

# Bachelor of Education 2014 Annual Implementation Report

Submitted by:

Dawn Buzza, Acting Dean

Julie Mueller, Acting Associate Dean

Steve Sider, Faculty member

Date: April 22, 2014

<b>Recommendation(s): Extend the perspective of inquiry; align PDS with action research (3a); refocus EU 404 (3c); and reconsider publication of inquiry projects (3d).</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Full-time faculty</b>	<b>Implementation Date: September 2013</b>
<b>Additional Notes: These recommendations are interrelated and will be addressed simultaneously. Discussions are currently underway and revisions will be implemented in Fall, 2013.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
<p>Unit Response: Focus groups were conducted with Teacher Education Candidates at the end of the academic year in May 2013 to better understand how to refocus EU404 (3c) and the inquiry projects were also discussed with principals at a breakfast meeting held in July. PLS (EU404) instructors met as a collaborative group with Dr. Steve Sider taking the lead as the full time faculty member teaching the course. The instructors took the input of TECs, principals, and the review document itself into consideration as they refocused the course. Significant work was done to change the format of the course (moved from mid-week to end of week) and to synthesize it with the professional workshops that had typically occurred on Fridays. As well, the syllabus for the course was completely examined and re-worked as were all assignments. The inquiry project was re-examined and re-conceptualized with a new focus on "action research" to better align with the purpose of the inquiry within the school context. Extensive training and input were provided to TECs to ensure a smooth transition to the new action research focus. All TECs completed the on-line Course on Research Ethics (CORE) by the Panel on Research Ethics. As well, Laurier Research Ethics Board approval was received for the action research projects as an aggregate. Communication with Associate Teachers and Principals occurred four times through the year to ensure that PDS sites were aware of the progress of TECs with the projects. Projects moved from group oriented, school focused projects to individual projects more closely connected with TEC professional development and included a reflective component addressing teaching development.</p> <p>Recommendation 3d, regarding publication was considered. At a Divisional Council meeting in Spring 214, Dr. Kotsopoulos shared her process of submitting ethics applications in the Spring to set up research projects for the Fall that might provide opportunity for TECs to be involved in inquiry/action research from the beginning of the year with faculty. This supports the possibility of co-authored publications and addresses the condensed time line for ethical review.</p> <p>The annual year-end celebration at which inquiry projects had generally been shared was discontinued due to financial constraints and limited attendance. TECs had two class periods in which they shared the action research they had been engaged in. A summary list of action research topics was sent to Principals and Associate Teachers so they could be aware of the breadth of topics.</p> <p>Decanal Response: I concur with the comments and implementation steps described above. In particular, the change in the focus of the action research inquiry projects to be individual and more closely connected with TEC professional development and to include a reflective component addressing teaching development is very appropriate, given the feedback we have heard from many of our previous TECs and school partners.</p>	

PRS Comments: Completion noted. It is not necessary to report on this recommendation further.

<b>Recommendation: Consider changing the weighting of the admission criteria.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Admissions Committee</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Summer 2013</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The above recommendation to consider changing the weighting of the admission criteria was considered by divisional council. The essay was dropped and the 50% GPA and 50% experience profile was maintained. The importance of GPA was recognized and confirmed but the experience with children and education contexts was seen as an important pre-requisite to admission to the program. Other faculties of education admission criteria were considered and faculty believed that the 50/50 split was in line with other faculties and that supported the philosophy of the program. Additional consideration is being given to the possibility of adding some form of face to face evaluation in the form of individual or group interviews to provide validity check to the experience profile and to attempt to measure emotional intelligence. The possibility was considered at a Divisional Council meeting and responsibility was given to the Admissions Committee to review alternative practices in the Spring of 2014.	
Decanal Response: The above description captures accurately the status of this response to the recommendation. We are currently exploring the potential costs and benefits of conducting interviews with applicants to the program. Our partnering PDS Principals have voiced strong support for this approach and have offered their assistance in conducting and scoring interviews, should we implement them. We recognize that our interview process in the first 2 years of the BEd program was not deemed to be effective; however, careful examination of that process showed that the interview questions were not likely to discriminate between applicants who met success criteria for a professional teacher education program and those who did not. We are now examining evidence-based approaches to interviewing that may be more effective in this regard.	
PRS Comments: Completion noted. It is not necessary to report on this recommendation further.	

<b>Recommendation: Solicit input on inquiry project.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Full-time faculty</b>	<b>Implementation Date: September 2013</b>
<b>Additional Notes: Data will be gathered in May and analyzed in Summer, 2013, to inform possible changes in September.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: As per the response to recommendation 3a to d, the inquiry projects were considered through focus groups with TECs and principals from PDS sites. The input from students and principals was used by instructors of the EU404 course to alter the approach	

to the inquiry project and ensure that the reflective aspect of the project was addressed. The inquiry thread was addressed in detail in the development of the extended program and a separate course was developed to address this thinking and learning process.
Decanal Response: I agree with and support the above comments.
PRS Comments: Completion noted. It is not necessary to report on this recommendation further.

<b>Recommendation: Coordinate due dates.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Associate Dean; full- and part-time faculty</b>	<b>Implementation Date: August and December 2013</b>
<b>Additional Notes: This has been tried before; another attempt will be made.</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The recommendation to coordinate due dates is an ongoing suggestion from students as well. The faculty has addressed the concern of concentrated assignment deadlines in faculty meetings and in CAS faculty orientation. Attempts to address the issue have included in-class assignments in EU401, combined assignments in our Integrated courses (EU414/415 and EU415/EU411), and flexible deadlines in several courses. The condensed course time line (5 weeks in between practica) in the first term results in less flexibility in scheduling than in the second term and students have noticed a difference. We will continue to address this concern and inform students of the more condensed requirements of course assignments in the first term.	
Decanal Response: I agree with the above comments. It should also be noted that 2014-15 is the last year of the one-year BEd program – beginning in 2015-16, we will be implementing the government-mandated two-year program. We will be coordinating the development and revision of courses for the new program so that content and workload are linked across courses that are offered during the same semester. However, the coordination of assignment due dates is always challenging and will require monitoring and likely some revision over the first few years in which the new program is implemented.	
PRS Comments: The committee looks forward to an update on this recommendation in next year's report.	

<b>Recommendation: Design a better-quality space for teaching and learning.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: N/A</b>	<b>Implementation Date: N/A</b>
<b>Additional Notes: Depends on space availability within the University</b>	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: Alteration to teaching and learning space was not available in the 2014 year other than booking of appropriate rooms for combined classes and special events. The Dean and Associate Dean met with athletic staff to ensure that an appropriate space was available for physical education courses. The Active Learning Classroom and the library	

were both utilized in foundation courses (EU401) to ensure that alternative learning spaces were utilized to support innovative practices.

This Spring, updates to current technology are being made within our classrooms as part of university-wide renewal. Dr. Mueller is working to develop a proposal for a technology-enhanced alternative learning classroom and will actively pursue development funds to renovate existing classrooms to support flexible arrangements.

Decanal Response: With current university budget restrictions and reduced funding for teacher education programs across the province, it is not realistic for our faculty to request additional space for teaching and learning at this time. However, as indicated above, we are making efforts to maximize the space we currently use, by enhancing the technologies available for teaching, learning, and demonstration purposes. As we continue to build connections with the external community, we will be seeking funding for expansion of our programs and spaces to accommodate those.

PRS Comments: The committee recognizes the limited control that the Faculty has over space issues. Please note any updates in next year's report.

<b>Recommendation: Strengthen strategic planning.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Dean, with full-time faculty</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Continuous, beginning September 2013</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The faculty has undergone several formal and comprehensive reviews and plans for future programming, including the internal IPRM process; a detailed design for an extended program mandated by the Ministry of Education that included extensive consultation with our education partners, university departments, full-time and part-time faculty, and students; and, plans to re-instate our Master of Education or create new programs if it is not re-instated.	
Decanal Response: The above describes accurately some of the major planning efforts that have been implemented this year. We also have put further effort into building connections with key community stakeholders in education through the Dean's Development Advisory Board (DDAB). This year we have added several new members to the DDAB and just recently the Board agreed to identify several additional high-profile community members for next year's DDAB. We also agreed to meet more often next year, in order to maintain momentum in the initiatives being explored and pursued.	
PRS Comments: Please provide an update in next year's report. The committee wishes the Faculty well in their strategic planning efforts.	

<b>Faculty goal: Analyze the experimental integrated courses that will occur during the fall term for possible revisions for repeating the courses in Winter, 2014.</b>	
<b>Responsibility: Dean, with full-time faculty and course instructors</b>	<b>Implementation Date: January 2014, with analysis in the fall</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress	

Other (please explain):

Unit Response: Instructors met to review course evaluations and reflect on the first iteration of the integrated courses in summer of 2013; changes were made to the courses to address challenges encountered in the first year. The courses were repeated with the same instructors in Winter 2014.

Ethics application was submitted by the Associate Dean (currently the Acting Dean) to review the integrated courses and conduct formal data analysis on the course development process and outcomes of the first year's implementation.

Decanal Response: The above description is accurate. An important feature of the integrated courses was that of preparing TECs to teach in ways that support students' development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills (see <http://www.p21.org/>). There were some interesting results from the data collected and analyzed from the first implementation of the integrated courses. One notable outcome was that a significant change over the span of the course was shown in TECs' self-efficacy for teaching in ways that support the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. In particular, a change was shown in their confidence for helping their pupils develop Learning and Innovation Skills (one of three subscales on the self-efficacy for teaching 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills measure). A very strong trend was also produced showing a change in a second self-efficacy subscale, that of supporting students' Life and Career Skills.

The integrated courses will be offered again in 2014-15. The following year will bring many changes to the curriculum for the BEd program as we move to the 2-year model. In the new program we will include several courses that focus specifically on integration across (K-12) curriculum areas/disciplines. The integrated courses described above will provide an excellent foundation and a strong evidence base for the creation of those curriculum integration courses.

PRS Comments: Completion noted. It is not necessary to report on this recommendation further.

***Additional Recommendation from the Program Review Sub-Committee:*** At its November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting, Senate Academic Planning approved the following motion: "that the Senate Academic Planning Committee, on the recommendation of the Program Review Sub-Committee, approve the inclusion of a university-wide recommendation on each Annual Implementation Report that, prior to the next cyclical review, the program develop a means for assessing program learning outcomes." A full explanation of the rationale behind the motion can be found here:

[http://legacy.wlu.ca/documents/56385/PRS\\_Recommendation\\_for\\_Annual\\_Implementation\\_Reports\\_SAPC\\_Nov\\_11\\_2013.pdf](http://legacy.wlu.ca/documents/56385/PRS_Recommendation_for_Annual_Implementation_Reports_SAPC_Nov_11_2013.pdf)

The committee recommends that the Department begin having conversations about program learning outcomes assessment and put together a strategy for collecting and presenting evidence of this assessment in its next cyclical review.

***Additional Comments (PRS):*** The committee wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the Faculty of Education for the diligence with which they attended to the implementation of these recommendations.