Teaching and Learning Framework* (Endorsed by Senate May 10, 2011) including a number of principles to guide the teaching learning process.
- *Public Engagement Framework 2012-2020* (Endorsed by Senate September 25, 2012) including goals and objectives.

Changes to the Budgeting Process

The University has undergone a change in its budgeting process from a model of block-based funding to a position-based budgeting model. This has substantially eroded the discretionary opportunities that Deans used to have in reallocating funds to areas of need. With the large number of retirements of faculty which the Faculty is facing, they will experience challenges with respect to the funding of new positions in the future.

REVIEW PROCESS

The review process consisted of reviewing a number of documents prepared by the Faculty, a meeting of the Review Committee members with the Dean of Record, Dr. Doreen Neville, Associate Vice-President (Academic), Dr. Fay Murrin, Dean of Graduate Students *pro tempore*, Ms. Kim Myrick, Centre of Institutional Analysis and Planning to discuss the process and expectations, and a two-day schedule of meetings with faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders of the Faculty. Additionally, the committee received written submissions from several members of the academic unit. Exit meetings were held with the Dr. Kirk Anderson, Dean of the Faculty, Dr. Doreen Neville, Dean of Record, and the faculty, staff and students of the Faculty, the intention of which was to share preliminary findings and recommendations.

In this report, the Review Committee has focused on the larger issues the Faculty is currently facing, although we received many other suggestions to improve workflow and efficiencies. We were unable to capture all of these in this report.

We assured everyone involved in the review process of anonymity regarding comments and concerns and we trust that we have upheld that commitment.

Documentary review

Prior to the on-site assessment, the Review Committee members had the opportunity to review the following documents:

1. Self-study Report
2. Strategic Plan 2011
3. Academic Staffing Plan
4. By-Laws of the Faculty of Education

Documents made available to the Review Committee at the site visit, upon request, included:

1. Curriculum Vitae of Faculty
2. Course Outlines
3. Handbook for Undergraduate and Per Course Instructors and New Faculty – 2014/15
4. Faculty of Education Teacher Employment Survey, 2013
5. Faculty of Education Teacher Employment Survey, 2014
6. Faculty of Education Introductory Internship Survey, October 2012
7. Faculty of Education Student Exit Survey, Winter 2009
8. Faculty of Education Focus Group on Teacher Education, February 2008
9. Focus Group Report of Intermediate-Secondary Graduates, July 2013
10. Early Field Experience: Observation Day Component manual
11. Internship Handbook – Primary/Elementary, Music and Native and Northern Studies
12. Internship Handbook – Education 406T: Introductory Internship
13. Internship Handbook – Intermediate/Secondary Winter 2014
14. Draft Undergraduate Post-Secondary Degree/Diploma Programs Review Report, November 2013
15. Report from the Faculty of Education for the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies: 2012 Fall Undergraduate Grades
16. Promotional Materials re: Program Offerings
17. Five year budget summary
18. Fact Book 2011 from the Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning (CIAP)

Although the self-study report was helpful for understanding context, the Review Committee noted some gaps. While it provided a comprehensive overview of the program offerings and their strengths and challenges, the Review Committee noted that a more extensive review of the operations and progress of the Faculty in light of its vision and mission and strategic plan had not been undertaken. Additionally, the Review Committee was informed by some of the faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders that they were not engaged as extensively as they might have been in the review process. While it is a challenge to balance teaching, research and academic responsibilities, engagement in a review process is beneficial in bringing a unit together to focus on its common goals, share ideas, and regenerate a commitment to its future growth.

Interviews

The Review Committee met with many individuals who represented faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders. The large number of people the Committee had to meet resulted in relatively brief meetings which at times meant we could not hear from everyone or explore some issues to the extent we would have liked. The schedule is attached in Appendix A.

Written Submissions

A number of members of the unit, both faculty and staff, chose to submit written documentation to the APR Committee for consideration in the review.

PLANNING, GOVERNANCE and LEADERSHIP

Planning

Alignment with University Strategic Direction and Frameworks

The Review Committee noted there was very little direct mention of the strategic frameworks during the meetings. As such, it was difficult to determine if there was alignment between the Faculty's strategic plan and Memorial's three framework documents.

The reviewers were surprised that despite the fact that at least three faculty members were directly involved in the development of the Teaching and Learning Framework the Review Committee did not hear from other faculty regarding general engagement in and with the initiative. Perhaps our questioning did not result in an exploration and discussion of the involvement of the Faculty in this specific initiative and more is being done than we were made aware. We see a tremendous potential for leadership in this area given the expertise in teaching and learning which resides in the Faculty.

Faculty of Education Planning

The Faculty of Education developed a comprehensive strategic plan in 2011 prior to the arrival of the current dean. However, the Review Committee heard that there was limited engagement of faculty, staff, students and stakeholders in its development and there was a general perception that it was driven from the top. The Review Committee also noted that timelines, responsible persons/groups for follow up action, and incremental costs for its implementation were not identified. These would have been beneficial for the plan's implementation and monitoring.

The Faculty also has an academic staffing plan to guide hiring over the next several years.

The Review Committee was left with the impression that the strategic plan was not being used as effectively as it might be to guide or monitor the Faculty's progress. It is our view that all academic units benefit from having a document, collectively developed to guide its progress and the development and ownership of such a plan should not reside within, but beyond the Dean's office. One suggestion would be to strike a Strategic Planning/Academic Planning Committee composed of representatives from all interested parties that would assume leadership for the development and on-going monitoring of the plan. Such a plan would be closely aligned with the University's strategic direction and Frameworks and would embed the academic staffing plan within. While it is often a challenge to engage individuals in a planning initiative, as noted previously, it is beneficial in bringing a unit together to share ideas, focus on common goals, and establish a commitment to its future growth. Engaging in meaningful discussions, respecting diverse viewpoints, and agreeing collectively to a common path are critical for a unit's success.

Recommendation 1: Establish a Strategic Planning/Academic Planning Committee as a standing committee of Faculty Council (include in By-Laws of Council). The committee should have broad representation, including external stakeholders with the responsibility to oversee the development of a strategic plan/academic plan and monitor its progress.

Recommendation 2: Develop a new strategic plan/academic plan which actively engages faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders in a meaningful manner and considers internal and external factors influencing the outcomes and potential successes of the Faculty. Consider having such a process facilitated by an external party with expertise in strategic planning.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that the next strategic/academic plan developed by the Faculty aligns more clearly with the strategic direction and frameworks of the University (research, teaching and learning and engagement).

Governance

The Review Committee reviewed the Bylaws of the Faculty of Education and made the following observations.

While it appears that the Bylaws were revised in 2014, reference is made on Page 2, section “e” of the Nominating Committee to “Beginning September 2011-12...”. Additionally, on Page 9 under Formal Liaison with Other Bodies, not all Schools are referenced (i.e. School of Pharmacy). While these are minor points, we wish to bring these to the attention of Faculty Council and suggest a more thorough updating be conducted in light of the recommendations below.

The Review Committee met with a number of external stakeholders (i.e. Department of Education, English School District and NLTA) and became aware that there was no formal relationship (e.g. representation on Faculty Council) between them and the Faculty. We would encourage the establishment of formal linkages through regular meetings with such parties for the purpose of information exchange. One approach would be to invite representative stakeholders to be standing members of Faculty Council.

Recommendation 4: Explore the possibility of inviting relevant stakeholders to become standing members of Faculty Council and if agreed, revise bylaws accordingly. (See also Recommendation 14).

There is both a Graduate Studies Committee and a Doctoral Studies Program and Admissions Committee. It was not clear to the Review Committee why there was a need for two such committees and think that there should be consideration given to collapsing the work of both committees into one.

Recommendation 5: Review the necessity of having two committees focused on the graduate studies program.

The APR documentation referenced the challenges the Faculty has with the awarding of some scholarships and awards. Specifically, it was noted that the uptake of the Fellow of the School of Graduate Studies was low as students did not self-nominate. This is not surprising since students often are not aware of the availability of certain awards and/or are reluctant to self-nominate or seek support for nomination. It was not clear to us how student awards were administered. As such, consideration should be given to establishing a formal Student Awards Committee as a standing committee of Council which would monitor the availability of awards, make students aware of such awards, and nominate deserving students for awards.

Recommendation 6: Consider establishing a Student Awards Committee as a standing committee of Council in order to strengthen communications about and potential uptake of awards.

Leadership

The administrative team appears committed to the Faculty and we heard many positive comments regarding the fact that they are approachable, friendly and are generally supportive of the work that faculty, staff and students are doing. However, concerns were expressed by several members of the unit that there is not a feeling that the support for people's efforts is balanced. We heard from some that certain areas are apparently well supported and others are less supported. Concern was expressed that the interest in internationalization and Aboriginal initiatives appears to be taking away from focusing on the more extensive core programs of the Faculty.

We also received feedback indicating that communication was not as effective as it could be. Concerns were expressed that opportunities for meaningful, two-way discussions and input of ideas to assist in decision making were not available. Additionally, some members of the unit informed us that they have raised the same issue on many occasions but without success in affecting change or understanding why the suggestion which has been made has not been explored, accepted, or implemented. Of some concern to the Review Committee were comments to the effect that some faculty and staff preferred not to voice their opinions (e.g. impact on tenure and promotion decisions).

While some members of the Faculty noted that the direction it is headed is clear, others expressed concern that they felt the unit was languishing. As a result, some faculty and staff are enthusiastic and engaged while others appeared frustrated and disengaged. Clearly, this discrepancy is of concern and needs to be addressed. There is a wealth of knowledge, ideas, expertise and experience within the Faculty which, if harnessed differently, could result in the Faculty making even greater strides in producing outstanding educators for the future.

Recommendation 7: Engage an external facilitator to help the Faculty explore how issues related to engagement, support, and communication may be inhibiting its progress and develop an action plan to address these issues.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

The Review Committee observed that for the size of the faculty complement (48 tenure and tenure track plus three administrative for a total of 51 core faculty), there is a large number of B. Ed. degree and diploma programs (nine at last count) offered by MUN including conjoint and consecutive options at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels, specialized programs in Music Education (both concurrent and conjoint), the Inuit

Teacher Education program that will be launched in September, 2015 in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and a new program focusing on STEM that is currently being developed. Given the declining student population in the province and dropping enrollments in at least some of the program routes, the Review Committee is not convinced that all current programs are viable in the longer term.

Recommendation 8: Conduct a thorough examination of current and projected enrollments within each of the B. Ed. programs in order to consider consolidating some of them.

Recently, the Administrative Team was able to make the case for the development of a Teaching/Learning Commons which is a flexible teaching/learning space for undergraduate students and is seen as a very positive development for the Faculty as teacher candidates are now able to engage in collaborative learning and learn how to integrate technology in the process.

The Review Committee also noted that the current Dean is committed to the “multi-campus” model with satellite programs at the Grenfell campus and at the Labrador Institute in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. However there were some concerns raised by the Review Committee members regarding the Faculty’s ability to sustain low enrollment programs given the resources required.

Recommendation 9: Given the relatively small enrollment in the Junior/Intermediate program offered at the Grenfell campus, reconsider whether or not this program is sustainable in the longer term.

The Review Committee was encouraged by the work being done at the Labrador Institute and feels that this would be an excellent opportunity to strengthen the Faculty’s research agenda in the area of Indigenous Education, particularly with respect to the work being done with the local governmental authority and the plan to interweave the Inuktitut language throughout the program.

Recommendation 10: Develop a research agenda related to the new Inuit Teacher Education program to be delivered at the Labrador Institute so that research will inform further program development.

The Review Committee was informed that major stakeholders such as the Department of Education, the NLTA and the English School District interact informally with the Faculty of Education on an as-needed basis and that their relationships are cordial and collaborative. As expected, each of these partners is interested in the quality of graduates completing their programs at MUN and would like to be more fully engaged in further discussions on improving teacher education in the province. One group expressed concern about the level of preparedness of graduates, particularly with respect to reading and mathematics competencies. Given the relatively high interest in

teacher education programs, one of the groups thought it would be beneficial to revise the current admissions process in order to ensure that the best and brightest students are admitted to the Faculty, whose knowledge, skills and attributes meet the needs of the profession. Another group submitted a letter urging the Review Committee to recommend to the Faculty that it ensure that all students in the various B. Ed. programs receive more preparation in Inclusive Education so that new teachers are better prepared to address diversity in today's classrooms. This group also expressed concern about the number of new teachers graduating from the Faculty each year given the drop in K-12 student enrollments, the number of teaching positions available, and the high number of sessional instructors/per course instructors whose preparation is believed to be outdated.

Recommendation 11: Explore the feasibility of revising the current admissions process to ensure that the Faculty is admitting only the most promising students and those who are most likely to be able to respond to the diversity in today's classrooms.

One of the external stakeholder groups expressed a desire for the Faculty to consider moving to a professional school model with the establishment of core competencies to guide the Faculty in program development and course offerings. At the same time, the Review Committee also heard from a number of students who talked about overlapping and duplication of content and assignments across courses. The Review Committee thought the Faculty and ultimately, the students would benefit from a comprehensive review of course offerings (course descriptions and outlines) and in particular the development of core competencies when combined with a curriculum mapping exercise.

Recommendation 12: Begin a process of identifying core competencies that graduates of all B. Ed. programs would be expected to have and do this in conjunction with an overall curriculum mapping exercise. Furthermore, consider aligning these core competencies into the revised admissions process suggested in the previous recommendation.

The Review Committee heard from the external stakeholders a real willingness and interest in playing a more active role in working with the Faculty of Education and the Review Committee believes that the process of developing core competencies together would be a good place to start.

Recommendation 13: Consider involving representatives of the NLTA, the Department of Education, and the English School District in the development of these core competencies.

Recommendation 14: Given the receptiveness of external stakeholders to be more actively engaged with the Faculty, establish a Dean's Advisory Committee

that would meet on a regular basis (perhaps 2-3 times a year) to discuss mutual areas of interest and concern such as teacher quality, ongoing professional development, and as mentioned above, core competencies. (See also Recommendation 4).

A recurring theme the Review Committee heard over the two days of meetings was the heavy reliance on sessional/per course instructors for course delivery. Students reported major discrepancies in how multiple sections of the same course are taught so greater consistency across instructors should be a priority. Also, the Review Committee heard a number of comments from students about their instructors' lack of knowledge of communication protocols (i.e. using Facebook rather than D2L), grading schemes, and other related matters.

***Recommendation 15:* Develop a plan to reduce the Faculty's over-reliance on per course or sessional instructors which may be done in conjunction with a review of the number of programs noted in Recommendation 8.**

***Recommendation 16:* Develop better pedagogical support, orientation and training for per course/sessional instructors especially as it relates to Faculty policies and regulations in both face to face and online environments. Formalize and foster opportunities for communications with and between per course and sessional instructors.**

The Review Committee was impressed with the new STEM initiative supported by an external grant from the Hibernia Management and Development Corporation (HMDC) and was excited for the faculty and staff engaged in this work.

***Recommendation 17:* Capitalize on the two major STEM initiatives currently in progress or in development as they represent excellent opportunities to combine program development, teaching, and research. Given that both initiatives involve or will involve field partners, the Review Committee recommends that to the degree possible, the Faculty seize these opportunities to strengthen partnerships with its external stakeholders.**

RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

The Review Committee noted the important contribution made by the Faculty of Education not just to teacher training, but also to graduate education in Newfoundland, Labrador and beyond. There is a clear commitment to accessibility and to hybrid delivery. With regard to research, there are pockets of significant scholarly strength and capacity within the Faculty of Education.

Roles of the Associate Deans

The roles of the Associate Deans are defined as *Associate Dean Graduate Studies and Research* and *Associate Dean Undergraduate Studies*. The reviewers found that the portfolio for research and support for and of a broad and deep research culture is not very visible or active at this time in the Faculty of Education. We did not hear of activities such as internal conferences, speaker series, joint writing workshops or significant peer support at the graduate level. Another factor is that MUN's Faculty of Education has a huge number of graduate students, about 900, most of whom engage in part-time online course based M. Ed programs.

Recommendation 18: Re-evaluate the portfolios for Associate Deans and consider a new infrastructure so that Research is supported actively, requiring this individual to create structures, opportunities and events that support the research culture in the Faculty of Education.

Support for Funding and Scholarship Applications

Faculty members and graduate students described challenges in identifying and applying for grant funding and scholarships. Previously, there existed a "Grants Facilitator" who developed an excellent and highly valued "writing program". There was a definite need expressed for a reinstatement of the Grants Facilitator, who will identify funding opportunities and assist in the writing of grant proposals and applications. Skilled in this role and working with the Associate Dean Research (for example), s/he will facilitate, for example, writing workshops and peer support groups for students and faculty.

Recommendation 19: Hire a research Grants Facilitator to identify and support funding and scholarship applications and provide research support to faculty and students.

Scholarship and Graduate Teaching Capacity

In the area of scholarship and teaching the Faculty enjoys critical scholarly capacity in the areas of educational leadership, child health and STEM as well as counseling psychology and special education. Programs that align with scholarly capacity include the M.Ed in Counseling Psychology; the M.Ed in Leadership Studies and the development of a B.Ed in STEM with \$5million+ in funding from HMDC.

The possibilities and scope of the HMDC funding offers opportunities for graduate studies which the Review Committee believes should be explored, including, for example, creating an endowed chair, an HMDC STEM graduate scholarship and a post doctoral fellowship. Similar opportunities with other funding partners including government and corporations should be explored.

As well, within Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, there is an opportunity to create clusters of research strength, for example, in arts education, given the award winning online course in creativity and the presence of scholars in music, drama and visual art education.

Areas currently without capacity in scholarship and teaching are French as a Second Language and French Immersion; Teaching Methods (pedagogy) as well as assessment and evaluation.

An associated and significant problem is the high number of sessional instructors (over 40%) teaching in the M. Ed program. Typically, sessional instructors do not offer strength in scholarship, nor do they provide the graduate supervision expected of full time faculty.

As well, the Review Committee was concerned that there will be a high number of retirements in the next few years which has the potential to negatively impact research culture, teaching capacity and scholarship.

Recommendation 20: Re-evaluate the high number of sessional/per course instructors teaching in the M. Ed program and reduce this number significantly, given the need for strategic hires that align with program needs and scholarship.

Recommendation 21: Given the \$5m in funding from HMDC, and to buttress the research culture at MUN, explore the following:

- a) an endowed research chair in STEM (from within the \$5 million or in addition to it);
- b) a HMDC STEM graduate scholarship at the M.Ed and/or PhD levels
- c) a post-doctoral fellowship in STEM;
- d) similar opportunities with other funding partners including government and corporations.

Recommendation 22: Create scholarly clusters where capacity exists by galvanizing scholarship around joint course delivery within specific cognate/interdisciplinary areas.

Research Culture: Thesis M. Ed versus Online Part-time Course-Based M.Ed Programming

In addition to the variables described above, the very limited number of full time thesis graduate students (72 of 900 in the M. Ed. and 20 students in the doctoral program) suggests that engagement in and with a thriving research culture at MUN is not valued or supported as much as online part-time sessional instructor taught M.Ed programming. The Review Committee heard concerns expressed regarding the focus on part-time, on-line learning. It speaks to wide dispersion of students and ideas, and

paucity in the creation of a galvanized community of graduate studies scholars. While the reviewers recognize that offering a course based online M.Ed program to students regionally and globally is attractive for those who do not wish to travel, we find that the Faculty of Education is spread far too thin in terms of resources, teaching, student support and scholarship. In fact, we are concerned that with so few full time graduate students on campus, a thriving, research culture will be difficult to develop and sustain.

Recommendation 23: Reconsider the mix of part-time online course based students in the M.Ed program and encourage more students to pursue the thesis route in the M.Ed program so that admissions are balanced, for example, to 50% thesis and 50% online part-time and course based.

The reviewers find that having 900 graduate students is excessive, given the small number of core faculty (51). Even if the numbers were halved, there would still be too many sessional/per course instructors teaching graduate level courses.

Recommendation 24: Consider reducing intake into all M.Ed programs by half so that entry is more competitive, quality is enhanced, and the programs are more aligned with Faculty resources.

Funding for Graduate Students

We note that a relatively small amount of the Faculty of Education budget (about \$120,000) is devoted to scholarships and graduate student funding. We recognize that this number is low because so many students are part-time. This related issue was addressed above.

Recommendation 25: Re-examine funding for full time M.Ed thesis and doctoral students in order to attract top graduate students.

Designated Space for Graduate Students

There is no learning commons space designated for graduate students to engage with one another, to work in a common shared area, and to provide peer support.

Recommendation 26: Consider creating a comfortable and inviting learning commons space for graduate students to meet, work, interact, and develop relationships and connections much like the learning commons space provided for undergraduate students.

Program Information: M.Ed and PhD

A relatively high number of students come to MUN for full time graduate studies. The reviewers heard that many international graduate students were very surprised to

arrive on campus and find that half their courses are delivered online. We assume this is the case for domestic students as well. International students indicated that at best, online courses are a challenge for those for whom English is a second language. They said that if they'd known that a significant proportion of program delivery would be online they would not have chosen MUN. There was frustration and disappointment about this. We heard that some faculty who teach distance courses offer to meet with students and this has been received very positively, in particular by international students who may face more challenges. Of course, having half the courses online for full time students in residence impacts not just the experience of learning, but also the development of a community of graduate students and by extension, a research culture.

***Recommendation 27:* Ensure that information about program delivery clearly outlines how many courses will be delivered online versus face to face.**

***Recommendation 28:* Provide language supports for international students, including in the delivery of online learning.**

***Recommendation 29:* Encourage instructors who teach online courses to hold informal meetings with on-campus students to foster a collegial, research minded environment which supports their learning.**

PhD Program: Infrastructure

In our discussions regarding the PhD program, we were surprised to learn that there are only two required courses. The first is geared to advanced research methods and the second is a directed reading course typically taken with the doctoral supervisor. It was stated that students lead a series of doctoral seminars in which they present one of their own papers. The doctoral seminars are not conceptualized as a course.

It is the view of the Review Committee that two courses do not provide a sufficient basis in the literature. As well, given that one course focuses on advanced research methods and the other typically is a directed study with the student's supervisor, we heard that the delivery of the directed study course is highly variable. As is the norm it is the responsibility of the doctoral committee to determine how well prepared the student is for the comprehensive examination, and clearly this assessment of preparedness has proved to be a great challenge. We heard that there have been a high number of doctoral students who have struggled with the comprehensive examinations.

***Recommendation 30:* Re-examine the course requirement component for the PhD program given the high failure rate in the comprehensive examination. Consider having required courses in theory, not just in educational studies, but also in the student's field of study.**

FACULTY AND STAFF

Staff

The Review Committee was impressed with the dedication and commitment of the staff to support the Faculty's mandate. They describe a teamwork approach within the staff to managing day-to-day activities. The Review Committee became aware of a changes which have occurred which are contributing to increasing workloads and at times inefficient work patterns. Some of the changes which were noted included:

- The number of programs has increased over the years, without a concomitant increase in the staff and support services
- The Faculty went from a departmentalized structure to the administrative structure it is today – apparently without a review of administrative services and academic support
- Prior to 2012 a decrease of tenured/tenure track faculty members and increase in per course and contractual instructors, further increasing the service load.

Recommendation 31: Conduct a review of how the staff supports the current administrative structure. Roles, responsibilities, relief duties and reporting structures have to be more clearly defined and communicated within the Faculty. Assess work assignments for duplication of effort and attempt to create greater efficiencies in assignments and workflow.

Faculty

As noted earlier in the report, faculty members expressed differing levels of support, communication and sense of progress and direction. They reported being concerned that some elements of communication may be missing (although admit that this may not be inconsistent with a large faculty).

Recommendation 32: Develop a more formalized intra-faculty communications plan (as an outcome of Recommendation 7).

It was noted that use of sessional/per course instructors in all program deliveries is high. This is of particular concern in the graduate program. Students reported variable experiences, overlapping course content and inappropriate communication practices from sessional/per course instructors. It would be better from both an administrative and a quality of delivery perspective to have limited-term appointments, instructors that teach the same courses year after year, but are not on a tenure-track progression. Secondments from schools (teachers who work 2 or 3 years and have a year off) or

recent retirees can certainly serve in these roles. Their roles however should be limited to the undergraduate program and/or serving as advisors in practicum supervision.

***Recommendation 33:* Make the case to Senior Administration for the development of limited teaching term appointments (without requirement for research) within the MUNFA collective agreement.**

In the near future, the Faculty will continue to be reliant on per course and sessional instructors. While the Review Committee was informed that these individuals are given an orientation, receive an orientation manual, are encouraged to attend orientation sessions and have an FAQ section on the website, more needs to be done. Additional approaches need to be considered as discussed earlier. (See Recommendation 16).

***Recommendation 34:* Ensure that the following occur more regularly in courses which employ several instructors over multiple sections:**

- a) curriculum mapping; and**
- b) evaluation of grading and assignment requirements**

There are clearly going to be challenges in faculty renewal in the next few years with the high number of projected retirements. Failure to manage faculty renewal will result in significant, unfunded liabilities (cost of searches, relocations, backfill of vacant positions, etc.) and will impact the teaching and research environment. Faculty renewal will have to be managed and monitored. Additionally with a large number of new faculty, there is a potential for a major cultural change which could be positive or negative. The Leadership team will need to be cognizant of ensuring that new faculty are supported in both their teaching and research endeavours and inculcated to the ways of the Faculty of Education.

***Recommendation 35:* Re-examine the current academic staffing plan to make sure it reflects upcoming retirement realities. (See also Recommendation 20).**

***Recommendation 36:* Start developing recruitment strategies as it is possible that international searches will be needed**

***Recommendation 37:* Balance searches across programs, recognizing research priorities as well as curriculum delivery.**

***Recommendation 38:* Develop a mentorship program to support new faculty.**

UNIVERSITY SUPPORT

Space

The Review Committee had the opportunity to tour the building in which the Faculty is located. While space demands within the University have become very challenging over the past several years, the Faculty of Education is fortunate to have an excellent space on campus. The Faculty has repurposed some spaces (e.g. STEM classroom, Technology Education room, etc) to improve the learning experiences of students and recently created a Teaching and Learning Commons for undergraduate students. In addition to its support for teaching and learning it has also become a popular gathering and interaction space for both students and faculty. This certainly creates a better sense of community within the Faculty.

During the consultations the Review Committee heard that there was no similar area for graduate students to meet and share ideas. The Review Committee feels that such a space would contribute to creating a culture of research and support the graduate students. (See Recommendation 26).

While there are a number of well-developed purpose built instructional spaces the Review Committee was made aware that it was lacking for the visual arts, music and drama disciplines:

Recommendation 39: Develop instructional space designated for the Visual Arts, Music and Drama Specialties. This space should be designed for “on the fly reconfiguration” (i.e. curtains or walls, instruction devices on trolleys etc.) so it is easily shared throughout the day.

Both the APR report and faculty identified that there was not an established plan for musical instruments replacement, equipment renewal and servicing or contributions to the School of Music but it would be beneficial to have.

Recommendation 40: In consultation with the School of Music, identify annual servicing costs for consumables, regular equipment renewal and contributions to the School of Music for usage of their equipment. Incorporate this into the annual budget of the Faculty of Education.

As has been noted on several occasions, the Faculty has a large number of sessional faculty which the Review Committee was advised do not have space to store instructional materials. It would be helpful if some storage space was available.

Recommendation 41: Create a space for sessional/per course instructors to store materials.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT and PARTNERSHIPS

Stakeholder Partnerships

As part of the Academic Program Review, the Review Committee was pleased to be able to speak to representatives of external stakeholders such as the Department of Education, the NLTA and the English School District and it received a formal written submission by the Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (LDANL). The Review Committee found that these groups are very interested in working with the Faculty to produce the most prepared teachers possible and would welcome more regular involvement. The EDGE Conference, which is held every two years, was mentioned as a perfect example of how stakeholders and the Faculty have shown that they can work together on initiatives of common interest. As previously noted working more closely with external stakeholders would be beneficial and the Faculty should consider establishing a Dean's Advisory Committee or some equivalent which would meet a few times a year to discuss common issues of concern and develop action strategies in these areas. (See Recommendations 4 and 14).

The Review Committee asked about relations with alumni of the Faculty but the response we received seemed to indicate that there was probably work to be done with respect to engaging with alumni and current and potential donors.

***Recommendation 42:* Consider re-establishing the position of Development Officer or Alumni Relations Officer (either on the Faculty's own or shared with another unit) which would be responsible for leading Faculty initiatives with current alumni and current and potential donors.**

***Recommendation 43:* If it doesn't already exist, establish a Faculty of Education Alumni Association to forge stronger connections between the Faculty, its current students and its former graduates.**

***Recommendation 44:* Work with the Alumni Affairs and Development Office to build stronger relations with the thousands of alumni who have graduated from the Faculty of Education, many of whom belong to the external stakeholder groups mentioned above.**

International Vision

During his tenure, the Dean has clearly taken up the challenge from the Senior Administration of the University to pursue international opportunities. There are clear benefits to the Faculty and the University in doing so. However, due to the current number of course and degree offerings and reliance on per course/sessional instructors and retirement projections, there may be fewer benefits to the Faculty at this time when there are more pressing needs. While it was made clear to the Review Committee

that current programs and international relationships are more exploratory than defined, a proportionate amount of attention should be made to this initiative.

Recommendation 45: Be more selective and strategic about the international opportunities currently being explored.

Memorial and the Multi-Campus Model

The Dean has certainly adopted the University's vision of Memorial's multi-campus model. He and the faculty, continue to develop and grow programs. However, as with Internationalization, program growth needs to be tempered. More consultation and partnering with the "host" campuses needs to occur.

Recommendation 46: Be more selective and strategic about the opportunities currently being pursued for course/program delivery at the Labrador Institute and Grenfell campus keeping in mind limited resources and program quality.

SUMMARY

The Faculty of Education offers a wide variety of programming at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Faculty benefits from many engaged and highly committed faculty members, staff and students. The Leadership team has embraced the focus on internationalization and offering programs at sites other than the St. John's campus. The faculty and staff are concerned about the future and the significant challenges it faces, many of which have been identified in this report. With the large number of retirements in the next few years and the possibilities of hiring new faculty, and thus re-visioning, the Faculty has the chance to re-invent itself should it choose to do so. In order to maintain excellence in program offerings, build capacity and generate a culture of research, and address the concerns regarding support, communication and engagement of faculty and staff, the Review Committee has made a number of recommendations which are summarized below. We wish the Faculty much success in the future.

Recommendation 1: Establish a Strategic Planning/Academic Planning Committee as a standing committee of Faculty Council (include in By-Laws of Council). The committee should have broad representation, including external stakeholders with the responsibility to oversee the development of a strategic plan/academic plan and monitor its progress.

Recommendation 2: Develop a new strategic plan/academic plan which actively engages faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders in a meaningful manner and considers internal and external factors influencing the outcomes

and potential successes of the Faculty. Consider having such a process facilitated by an external party with expertise in strategic planning.

Recommendation 3: Ensure that the next strategic/academic plan developed by the Faculty aligns more clearly with the strategic direction and frameworks of the University (research, teaching and learning and engagement).

Recommendation 4: Explore the possibility of inviting relevant stakeholders to become standing members of Faculty Council and if agreed, revise bylaws accordingly. (See also Recommendation 14).

Recommendation 5: Review the necessity of having two committees focused on the graduate studies program.

Recommendation 6: Consider establishing a Student Awards Committee as a standing committee of Council in order to strengthen communications about and potential uptake of awards.

Recommendation 7: Engage an external facilitator to help the Faculty explore how issues related to engagement, support, and communication may be inhibiting its progress and develop an action plan to address these issues.

Recommendation 8: Conduct a thorough examination of current and projected enrollments within each of the B. Ed. programs in order to consider consolidating some of the programs.

Recommendation 9: Given the relatively small enrollment in the Junior/Intermediate program offered at the Grenfell campus, reconsider whether or not this program is sustainable in the longer term.

Recommendation 10: Develop a research agenda related to the new Inuit Teacher Education program to be delivered at the Labrador Institute so that research will inform further program development.

Recommendation 11: Explore the feasibility of revising the current admissions process to ensure that the Faculty is admitting only the most promising students and those who are most likely to be able to respond to the diversity in today's classrooms.

Recommendation 12: Begin a process of identifying core competencies that graduates of all B. Ed. programs would be expected to have and do this in conjunction with an overall curriculum mapping exercise. Furthermore, consider aligning these core competencies into the revised admissions process suggested in the previous recommendation.

Recommendation 13: Consider involving representatives of the NLTA, the Department of Education, and the English School District in the development of these core competencies.

Recommendation 14: Given the receptiveness of external stakeholders to be more actively engaged with the Faculty, establish a Dean's Advisory Committee that would meet on a regular basis (perhaps 2-3 times a year) to discuss mutual areas of interest and concern such as teacher quality, ongoing professional development, and as mentioned above, core competencies. (See also Recommendation 4).

Recommendation 15: Develop a plan to reduce the Faculty's over-reliance on per course or sessional instructors which may be done in conjunction with a review of the number of programs noted in Recommendation 8.

Recommendation 16: Develop better pedagogical support, orientation and training for per course/sessional instructors especially as it relates to Faculty policies and regulations in both face to face and online environments. Formalize and foster opportunities for communications with and between per course and sessional instructors.

Recommendation 17: Capitalize on the two major STEM initiatives currently in progress or in development as they represent excellent opportunities to combine program development, teaching, and research. Given that both initiatives involve or will involve field partners, the Review Committee recommends that to the degree possible, the Faculty seize these opportunities to strengthen partnerships with its external stakeholders.

Recommendation 18: Re-evaluate the portfolios for Associate Deans and consider a new infrastructure so that Research is supported actively, requiring this individual to create structures, opportunities and events that support the research culture in the Faculty of Education.

Recommendation 19: Hire a Research Grants Facilitator to identify and support funding and scholarship applications and provide research support to faculty and students.

Recommendation 20: Reevaluate the very high number of sessional/per course instructors teaching in the M. Ed program and reduce this number significantly, given the need for strategic hires that align with program needs and scholarship.

Recommendation 21: Given the \$5m in funding from HMDC, and to buttress the research culture at MUN, explore the following:

- a) an endowed research chair in STEM (from within the \$5 million or in addition to it);
- b) an HMDC STEM graduate scholarship at the M.Ed and/or PhD level
- c) a post-doctoral fellowship in STEM;
- d) similar opportunities with other funding partners including government and corporations.

Recommendation 22: Create scholarly clusters where capacity exists by galvanizing scholarship around joint course delivery within specific cognate/interdisciplinary areas.

Recommendation 23: Reconsider the mix of part-time online course based students in the M.Ed program and encourage more students to pursue the thesis route in the M.Ed program so that admissions are balanced, for example, to 50% thesis and 50% online part-time and course based.

Recommendation 24: Consider reducing intake into all M.Ed programs by half so that entry is more competitive, quality is enhanced, and the programs are more aligned with Faculty resources.

Recommendation 25: Re-examine funding for full time M.Ed thesis and doctoral students in order to attract top graduate students.

Recommendation 26: Consider creating a comfortable and inviting learning commons space for graduate students to meet, work, interact, and develop relationships and connections much like the learning commons space provided for undergraduate students.

Recommendation 27: Ensure that information about program delivery clearly outlines how many courses will be delivered online versus face to face.

Recommendation 28: Provide language supports for international students, including in the delivery of online learning.

Recommendation 29: Encourage instructors who teach online courses to hold informal meetings with on-campus students to foster a collegial, research minded environment which supports their learning.

Recommendation 30: Re-examine the course requirement component for the PhD program given the high failure rate in the comprehensive examination. Consider having required courses in theory, not just in educational studies, but also in the student's field of study.

Recommendation 31: Conduct a review of how the staff supports the current administrative structure. Roles, responsibilities, relief duties and reporting structures have to be more clearly defined and communicated within the Faculty. Assess work assignments for duplication of effort and attempt to create greater efficiencies in assignments and workflow.

Recommendation 32: Develop a more formalized intra-faculty communications plan (as an outcome of Recommendation 7).

Recommendation 33: Make the case to Senior Administration for the development of limited teaching term appointments (without requirement for research) within the MUNFA collective agreement.

Recommendation 34: Ensure that the following occur more regularly in courses which employ several instructors over multiple sections:

- a) curriculum mapping; and
- b) evaluation of grading and assignment requirements

Recommendation 35: Re-examine the current academic staffing plan to make sure it reflects upcoming retirement realities. (See also Recommendation 20).

Recommendation 36: Start developing recruitment strategies as it is possible that international searches will be needed

Recommendation 37: Balance searches across programs, recognizing research priorities as well as curriculum delivery.

Recommendation 38: Develop a mentorship program to support new faculty.

Recommendation 39: Develop instructional space designated for the Visual Arts, Music and Drama Specialties. This space should be designed for “on the fly reconfiguration” (i.e. curtains or walls, instruction devices on trolleys etc.) so it is easily shared throughout the day.

Recommendation 40: In consultation with the School of Music, identify annual servicing costs for consumables, regular equipment renewal and contributions to the School of Music for usage of their equipment. Incorporate this into the annual budget of the Faculty of Education.

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Recommendation 42: Consider re-establishing the position of Development Officer or Alumni Relations Officer (either on the Faculty's own or shared with another unit) which would be responsible for leading Faculty initiatives with current alumni and current and potential donors.

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Recommendation 44: Work with the Alumni Affairs and Development Office to build stronger relations with the thousands of alumni who have graduated from the Faculty of Education, many of whom belong to the external stakeholder groups mentioned above.

Recommendation 45: Be more selective and strategic about the international opportunities currently being explored.

Recommendation 46: Be more selective and strategic about the opportunities currently being pursued for course/program delivery at the Labrador Institute and Grenfell campus keeping in mind limited resources and program quality.

APPENDIX A – Schedule of Meetings



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Academic Program Review

Site Visit Itinerary November 19 - 22, 2014

Wednesday, Nov. 19th, 7:00 PM, Bacalao Restaurant, 65 LeMarchant Rd.

Welcome Dinner - Panel Members meet with Associate VP (Academic)/Dean of Record, Dean of Graduate Studies, APR Coordinator

Thursday, Nov. 20th Room: ED5005		Friday, Nov. 21st Room: McCann Centre (ED2030B)		Saturday Nov. 22 nd
8:30 AM	Organizational Meeting: Panel & APR Coordinator	8:30 AM	Organizational Meeting: Panel & APR Coordinator	Panel: Draft Report Room: ED5005
9:30 AM	Dr. Kirk Anderson, Dean	9:30 AM	Labrador Institute/Grenfell Campus Videoconference	
10:00 AM	External Stakeholder English School District	10:00 AM	External Stakeholders NL Teachers' Assoc., Dept. of Education	
10:30 AM	Tour of Education Building with Dr. Kirk Anderson, Dean	10:30 AM	Coffee Break	
11:00 AM	Counseling/Psychology & Special Education Specialization	11:00 AM	STAFF Undergraduate Studies Office/ Graduate Studies & Dean's Office	
11:30 AM	Post-Secondary Education	11:30 AM	Associate Deans/ Senior Administration Office	
12:00 PM	Panel Lunch with Dr. Kirk Anderson, Dean & Two Invited Guests The Pantry (Clinch Crescent)	12:00 PM	Dr. David Peddle, Associate Vice- President Academic, Grenfell Videoconference	
		12:30 PM	Panel Working Lunch	
1:30 PM	Leadership & Foundations Specialization	1:30 PM	Education Library/ Teaching Learning Commons	
2:00 PM	Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Specialization	2:00 PM	Music/Arts Education	
2:30 PM	Graduate Studies & Doctoral/Masters Committee	2:30 PM	Panel confers for Exit Meetings	
3:00 PM	Graduate & Undergraduate Students	3:00 PM	Exit Meeting with Dr. Doreen Neville, APR Dean of Record (Panel shares preliminary findings)	
3:30 PM	OPEN Faculty/Sessional Session	3:30 PM	Exit Meeting with Dr. Kirk Anderson, Dean (Panel shares preliminary findings)	
4:00 PM	CUGS Group	4:00 PM	Exit Meeting with Dr. Kirk Anderson, Dean, & Faculty, Students, Staff (Panel shares preliminary findings)	
4:30 PM	STEM Group			
5:00 PM	Suggested time for panel to confer	4:30 PM	Suggested time for panel to confer	
7:00 PM	Working dinner for panel to discuss meetings and report writing	7:00 PM	Working dinner for panel to discuss meetings and report writing	

Review Panel Members:

- Dr. Linda Hensman, Former Dean of School of Pharmacy, Memorial University (Panel Chair)
- Dr. Scott MacKinnon, Professor/Associate Dean of Graduate Studies & Research, School of Human Kinetics & Recreation, Memorial University
- Dr. David Mandzuk, Dean of Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
- Dr. Fiona Blaikie, Dean of Faculty of Education, Brock University