

To: Deans Wilczenski and Liem; Provost Langley  
From: LTET core faculty: Profs. Brady, DeGennaro, Kiang, Patmon, and Taylor  
Re: Response to AQUAD Review Committee's Report on the Learning, Teaching, and Educational Transformation (LTET) non-licensure Teacher Education M. Ed. track  
Date: 18 April 2011  
Cc: C& Chair Levy; AQUAD Review Committee: Profs. Battenfeld, Jablon, Check, Ybarra

We are pleased that the AQUAD review team saw the Learning, Teaching, and Educational Transformation (LTET) non-licensure Teacher Education M. Ed. track<sup>1</sup> to be “a program with substantial strengths,” with a curriculum central “to the campus-wide and... CEHD mission of ‘education for a diverse democracy’.” The specific strengths and weaknesses noted by the reviewers are summarized in a table at the end, where we have translated “weaknesses” into “areas to be developed” with a view to defining goals and objectives for years ahead.<sup>2</sup> With a commitment of resources at a very modest level, we believe that LTET can continue to address its stated mission of “providing students with knowledge, tools, experience, and support so they can become constructive, reflective agents of change in education within traditional and non-traditional roles and settings, from a social justice perspective and by embedding reflection within their practice.”

One of the most notable changes during the last few years has been the shift from an identity as a track within a program (“Track A”) to a program that warranted an AQUAD review in its own right (i.e., LTET).<sup>3</sup> There lies the rub, however. As a track within the College of Education’s flagship Teacher Education program, the non-licensure track could expect to be seen by the leadership of Program, Department, and College as one of their responsibilities. By the time of this AQUAD review, however, it is clear that LTET’s needs for funding and attention are

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<sup>1</sup> The AQUAD reviewers sometimes use the term Certificate, but LTET is a 33-credit Master’s degree.

<sup>2</sup> Some of these “areas to be developed” have received attention over the last four years and/or are being worked on in light of the AQUAD review, e.g., a name that conveys the mission of the Program (2008-9), a wider range of courses fulfilling the core requirements (2008-9), an organized advisor-advisee system backed up by up-to-date information at <http://candi.wikispaces.umb.edu/LTETtrack> (2008-present), and the program’s database recording key points (matriculation, transfer in, graduate, and become inactive) in a format that allows the exact number of students served by LTET at any given time to be determined (since 4/15/11).

<sup>3</sup> The AQUAD reviewers misconstrue the earlier history somewhat. From the catalog description dating back to the early 1990s, the track has always served students transferring from Teacher Education licensure programs, teachers who already have teacher licensure, and students who were interested in non-teaching careers within the broad field of education.

eclipsed by, or even in competition with, the needs of the licensure tracks. In light of this, let us suggest some reframing of how needs are viewed and prioritized.<sup>4</sup>

There are matriculated students in LTET; they need to be taught, advised, evaluated, and graduated. Serving tuition/fee-paying students is a statutory responsibility of the University. Once a minimum level of service is in place for these students, then Department/College/University priority-setting can mean that mandates, accreditation and licensure requirements, investment to meet anticipated demand, etc. come into play. At that second level the LTET faculty has no expectation of LTET being a high priority; it is simply the first level—providing “food” to ensure the “organism’s basal metabolism”—that warrants adequate resources.

A minimum level of service to LTET students would entail only the following:

1. Continuation of the quarter-time graduate assistantship, with additional hours for work during the key admissions and registration periods of the winter and summer break.
2. Continuation of advising by the core LTET faculty of students in their areas and of sharing in the grading of the capstone exams.
3. Advisors from the licensure tracks continuing on in that role when an advisee shifts to LTET.
4. Appointment of a Coordinator who advises students not covered under #2 and is dedicated to LTET (that is, not serving LTET at the expense of a primary leadership responsibility to another program).
5. An apprenticeship/successional arrangement so transitions from one coordinator to the next are not crises to be “solved” by core faculty taking on an over-overload.

To meet #4 might require offering a stipend equal to that of other same-size programs and/or a course load reduction, or appointing a new half-time person who also teaches needed courses, such as online sections of EDCG-606, Socio-cultural Perspectives. With a suitable person meeting requirement #4, LTET will be able to maintain the “QU” that the AQUAD reviewers applauded and to continue making progress on the “D” items they identified.

In conclusion, in the words of the AQUAD reviewers: “Adequate resources will help the LTET program grow so that it can even better serve students, the College of Education and Human Development, the wider campus community, and the local, state and national constituencies to which it is connected.”

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<sup>4</sup> We do so recognizing however that the AQUAD process focuses on the program under review and does not evaluate the larger structures within which a program is embedded.

**Excerpts from the AQUAD Review Committee’s Report on the Learning, Teaching, and Educational Transformation (LTET) non-licensure Teacher Education M. Ed. track.**

STRENGTHS	AREAS TO BE DEVELOPED
<b>1. Goals and objectives are linked to the campus mission and strategic priorities.</b>	
<p>"integrate[s] and support[s] civic engagement in teaching and learning"</p> <p>"prepares graduates to analyze and address 'big picture' issues in education"</p> <p>“several students [the reviewers] spoke to are planning to go on to obtain a doctorate in education”</p> <p>“serves a population deeply involved in education, but mostly not as K-12 classroom teachers”</p> <p>“provides [students] with core curricular skills and greater understanding of educational transformation as well as a choice of courses where they can learn the particular skills to take on the requirements of their unique personal, educational and professional situations”</p> <p>“work of LTET faculty, not only in but outside of the walls of the university, is also impressively aligned to campus, college and program missions and strategic priorities”</p>	<p>Faculty need “the opportunity [away from their work full-time in other programs] to meet and clearly articulate in writing the program’s mission”</p> <p>Faculty need “time to collect and analyze data related to understanding which individuals are best served by this program and the types of job opportunities available to program graduates”</p> <p>Make it less “difficult for [potential] students to find out about [the] existence of “the LTET program [which] addresses the mission of the university extremely well for a population not served by other programs in education”</p>
<b>2. Curriculum is relevant, rigorous, current and coherent</b>	
<p>“Courses offer both depth and breadth and meet a range of student and curricular needs”</p> <p>“offers coherence via the four core areas [and] “also provides a flexibility (the seven electives) [viewed by students] as an important and positive feature”</p>	<p>Move from “curricular structure and course offerings seemed... linked to faculty strengths and existing courses in other programs” to “purposeful organization informed by internal and external measures of review”</p>

<b>2. Curriculum is relevant, rigorous, current and coherent (cont.)</b>	
<p>“engage[s] students in learning that continues beyond the classroom walls”</p> <p>“linkage of practical skills and critical thinking, providing depth through analysis and action in a specific setting, as well as breadth, as students learn to place educational transformation in institutional, cultural and historical contexts.”</p> <p>Emphasizes “two particular ‘things that are missing’ from other graduate programs... cross-cultural understanding among educators [and] attack[ing] the problems [of education] at the organizational level.”</p> <p>“powerful individualized programs of study” providing “practical and cognitive tools to apply to educational transformation”</p> <p>“A number of recent graduates are applying for doctoral study... Most are already applying their skills at their jobs or in their communities.”</p>	<p>More balance “in the number of course offerings for the core areas”</p> <p>“more courses in administration... given how many students are working or plan to work in educational administration.”</p> <p>“develop the capstone to better prepare its graduates for further employment by assigning a community-based project, internship or service-learning experience that requires students to implement the skills and understandings acquired throughout the program</p> <p>(In the spirit of the new capstone option for a written paper with oral presentation rather than only a comprehensive examination), capstone needs to “provide [more] of a culminating experience” than the current exam option... “A more shared experience [that] bring[s students] together as a group of learners at the end of their program.... [P]rovide the kind of advanced research and writing experience that would best prepare students for doctoral work.”</p>
<b>3. Faculty quality and productivity</b>	
<p>“faculty with tremendous commitment and strengths in teaching, scholarship, advising, and service... [with] commitment and generosity in lending their professional expertise to off-campus constituencies... [and] also are engaged in significant scholarly activities, which enhance the intellectual community of their classes and of the LTET program as a whole.”</p> <p>“faculty of excellent teachers”</p>	<p>Need to address the fact “that faculty are holding this all together through sheer dint of energy, and that they are stretched as thin as they can possibly go.”</p> <p>Given faculty “commitment to the goals and types of teaching, learning, and educational transformation” in LTET, more “time [needs to be] available to reflect on program goals and purpose”</p> <p>Need to address the fact that faculty are “just so busy with their other departmental responsibilities that they were not always as accessible as would be desirable”</p>

<b>3. Faculty quality and productivity (cont.)</b>	
<p>“faculty shoulder an impressive and important advising load... [LTET] requires advising that is flexible to student needs, while at the same time offering consistent advising so that students can complete a cohesive program.”</p> <p>“commitment to students continues after graduation, as faculty have successfully mentored graduates in job searches and encouraged students to pursue a Ph.D.”</p>	
<b>4. Teaching and learning environments that facilitate student success</b>	
<p>“students... gain advanced skills and knowledge related to the program focus on educational transformation.”</p> <p>“facilitates success for students from a variety of educational backgrounds and experiences”</p> <p>“students commented on the program in terms of personal, intellectual <i>and</i> professional growth”</p> <p>“The variety in types of courses and when they are offered helps make the LTET program accessible to many types of students... after 4 p.m. [and] courses... offered online, in the summer, and in intensive three or six week sessions”</p> <p>“capstone, with its two options, offers choices helpful to students with different experiences and learning needs.”</p> <p>“Student progress and needs are also monitored through advising, as well as through annual review of student data by program faculty.”</p>	<p>“specific supports in place to ensure... successful progress through the program” for students admitted with GPAs less than 3.0.</p> <p>“more clearly articulate, track and review student learning outcomes”</p> <p>“collecting and evaluating data related to LTET graduates would help the program anticipate and respond to the professional needs of students and graduates.”</p>

<b>5. Curriculum resources are used wisely</b>	
<p>“a program with no assigned faculty that serves students from many different campus constituencies is not just ‘wise’ but a creative and exemplary model for maximizing resources.”</p> <p>“does not duplicate or take from other programs but rather leads students, as the self-study argued, to ‘an array of options’ and a graduate degree not available elsewhere in the university.”</p> <p>“[The] difference lay in the flexibility of the program to... ‘scope and mold’ the master’s degree, and in the program’s focus on education in settings and opportunities beyond classroom teaching.”</p> <p>“[P]rogram serves an adequate number of students, especially given its minimal resources.”</p>	<p>“efforts to explain the program and recruit new students” beyond “informal word of mouth”</p> <p>[Efforts to ensure that] “people outside of the program... know that it exists [and] what it does... [Counteract] misinformation, particularly... the view that most LTET students have failed licensure exams... [and] that the degree earned in the LTET was ‘terminal’.”</p> <p>[Use students] “more to explain the program and to bring more students into it... [Students’] experiences and understanding of the program provide persuasive evidence of the program’s importance and impact.”</p> <p>[LTET] be given “a separate page in the graduate catalog instead of hiding it without an index entry beneath the ‘Teacher Education’ heading.”</p>