

Date: September 7, 2018

To: Diana Hess, Dean, School of Education

From: Julie F. Mead, Associate Dean for Education, Chair of the Review Committee  
Erica Halverson, Professor, Curriculum and Instruction  
Janean Dilworth-Bart, Chair and Professor, Human Development and Family Studies

Re: Program Review of the Undergraduate Certificate in Education and Educational Services

The Undergraduate Certificate in Education and Educational Services (EES) began in 2013. The EES certificate exists to permit students who are not majoring in a teacher education program to explore “a variety of key issues related to education, as well as national changes in teacher education. This program contributes to the cultivation of informed and engaged citizens and enriches public dialogue around critical issues in educational policy and practice”

(<https://edpsych.education.wisc.edu/academics/ees-certificate/>). Housed in the Department of Educational Psychology, the EES certificate permits students to take courses from an array of offerings from the departments of Counseling Psychology, Curriculum & Instruction (C&I), Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (ELPA), Educational Policy Studies (EPS), Educational Psychology (Ed. Psych.), and Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education (RPSE). Students must complete a total of 15 credits to earn the certificate. The only required course for all EES students is Curriculum and Instruction 240, Introduction to Education (C&I 240). Students then select one 3-credit course from a list of six courses (5 EPS courses & 1 ELPA course) that address the “social context of education” and select one of six 3-credit courses (5 Ed. Psych. courses & 1 RPSE course) that examine the “individual processes in teaching and learning.” These nine credits form the “foundation” requirement of the certificate and also result in students sampling from at least three School of Education departments. Students then select an additional six credits (2 courses) of “focus” coursework from any of the participating departments. Up to three credits of independent study may be used to satisfy the “focus” requirement.

This is the first time the program has been reviewed in accordance with the university’s requirements for academic program review (<https://apir.wisc.edu/academic-planning/program-review/>). Accordingly, the review was initiated to gather information concerning whether the certificate is meeting the standards of quality expected, to consider the certificate’s relationship to other programs on campus, to assess whether sufficient resources support the program, and to offer advice concerning program continuation. To respond to those goals, this report is organized in three sections to provide: 1) a summary of the activities of the review committee and materials reviewed; 2) an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the certificate; and 3) recommendations for future directions.

### **Summary of review committee activities**

The review committee was comprised of Julie Mead, Associate Dean for Education (Chair), Erica Halverson, Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, and Janean Dilworth-Bart, Chair and Professor, Human Development and Family Studies. To conduct the review, the committee completed three activities. First the committee reviewed the self-study completed by the Department of Educational Psychology. The committee also reviewed the website maintained by the department (<https://edpsych.education.wisc.edu/academics/ees-certificate/>). Finally, the committee met with faculty associated with the certificate, including: B. Bradford Brown, Chair and Professor, Educational Psychology; Bianca Baldrige, Assistant Professor, Educational Policy Studies; Mary Louise Gomez, Professor, Curriculum and Instruction; and Ed Hubbard, Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology. Professor Hubbard also serves as the EES Certificate program director.

### **Evaluation of the certificate's strengths and weaknesses**

The Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research lays out the following purposes for a 5-year program review:

- a. Determine whether the goals and objectives as stated in the original program proposal were met and evaluate if the program is meeting standards of quality that are expected based on the original proposal.
- b. Confirm that the program is important to be delivered at UW - Madison and understand the program's relationship to other programs at UW - Madison. Are other programs positively or negatively impacted? Are connections with other programs as planned in the original proposal developing as envisioned?
- c. Determine if the resource implications of continuing the program are appropriate.
- d. Offer the program faculty, the dean(s), and/or provost any advice for program improvement and summarize any actions for follow-up or attention.  
(<https://kb.wisc.edu/vesta/page.php?id=33116>)

The self-study of the EES certificate completed by the Department of Educational Psychology clearly responds to each of these considerations and shows that the program is meeting its stated purpose and has, in fact, become quite popular. With a current enrollment of over 200 students, the EES certificate has the 8<sup>th</sup> largest enrollment of undergraduate certificates on campus and the largest enrollment of any undergraduate certificate in the School of Education. The program is delivered with a small budget and the department reports no difficulties in program administration. The report raised one concern with respect to the availability of seats in C&I 240, but Professor Gomez indicated during the meeting with the review committee that the Department of Curriculum and Instruction delivered the course online during summer 2018 and has added a second section of the course for spring semester 2019. In addition, consideration is being given to offering at least one section of the course online during the academic year. These measures are designed to meet the demand for the course and will be evaluated going forward to ensure that limited availability of the course does not hamper students' ability to complete the EES certificate.

The self-study of the EES certificate completed by the Department of Educational Psychology identifies a number of program strengths. Chief among them is the program's flexibility that

permits students to explore various aspects of education while completing any major except those that lead to teacher licensure. The nine-credit core requirement ensures that all students completing the certificate have a reasonably consistent foundational understanding of education and education services, while the 6-credits of “focus” courses permit students to pursue their individual interests. This flexibility likely has led to the program’s popularity and another strength is the broad range of majors the EES certificate attracts. In fact, the self-study shows that the 91 students who completed the certificate in 2016-17 were drawn from 27 different majors outside the School of Education.

The self-study also addresses three concerns for the program. As discussed above, ensuring that C&I 240 does not become a “chokepoint” for students’ ability to pursue the certificate is one concern. However, it appears that plans are already underway to address that issue. A second concern relates to the introduction of the Education Studies major in Educational Policy Studies. That major may attract some students who would otherwise enroll in the EES certificate program and may result in a reduction in the certificate’s enrollment. As the Education Studies major will begin only its second year in Fall 2018, it is too early to discern its impact on the EES certificate. Nonetheless, as the self-study shows, the Department of Educational Psychology has plans to address the marketing of the program in order to maintain current enrollment levels and replace any students “lost” to that major. There are no current plans to grow the program’s enrollment. The third concern is the lack of an identifiable community associated with the certificate. The self-study also describes how the department plans to explore branding, recognition, and social events as means to structure opportunities for EES students to create community. Reportedly, students enrolled in the certificate seem unaware of others in the certificate. Telling the success stories of former students and engaging current students as advocates would not only build community, but would also help to market the program to prospective students. The department may need to consider devoting additional funds and time to this goal.

The review committee identified one additional concern, a lack of clarity about what the completion of the EES certificate may prepare a student to do. In other words, while flexibility is a strength, it also diffuses the purposes, other than satisfying personal interest, for which a student may benefit from completion of the certificate. We will address that concern along with the others in the section that follows.

### **Recommendations**

We commend the Department of Educational Psychology, the steering committee, and all those involved in developing a strong certificate program that clearly meets the needs of a large number of undergraduate students. We concur with the assessment detailed in the self-study report and encourage the Department to implement the plans for improvement laid out in section 10 of that report. In addition, we offer the following recommendations.

1. Consider marketing the program to other School of Education students who are not enrolled in the teacher education programs. The committee found it curious that not one of the 91 students who graduated in 2016-2017 were majors in other education departments. We understand that eligible School of Education students may not use more than six credits of coursework that satisfy their major to count toward the EES certificate. However, there may be students, particularly those enrolled in majors in Art, Dance, and

- Theatre and Drama, who may not wish to pursue teacher licensure, but would have interest in and benefit from the EES certificate. We encourage the Department to explore this idea, which may also help to replace the students lost to the Education Studies major.
2. Consider identifying groups of classes clustered around interests that directly relate to the marketplace. Currently, “focus” courses are listed according to departmental affiliation. We recommend that in addition to this approach, program faculty consider creating interest-based lists of courses and use those lists to market the EES certificate to students. For example, a student interested in community-based non-profit work with children might be directed to one set of courses that meet the “foundation” and “focus” requirements of the certificate, while a student interested in arts-based work with children might be directed to a different set of courses to help them navigate the certificate. Arranging courses in this manner would help to communicate the benefits and uses of the certificate and may also help the Department to track students who complete the program.
  3. Consider “bundling” courses for summer delivery or at least marketing the courses delivered during the summer that satisfy EES requirements. We recommend particular attention be giving to creating a group of courses that are delivered asynchronously online as way to maximize student access. Helping students to identify community resources (libraries and other resources) that provide free computer online access will also be important to ensuring the broadest access possible. Likewise, it is important to consider the number of credits required for financial aid eligibility in the summer (“half-time” enrollment for the number of weeks of enrolled; 6 credits for federal direct loans. <https://financialaid.wisc.edu/eligibility/>). Marketing the availability of these summer EES “bundles” may attract students to enroll in the program and may assist those who have already declared an interest to complete certificate requirements.

CC: Carolyn Kelley, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Programs, School of Education  
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