

External Review Report: Faculty of Education Response to CCAM

The following response addresses the issues raised in the external review report, outlines priorities and identifies some future directions and initiatives for the Faculty of Education over the next three to five years. Some of the recommendations are difficult to plan for in the long-term because the Faculty of Education currently has an interim dean. A search is underway and a new dean will join the faculty in July 1, 2018. In terms of timeline and process, the Education leadership team received the external review report on May 1, 2017, faculty members received the report on July 5 and the Education leadership team met on August 22 to plan a multi-pronged approach to ensure opportunities for faculty input. At the Faculty Fall Retreat on August 28, the Dean provided faculty members with an update on this process. On September 15, the Dean wrote to Faculty to begin the process of requesting individual written submissions from faculty pertaining to the external unit review by October 6. At the September 12 Planning and Priorities committee meeting on September 12, the Dean asked program chairs to discuss the 12 recommendations and provide notes from those discussions. Finally, the faculty met on Wednesday, 18 October, 2017 to discuss the recommendations as a collective. A second meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 8, 2017.

The first recommendation suggests that efforts should be undertaken to create a culture of transparency within the Faculty of Education that will foster greater collegial input into a range of decisions including workload, program configuration and possible change, budget allocations, and committee formation and processes. In response, collaborative processes have been implemented around the direction of SIDRU, one of the Faculty's two research units (initial report circulated, faculty feedback solicited, faculty meeting held in November) and decision-making on two tenure-track positions. A two part-process was used to foster collegial input. We

examined sessional patterns over last three academic years, shared that information with all faculty members, solicited proposals from faculty members, and ten proposals were submitted. Dean's group met, reviewed, and determined a direction forward for the two positions

Workload was identified as an important area in the report and faculty members also identify this as a key area. A committee has been created to examine work load issues within the faculty within in the context of the criteria document and budget. The committee has been asked to confirm issues of workload in the Faculty of Education, conduct course inventory, identify and examine factors that contribute to the workload environment of faculty members, and prepare recommendations by May 2018 considering: recommendations that are likely to be implemented, innovative routes, and short-term and long-term approaches. Because program content and workload are intertwined, this committee's work will also contribute to the faculty's review of its graduate programs as well as a review of the secondary program. As a faculty, we suspect there are too many graduate programs. There are likely to be cuts and consolidations of some existing programs and the review process is underway. One clear direction is reducing the types of PhD programs we have, thus eliminating the need for speciality 900 level courses. We also know we have to increase access to online options. There has been discussion of the possibility of forming cohorts and there is also a sense that the faculty requires a better rotation of core courses alongside regular courses

Another area of consideration in the report's recommendations is the Faculty's Centre for International Education and Training (CIET). Possibilities raised in discussion have thus far taken the form of questions. Faculty members have asked if CIET is a reduplication of the services of UR International. Others have pointed out that CIET is a Tier II Research Centre – not a recruitment centre. Others are unsure about how CIET is funded. Some have asked if

SIDRU and CIET can be combined or share resources. While no clear decisions have been reached about the future of CIET, Faculty discussions have led to the scheduling of a meeting focussed solely on discussing the work of CIET. The director of CIET will talk about the work of the Centre and respond to any questions about its mandate and activities. This meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 5.

Several other recommendations are more likely to take place once the new Dean is in place. This person will need to find a variety of mechanisms to support the research productivity of each of the faculty members, despite the challenges that decreasing budgets may present. A new strategic mentoring plan for the Faculty will need to be developed. The report also highlighted the importance for the new Dean to focus a considerable amount of their time towards diversifying the ways in which funds come into the Faculty budget, in particular, ways that revenue can be generated. While some program areas are currently developing revenue-generating programs and the reimagining of our research centres also open up opportunities for another form of generating revenue, faculty members do not agree that the new Dean should focus a considerable amount of their time towards revenue-generation.

The report also recommended an immediate hiring freeze for both staff and faculty in order to help foster strategic alignment of all present and new initiatives within the Faculty including alignment of budget, facilities, time, staff, space, and new revenue streams. While we are carefully aligning any initiatives to areas identified in our faculty strategic plan, we have not implemented any hiring freezes. The report also recommends that attention be given to increasing digital literacy throughout the faculty. Some faculty and staff have high levels of digital literacy and others do not. We are committed to working together to improvements in this area through training for faculty and staff.