February 28, 2011

Clifford Fedler
Associate Dean of the Graduate School
Texas Tech University
P.O. Box 41030
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Dear Dr. Fedler:

Attached please find my review of the graduate program Instructional Technology in the Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership in the College of Education at Texas Tech University

Sincerely yours,

Terence C. Ahern, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Instructional Technology
I visited the Department on February 17 and 18, 2011. During my stay at Texas Tech we met as a review group for a series of meetings. On February 17, 2011 we met with the College Administration, Drs. Johnson, Burley, and Hovey as well as the Department Chair Dr. Lan. For the afternoon the review team was broken into two groups in order to facilitate meeting with specific program faculty and students. One group met with faculty from Special Education, Counseling, Educational Psychology and Instructional Technology. The other group met with Higher Education and Educational Leadership. We also met with students from the respective programs.

On Friday February 18, 2011 the review team had a session with the program coordinators from each program. Loretta Bradley represented counseling as the program coordinator for that program was traveling. Finally we concluded our meetings with the College Administrators and the Department Chair.

I was asked to review the Instructional Technology Program, and my report will be primarily focused on that program.

Program Overview and Vision

The mission of the Instructional Technology program according to the program website:

The program was established to prepare professionals at the masters (M.Ed.) and doctoral (Ed.D.) levels, and is designed to meet the needs of individuals desiring to become specialists in the field of instructional technology, to obtain public school certification in computing technology, or to obtain specific technology skills

Instructional Technology (EDIT) is a graduate program that offers both a Master of Education (M.Ed) and Doctor of Education (EdD) degrees. The Master’s Degree program provides students the opportunity to explore an emphasis in Educational Computing or Distance Education as indicated in the self-review documents supplied by the department.
Instructional Technology also provides two Texas Certification programs: Technology Applications and Master Technology Teacher. The Technology Applications program prepares the student for initial certification. The Master Technology Teacher program is a professional certificate and requires a prior teaching certificate.

Besides its primary mission EDIT also provides service to the university in two courses: EDIT 2318 and 3318. The university requires all students to fulfill a technology requirement and EDIT 2318 meets that requirement. Further in order to be credentialed in the State of Texas a student must satisfactorily complete an educational technology course. A student can fulfill this requirement by successfully completing EDIT 3318.

Overall Score:
- EdD. Program overview is excellent;
- M.Ed Program overview is excellent;
- Certification Design overview is excellent

Faculty Productivity

The Instructional Technology Program at Texas Tech currently has four tenure track professors (2 Associate and 2 Assistant) and two full instructors (1 Ed.D and on ABD). Given the rapid growth in the number of graduate students the faculty has maintained an impressive productivity. The two senior faculty members Drs. Maushak and Crooks have chaired the majority of the dissertations over the past 6 years. Dr. Maushak chaired 20 dissertations while serving on an additional 10. Even with this she was able to continue her own research and writing. Dr. Crooks besides chairing 9 dissertations during this time was able to publish 10 referred articles with his graduate students. This has allowed the junior Drs. Inan and Cheong faculty to concentrate on their own research writing.

Dr. Crooks also serves fulltime as the Program Coordinator. This is a position that is not provided with dedicated staff time. Consequently the Program Coordinator is required to spend additional time on program matters such as course scheduling, resource allocation and the like.

The College has initiated some help for faculty in the implementation of research teams. The faculty in EDIT does not seem to have taken advantage of this opportunity but given their own level of productivity this is not a real concern.

Overall Score:
- Faculty Productivity is excellent

Quality and Quantity of Graduate Students and Graduates

It was difficult to properly assess the quality of the graduate students because the data from the self-report only included the GRE scores of enrolling graduate student. According to this data the quality of the graduate student population at Texas Tech was
somewhat below average. However, on discussions with the administrators, the program coordinators, program faculty and reviewing the EDIT graduate student handbook we found out that admission to the Instructional Technology at Texas Tech is a rigorous process that takes into consideration a range of indicators.

I had the opportunity as part of the review committee to meet with a group of the current fulltime doctoral students and they were very positive concerning the program. They indicated that the faculty was accessible and very supportive. They were extremely positive in their assessment of the programs. One area that received high praise was the opportunity to conduct original research to present at regional and national conferences. They did however voice concern at the low amount money ($300 per student) available in support of research and travel. Others expressed concern as to the availability of coursework necessary to complete their program in a realistic amount of time.

Instructional Technology is maintaining the number of students graduating each year. However, I am unable to generate any program quality assessment based on initial appointments upon graduation of students for the Instructional Design Program due to the lack of available data.

The quantity of students is impressive. The entire college is under pressure to increase the number of graduate students college wide and has increased student enrollment 41% over the past five years. However, the Instructional Technology Program has experienced an even more explosive growth. According to the data EDIT has experienced a 56% (23 to 36) growth in the number of graduate students during the review period.

**Overall Score:**
- Quality of students is good/excellent
- Quantity of students is excellent

**Curriculum and Programs of Study**

The doctoral program places an emphasis on preparing Educational Technology professionals for leadership roles as public school and college level educators and for work in training positions in business and industry. The doctoral program requires 81 hours plus 12 dissertation hours for a total of 93 hours. According to the program literature, students are required to choose courses from four program areas: Foundation (9 hours), Research and Statistics (12 hours), Educational Technology (30 hours) Specialization (15 hours) and a minor or additional course (15 hours). However, there appears to be no commonality of experiences for students. This puts a tremendous burden on both the faculty and the students and creates a tension between making sure the course has sufficient enrollment and having students meet their specific program requirements.

The Master’s program is predicated on practical application and knowledge of educational technology including design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation. According the Program Handbook “Graduates of the master’s program are equipped to teach, design, and administer instructional technology programs.” The
Master’s degree requires 39 hours and is designed for maximum student flexibility. Students select coursework from four areas: Research and Statistic Core (3 hours), Foundation Courses (3 hours), Instructional Technology (21 hours) and Electives (12 hours). According to documentation provided from the department “Two areas of emphasis are available: educational computing and distance education.” However, I could find neither an explicit description nor any overarching curricular goals that would justify either track.

Certification is for individuals interested in teaching technology applications EC-12. For initial teacher certification, 15 hours in education and 15 hours in EDIT are required. The program is designed to meet the state requirements.

Overall Score:
- Doctorate of Education degree is good/excellent
- Master’s Degree is good

Facilities and Resources

Facilities and resources are excellent. The College is in a building that is less than 10 years old. The program has access to the Learning Resources Center (LRC), which has both physical copies of textbooks as well as the availability of software. The College is currently installing “smart boards” in classrooms throughout the building. Most of the classrooms are equipped with electronic projectors and Internet connections. The EDIT program also has access to the multi-media development lab. Online course management and delivery is state of the art.

Overall Score:
- Facilities and Resources is excellent

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Faculty productivity
   a. Comments
      i. The faculty is exceptional given the demands on their time and talent.
   b. Recommendations
      i. The college should designate staff resources to the program coordinators for all the programs in the college. The demands for recruitment and retention on each program coordinator from the College are heavy as they push to increase graduate enrollment.

2. Curriculum and Programs of Study
   a. Masters Degree Program
      i. Comments
         1. Overall the program serves its constitutes well.
      ii. Recommendations
The program should identify a common experience for all students in the program.

2. The program should clearly describe what constitutes an emphasis by stating the curricular rationale for the emphasis.

3. The program should identify an appropriate series of courses a typical student may choose to meet the curricula goal of the emphasis. This sequence could be modified on consultation with the student’s advisor.

b. **The Doctoral Degree program**
   
   i. **Comments**
   
   1. The design of the Doctor of Education degree is closer to the traditional PhD than an EdD. As noted above for an EdD there is a distinct lack of a common experience. The program would be better served by increasing the core from 30 hours to 45 hours and having the specialization be 15 hours – you could then remove the “minor” and the additional courses. However, this all may be moot as the program faculty informed me that they are in the process of moving the EdD to a PhD.

   ii. **Recommendations**
   
   1. A PhD program should have some “core” or “common” experiences for all students within the program.
   2. Revamp the core/research design with an eye toward mapping out the types of courses students will need when they do their dissertation. Increase the overall number of units to 15 hours. Then create a set of common experiences in quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Finally the students could choose two electives in consultation with their doctoral advisor to provide more in-depth skill.

3. **Program resources**
   
   a. **Comments**
   
   i. Instructional Technology as well as the entire college is under tremendous pressure to maintain the phenomenal growth in graduate programs while simultaneously trying to reach intensive research status. According to the data supplied from the college there seems to be an alarming increase in the number of part-time instructors. The EDIT the program lists two full time non-tenure track instructors. Even though these instructors do provide teaching relief they are unable to serve as doctoral advisors. Further, current tenure track faculty is under increasing pressure to recruit, to retain and to graduate high numbers of students.
ii. Moving to a PhD program would suggest that there be fewer numbers of students per faculty in order to maintain the highest level of quality in instruction and advising.

iii. Additionally, EDIT has moved the master’s degree online, which is a further strain on resources. Online programs typically take more time in both the design and maintenance of the program.

b. Recommendations
   
   i. I recommend that the University seriously consider adding another full-time tenure track position preferably at a senior level in EDIT.