

24 February 2014

Jack Rasmussen, Dean  
Jerry and Vickie Moyes College of Education  
Weber State University  
Ogden, UT 84408

Dear Dean Rasmussen,

On 10 February 2014, a program review was conducted of the Department of Child and Family Studies, housed in the Moyes College of Education. The four review team members were:

- Kevin Galbraith, Brigham Young University—Idaho, Department of Home and Family
- Raeann Hamon, Messiah College, Department of Human Development and Family Science
- Brent Horn, Weber State University, Department of Criminal Justice
- Louise Moulding, Weber State University, Department of Teacher Education

The review was conducted at Weber State University in accordance to the program review guidelines provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The team reviewed the self-study report authored by the Department of Child and Family Studies. We also interviewed students in the program, staff, faculty, and administration of the department and the college, and community members outside of WSU. This report summarizes the findings of the program review committee.

The report is generally positive. It acknowledges the outstanding work done by the faculty to provide a high quality, university education that addresses both theory and practical application. We commend the department on the quality of the connections it has made to the outside community. The review committee notes the evolving nature of the faculty and the program. We strongly encourage improvement in communication between all members of the department, college and its associated programs.

Attached you will find the 4-page narrative report discussing the strengths and weaknesses noted in eight self-study standards. We hope that this information finds utility in improving the Family Studies, Early Childhood, and Early Childhood Education programs.

Sincerely,

Brent A. Horn, Ph.D., F-ABC  
Chair, CHF Program Review Committee

**PROGRAM REVIEW EVALUATION TEAM REPORT GUIDELINES**  
**Department of Child and Family Studies**

**Standard A—MISSION STATEMENT**

Program Strengths

The mission statement is consistent with the department's professional association and accreditation goals, the college of education mission statement, and the university mission statement.

Program Challenges and Recommendations for Change

The mission of the College, the Packer Center, the Departments, and programs (e.g., Charter Academy, Melba Lehner Children's School (MLCS), Storytelling Festival, etc.) need to be aligned and roles, responsibilities, and governance need to be clearly defined. This would clarify channels of communication, decision making protocol, and facilitate collaboration. We see the accomplishment of this alignment as the responsibility of the Dean.

**Standard B—CURRICULUM**

Program Strengths

Family Studies (FS) has clear sense of their outcomes as defined by the CFLE program. While not yet fully developed, they have outlined a basic timetable for achieving tasks toward curricular modification and an assessment plan.

FS should be commended for trying to align the courses offered with the 10 CFLE substance areas so that additional courses could be developed to provide electives, allowing students to explore breadth and depth in their educational program and pursue particular career paths (e.g., child life, military families).

We recognize the program provides diverse delivery of its coursework at multiple campuses (Ogden and Davis) and multiple times (morning, afternoon, evening, online). We find that courses are taught on a regular enough basis to support timely graduation.

The courses for Early Childhood/Early Childhood Education (EC/ECE) align with professional standards.

The faculty and MLCS staff both acknowledge that change is necessary, exciting and welcomed. They recognize that it will be difficult at times, and, hence the need for strong communication.

## Program Challenges and Recommendations for Change

The Review Committee recognizes that there is a communication disconnect between faculty and the staff of the MLCS. Concerns about the school should first be discussed with the Director so that the staff can resolve the issue. We acknowledge the value of the school as a learning environment for the college students and research environment for the faculty. We note the steps that have been taken to improve communication, the formation of the school's executive committee, and support more proactive efforts to unify philosophy and purpose. Specifically, the Review Committee understands that the school's purpose is intended to enhance the curriculum and provide opportunity for faculty research agenda.

## **Standard C—STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT**

### Program Strengths

FS learning outcomes are well defined and aligned with national standards and identified student needs (standard #11—professional development). Faculty members demonstrate that they have researched the student body and find that these outcomes meet the needs of the student population.

For EC/ECE, the five curriculum outcomes seem appropriate and aligned with curriculum.

All three majors capitalize on authentic learning activities within community.

### Program Challenges and Recommendations for Change

The current FS assessment tool is not clearly aligned with individual courses and assignments. While the portfolio is an excellent assessment tool, FS students need to know what assignments and other evidence/artifacts they might place within each of the 11 content areas and this should be explicitly communicated in course syllabi. This would provide the department information relative to which content areas/outcomes need further refinement and the primary course where the feedback needs to be integrated.

The assessment plan for EC/ECE, as outlined on pp. 29-36, is not feasible or manageable. There needs to be more direct alignment between the 5 measures of “thresholds for acceptable performance” (pp. 41-43) and a few select artifacts from a smaller number of courses. If the EC/ECE faculty wants to revise the charts on pp. 37-40, for instance, we recommend that they indicate where the base material for the learning outcomes are introduced, developed, and then mastered.

Ultimately, we recommend that the final assessment plans for all three programs be manageable so that faculty members are not overwhelmed with information. Faculty need to be able to make data-driven revisions to their programs. An unmanageable

evaluation process that significantly burdens a few faculty members to the point of burnout cannot accomplish this end.

## **Standard D—ADVISING**

### Program Strengths

Students are receiving exemplary levels of curricular/program advising from the Academic Advisor and superb professional advising from program faculty. This was evident in conversations with students in which they cited regular communication from the Academic Advisor and multiple faculty-facilitated advising events. The Committee notes that this College has made excellent advising a priority in its dedication of one Academic Advisor for each department.

## **Standard E—FACULTY**

### Program Strengths

The Review Committee observed the following faculty assets: the ability to work together, the support of one another through personal challenges, the willingness to both formally and informally mentor new faculty, demographic diversity, a range of disciplinary expertise, the utilization and maximization of each member's strengths, clear communication of expectations and support for promotion and tenure, appropriate use of adjunct faculty, and an amazing commitment to outreach with community.

We acknowledge the benefits that faculty members receive for travel to conferences and other faculty development projects through the Moyes Endowment.

The department has a process to assess the effectiveness of faculty teaching and has a clear process for tenure and rank advancement.

### Program Challenges and Recommendations for Change

Many faculty members are teaching an overload to supplement their lower base salaries and this detracts from the department's ability to recruit and maintain faculty and may promote burnout. The extra teaching load may inhibit accomplishments in scholarship and service, as well. We recommend that the University look at the salary scale problems.

## **Standard F—SUPPORT (STAFF, ADMINISTRATION, FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND LIBRARY)**

### Program Strengths

All program support-- staff, facilities, equipment, and library support—are adequate.

## Program Challenges and Recommendations for Change

Administration needs to recognize boundaries (e.g., work-family) necessary for staff. Administration might also help support staff prioritize tasks and identify needs or assignments in advance, where possible. The Committee also recommends a more explicit job description, particularly for the department Administrative Assistant.

The faculty and staff note that the heating and cooling system in the McKay Education Building needs attention. Frequently the temperature in the building is either extremely hot or extremely cold, which negatively impacts learning opportunities for students and faculty and staff productivity.

## **Standard G—RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL COMMUNITIES**

### Program Strengths

The Review Committee believes that this Department's relationships with external communities are exemplary. Clearly the Department maintains a strong applied focus in their education and training of students. These relationships support student outcomes, facilitate faculty research, afford community partners access to faculty as resources, grow student intern placements and employment options, develops leadership opportunities and enables the application of knowledge for students, and plays a key role in helping community agencies network with one another. In short, the Department is a hub in uniting child and family resources in northern Utah. It is extremely impressive!

## **Standard H—RESULTS OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM REVIEWS**

We find that all five items in the previous program review have been address. We concur with all of the areas of need from the current self-study review.