

April 15, 2003

Memorandum

TO: School of Education Policy Council

FROM: Long Range Planning Committee

RE: Departmental Structure of the School of Education

In the Fall of 2002, Dean Gonzalez charged the School of Education Long Range Planning Committee to consider if the current departmental structure is well serving the mission and strategic plan of the School of Education.

As a result, the members of the Long Range Planning Committee conducted a series of meetings with the departmental chairs and the chairs of the standing committees of the School of Education. The committee decided that this focused inquiry and discussion was an important first step to provide some context for what could be a broader discussion with faculty and staff over time. The committee also reviewed the current structure of the School, and collected information regarding the organization of Schools' of Education of other Big 10 universities.

Based on these discussions, the committee did not find any clear felt need for major reorganization of departmental structure of the School of Education. Overall, these discussions raised a number of interesting questions, some regarding departmental structure, and some questions on governance issues not directly related to departmental structure. Following is a summary of issues that surfaced.

Size of Departments

Some questions were raised about the relative size of various departments. In particular, the rather large size of Curriculum and Instruction was noted and the small size of Language Education. This point was noted more as an historical artifact than as a reason to reorganize. In no instance was there any strongly held opinion that department size alone was reason to reorganize. Some noted that, even given size considerations, ELPS, C & I, and CEP seem suitable in relative size and scope. Matters somewhat related to size surfaced including the administrative buy out afforded to any department and the extent to which individual programs within departments have a voice in programmatic decisions of the School of Education.

Voice of Programs

Are the voices of individual programs heard in the governance of the School? That is, particularly in larger departments, are the viewpoints and perspectives of individual programs considered as programmatic decisions are made? The point made on this matter

is related to whether or not the plans and direction of individual programs in larger departments are considered within the broader context of planning and decisions by the School.

Related Issues

A number of matters surfaced that may be worthy of more discussion in the School of Education, even independent of discussion about reorganization. These included the following questions.

Is Inquiry best located in CEP? Clearly, Inquiry needs a “home”. However, are all departments sufficiently involved in an Inquiry focus in the School?

How shall potential growth of departments be handled? As some programs expand or new programs developed (e.g. Learning Sciences), what guidelines may be needed to manage growth?

Is there a need for some kind of forum other than the Dean’s Council of Department Chairs for discussion of information and strategies?

Are there better ways to organize for recruiting quality graduate students, especially given the importance of the instructional role of AI’s.?

Should outside projects be better coordinated across the School of Education? For example, individual departments sometime find opportunities for major international projects, or other large scale projects. Are these opportunities best handled within departments or should there be some discussion of priorities and coordination for such projects across the School? And, what about the School’s ability to mount interdisciplinary programs?

Over time, what should be the relationship between the Teacher Education Program and departments? This was raised more as an ongoing question of coordination and roles rather than as a problem of concern.

Is the ongoing development and use of technology focused enough across the School?

How should the roles of research vs. academic mission be managed relative to the research office and departments? How should the role of “centers” evolve? The recent combining of CRLT and the Research Office should be helpful in this discussion.

Should there be more coordination of the content and teaching of courses that cut across programs and departments, especially when an increasing number of courses are taught by adjunct faculty?

Summary

Such questions are not directly a matter of possible reorganization of the School of Education. Rather, these questions may be worthy of discussion in addition to any consideration of reorganization of departments. And, in part, these questions have resulted from opportunities that have been developed by individual faculty and departments.

Overall, the Long Range Planning Committee did not find a clear felt need to reorganize departments at this time.