CONSULTANT RECOMMENDATION REPORT
Planning and Review Committee
Consultant Recommendation

I. Degree: M.S. Education

Date of Review: 2011-2012

Program Director: Renee Chandler

PRC Consultant(s): Deb Homa and Kimberly Zagorski

Purpose of the Review: The review was conducted to assess the quality of the M.S. Education degree program as part of the ongoing seven-year review cycle of UW-Stout programs.

Committee Findings: The PRC recommends continuation of this program through the next scheduled review in 2018 and that the recommendations made by the committee be implemented.

Abstract:

In alignment with the UW-Stout mission, the M.S. in Education program prepares graduates for professional careers in education by offering a high-quality and challenging program Professional Development. Since 2010, the program has been delivered completely through an online format, using the cohort model. The program includes a professional core of 14 credits; Research, 5 credits; and Electives, 11 credits. These electives are designed to afford students the opportunity to align the degree to their specific goals or to obtain certification in Reading, e-Learning and Online Teaching, or Instructional Design. To maintain a high degree of rigor, the program coursework for the core and research components are graduate-level-only classes. Extensive program revision for this degree was implemented by the program director in 2011. A major part of this revision has been the introduction of EDUC-745 Assessment for Learning and EDUC-780 Action Research, which focus on the development of assessment tools and student learning. Overall, this is a high quality program offering flexibility to a diversely located audience

II. Process Followed for Current Review:

The PRC consultants met with the program director to review the procedures and offer assistance. Data regarding several aspects of the program were collected from juniors and seniors currently enrolled in the program, key faculty, advisory board and alumni. The data were analyzed and returned to the program director and PRC members. The program director then completed the self-study report and presented the report to the PRC. The consultants then wrote the recommendation report. This report was forwarded to the dean for his response. The PRC reviewed the dean’s response, approved the recommendation report and forwarded the report to the Faculty Senate.
III. Previous Review Year 2005

Previous Recommendations for Program Director:

1. Work to improve and standardize course delivery options for online cohort.

2. Work to improve communication via email and use of the web to clarify (and avoid misunderstandings) on such issues as:
   a. Requirements and transcript review for certification students.
   b. Students’ responsibility for updating contact information.
   c. Scheduling of core and selective courses.

3. Work to keep needs of the online cohort integrated with those of on-campus students.

4. Seek and respond to student feedback regarding the implementation of the new program revision and quality of curriculum, possibly through use of surveys.

5. Work to maintain enrollments sufficient to supply program needs.

6. Investigate possibilities for developing a re-licensure plan.

7. Align program with PI-34 requirements.

Response from Program Director:

1. We will work toward that end but this is a problem across campus. We are standardizing all of MSE required courses taught out of the School of Education to using Learn@UWStout and providing summer support for our faculty to prepare their courses for that delivery.

2. We are adding a new section to the SOE web site this summer that will clarify the available certifications, enrollment status options for certification programs, and the transcript review process. We will also provide frequent reminders to students regarding how UW-Stout contacts them and the importance of contact information. The two-year sequence of MSE courses for the online cohort group is always maintained on the MSE web site. Information on the schedule of on-campus courses will be added to the MSE web site.

3. The MSE and MSE DE program director work closely together to identify areas of common need and we work hard to provide common communication to on-campus and online students regarding common needs, e.g. filing for degree candidacy, registration time frame, etc. Additionally there are needs unique to the two groups, e.g. available selectives that require separate communications.

4. Annual surveys of graduates will be conducted. Students complete course evaluations in all online courses.
5. Both program directors review and update the web site. Stout Outreach and Continuing Education is working with the program directors to develop a new brochure. The online program is marketed to all students who take any EDUC online course. The MSE program director provides program information to all students graduating from the undergraduate SOE programs.

6. Credits are no longer required for re-licensure by Wisconsin teachers graduating after August 2004. Instead, they must develop a Professional Development Plan to move from initial educator status to a regular license. The format for the MSE professional development goals and the portfolio of evidence of program/goal attainment are very compatible with the WI PDP format and requirements. Therefore we are very optimistic that new teachers will seek out the MSE to fulfill their PDP requirements while obtaining their master’s degree.

7. See response to recommendation 6.

Previous Recommendations for Coordinating Chair of the School of Education:

1. Work with program director to assure that course offerings, both on-campus and online, are aligned and staffed by faculty and staff able to uphold the standards and mission of the program.

2. Work to identify and support faculty who can provide guidance and expertise for the research, grant proposal, and program revision specialization options.

Response from Coordinating Chair of the School of Education:

1. Alan Block and I work closely together to plan the offerings and staffing. With very few exceptions regular SOE faculty/staff now teach all of the required courses.

2. The chair will conduct a training session for faculty interested in being research advisors for the grant and program evaluation research options this coming fall. The research specifications and evaluation rubrics for those two options will be included in the training. I have worked individually with advisors up to this point.

Previous Recommendations for Dean of the School of Education:

1. Work closely with university technology support to assure improved course delivery resources for online degree students.

2. Maintain communication with program director and other stakeholders to assure continuing implementation of 2004 program revision.

Response from Dean:

1. The program director Alan Block, Stout Solutions, and I will continue to work very closely with technology services on campus to assure excellent resources for online degree students. The School of Education also has an online coordinator who is very
knowledgeable and skilled in offering excellent online course delivery. She constantly manages the quality of delivery and needs of online students.

2. I am in ongoing communication with the program director, the School of Education chair, and Stout Solutions to monitor the online M.S. in Education program. The program appears to be meeting a need of practicing educators.

IV. Current Year Program Review:

Program Strengths-Indicate Source:

- Recent program revision to address previous concerns and improve program (PD self-study)
- Addition of assessment of learning components in the program (PD self-study)
- Data driven decision making for real world research (PD self-study)
- Enrollment has been strong and increasing (PD self-study)
- Accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (PD self-study)
- Students can take all courses online, requires no travel to campus (PD self-study, student surveys)
- Flexibility of programming for adult learners (PD self-study, student evaluations)

Issues of Concern-Indicate Source:

- Develop more consistent assignment of faculty to deliver courses (PD self-study, student surveys)
- Consider exploring feasibility of adding more courses to existing array to meet student requests for more variety (student surveys)

Recommendations for the Program Director and Chair:

1. Explore feasibility of offering additional variety of courses in the program

2. Determine feasibility of assigning faculty to offer courses on more consistent basis

Recommendations for the Dean:

1. Identify possible allocation of resources that would provide more consistent faculty cohort