




July 3, 2019

Daniel A. Reed
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
205 Park Bldg.
Campus

APPROVED 
RWatkins 7-15-19

RE: Graduate Council Review
Department of Special Education

Dear Vice President Reed:

Enclosed is the Graduate Council's review of the Department of Special Education. Included in this review packet are the report prepared by the Graduate Council, the Department Profile, and the Memorandum of Understanding resulting from the review wrap-up meeting.

After your approval, please forward this packet to President Ruth Watkins for her review. It will then be sent to the Academic Senate to be placed on the information calendar for the next Senate meeting.

Sincerely,



David B. Kieda
Dean, The Graduate School

Encl.

XC: Susan S. Johnston, Chair, Department of Special Education
Elaine Clark, Dean, College of Education

The Graduate School
201 Presidents Circle, Room 302
Salt Lake City, Utah 84112-9016
(801)581-7642
FAX (801)581-6749
<http://www.gradschool.utah.edu>

Department of Special Education

The Department of Special Education is training educators who are in wide demand. Faculty were praised for their records of publishing and of securing personnel preparation funding awards. The Department's distance education program in Severe Disabilities was particularly lauded. The Department is seeking ways to attract more students, including the recently designed undergraduate minor which will expose more students to careers in this area. Priorities for the coming years include strategic hiring, as well as bolstering the research culture of the Department.

The Graduate School - The University of Utah

**GRADUATE COUNCIL REPORT TO THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND THE ACADEMIC SENATE**

November 26, 2018

The Graduate Council has completed its review of the **Department of Special Education**. The External Review Committee included:

Vivian I. Correa, PhD (Chair)
Professor Emerita
Department of Special Education and Child Development
University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Joseph Wehby, PhD
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Special Education
Vanderbilt University

David L. Westling, PhD
Adelaide Worth Daniels Distinguished Professor of Special Education
School of Teaching and Learning
Western Carolina University

The Internal Review Committee of the University of Utah included:

Kathy Chapman, PhD
Professor
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

William B. Thompson, PhD
Professor Emeritus
School of Computing

Cheryl Wright, PhD
Professor
Department of Family and Consumer Studies

This report of the Graduate Council is based on the self-study submitted by the Department of Special Education, the reports of the external and internal review committees, and a joint response to the external and internal reports from the Chair of the Special Education Department and Dean of the College of Education.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Program Overview

The Department of Special Education (the Department) is one of four academic departments in the College of Education (COE), with an additional unit, the Urban Institute for Teacher Education (UITE), also operating out of the Dean's Office. The Department was established in the late 1960s, offering both undergraduate and master's degree programs. The doctoral degree program was approved in 1984. The undergraduate program was suspended in 1987 in order to focus resources on graduate-level teacher education and master's degree programs. The undergraduate major/teacher education program was reinstituted in 2000 in direct response to the shortage of special education teachers in the state.

The Department's mission is to "improve the quality of life of people with disabilities and their families by developing and disseminating essential skills, knowledge, and values through research, teaching, and service". The self-study reports that the Department achieves its mission by: (1) preparing competent professionals and citizen advocates to serve individuals with disabilities and their families; (2) seeking new knowledge that will lead to improvements in the education and lives of individuals with disabilities, and (3) impacting research, policy, and practice at the university, local, state, and national levels. Internal and external reports concur in their evaluation of the Department of Special Education as a "strong academic department with a history of nationally recognized scholarship."

Faculty

Currently, the Department has 10 tenure lines and four career lines that are hard funded through the state budget. One tenure-line faculty member is currently on full-time administrative assignment (Chief Global Officer, Office for Global Engagement). Additionally, there are three career-line faculty members funded by the Department or by special state legislative funding. The faculty has been very successful over the years in securing state and federal grants, particularly in the area of personnel preparation and leadership development. These grants have allowed the faculty to be responsive to the special education needs in Utah, especially through their well-established distance education program. Many of the senior faculty are nationally recognized because of a history of scholarly work; younger faculty are on a trajectory to a similar level of recognition.

The Department Leadership Team includes the Department Chair, seven Licensure/Endorsement Program Coordinators, and three support staffers. The internal report notes that all students, faculty, and staff who were interviewed hold the Department Chair in high esteem.

Since the last Graduate Council review in 2011, the Department has taken action on several recommendations impacting their faculty community. Most notably among these, the Department is now housed in the Beverly Taylor Sorenson Arts and Education Complex (SAEC), providing adequate space for offices, meeting rooms, and classrooms. Internal and external review teams noted that the Department has taken steps to enhance its diversity, with the hire of a female faculty member of Asian American heritage, as

well as discussions (prior to this review) with the Associate VP for Equity and Diversity to develop plans for further diversity efforts. This said, Department faculty (and student body) as a whole continues to lack diversity. Additional areas cited for continued improvement include career-line faculty salaries (currently low) and career-line faculty workload (currently 4/4 load). Career-line faculty are viewed as essential to the mission of the Department, but in the current environment, their risk for burnout is perceived as high, as is their vulnerability to outside hiring by other agencies.

Overall, the faculty is strong in each of the areas evaluated for RPT, including teaching, scholarship, and service. Teaching evaluations and feedback from students are positive. External funding (especially federal and state personnel preparation grants) and publications in reputable journals in the field of special education serve as testament to the Department's scholarship and productivity. Despite these notable achievements, there has been less success in competitions for externally funded research grants. External reviewers noted that it was not clear whether faculty are rewarded for receiving or applying for grants. Importantly, external reviewers did not attribute this failure in external granting success to faculty competence, but rather to a need for improved long-term plans for hiring, particularly with respect to areas of expertise to be pursued, and the strategies used to pursue them.

A proactive plan for faculty hiring is viewed as essential by external reviewers. Assessment of the CVs of current faculty reveals them to be an impressive group; however, many of the current faculty are: 1) nearing retirement, and 2) disproportionately represented by U of U graduates. For the inevitable upcoming faculty searches and recruitment and hiring efforts, external reviewers encourage the Department to “exploit more external connections to increase the academic diversity of the faculty.”

Finally, both the internal and external reviewers lauded the Department's Severe Disabilities Distance Education program, which is ranked 15th in the nation for online education by *US News and World Report* and is notable for its impact on student outcomes. This program prepares graduates to work with a wide range of children and adult populations (with and without disability labels) in a variety of settings, including schools, residential and vocational programs, and home and community environments. Reviewers assessed the program's impact on Utah classrooms as considerable. While Department faculty continue to expand the distance education program, they are also designing new strategies for improved supervision of distance education students.

Students

Undergraduate and Master's Students

In the 2016-17 academic year, Department enrollment included 25 undergraduate pre-majors, 30 undergraduate majors, and 57 master's students. According to the self-study, students are admitted into one of six specialization areas and work toward one or more of eight different licensure and endorsement programs. All entering students are assigned a faculty advisor in their area of study. While the three admissions opportunities per year provide flexibility to applicants, reviewers noted that the system is not well-aligned with sequential course offerings in the curriculum. In the 2016-17 academic year, 13 students graduated with a bachelor's degree and 29 students graduated with a master's degree. In recent years, the average time to completion for a master's degree has been 4-5 terms. This course load is comparable to that of other units in the college and to that of similar programs nationwide.

The number of applications to the Department has been increasing from a low in 2014-15, but the increase is small and limited to enrollments for graduate students. The Department conducts an extensive set of undergraduate student recruitment activities, including outreach at local high schools, collaboration with community colleges, and a program to educate Navajo teachers. External reviewers noted student diversity, like that of the faculty, is limited. The Department has hired an Academic Advisor who has been tasked with assisting in recruitment. While this commitment to student diversity is laudable, external reviewers note that it is less than that of other units in the college, where students assist in recruitment and outreach. The Department is now hiring a student to work part-time in this arena, but it will be important to have a plan to keep this position stable.

Undergraduate and master's students interviewed by the internal reviewers seemed mostly satisfied with their experience in the Department. Significant strengths of their experience are the frequent and positive interactions with faculty and academic advisors. This said, master's students are concerned by a curriculum that is deficient in several respects (see below).

Doctoral students

In the 2016-17 academic year, 15 students were enrolled in the doctoral program. The average time to completion for the PhD is 5-6 years, and during the years of the self-study, 11 PhD students graduated (zero to four per year). There are currently no postdocs in the Department. Both internal and external reviewers found students to be largely satisfied with the program, noting first the inclusion of both research and practice in their education experience, and second the quality of their mentoring. External reviewers noted that there are several job openings for the Department's graduating PhD students; they also indicated that "a class in higher education received special praise." In their interviews with external reviewers, doctoral students expressed some concerns with their curriculum (see below).

Student support

The Department supports students through a number of mechanisms including teaching and research assistantships and fellowships, scholarships, and state/federal grants. Grant funding currently supports 38 bachelor's/master's and 12 doctoral students. External reviewers noted that doctoral students are supported, for the most part, by training grants (in lieu of research grants). These reviewers suggested that the Department explore NSF opportunities for early childhood research, as these grants will be helpful in attracting doctoral students and can be used to fund them (as well as postdocs). Increasing the level of student support will be crucial to the Department's ability to sustain their successes in student recruiting.

Curriculum

Internal and external reviewers considered the Department's curriculum to track generally accepted standards for undergraduate and graduate level degrees. The Department offers undergraduate degrees in two areas to prepare professionals to work with young children (birth to five years) and/or school-age students (ages 6-21) with disabilities. These programs require a minimum of 120 semester hours leading to a Bachelor of Science degree in special education and teacher licensure in Utah. Additionally, the Department offers several master's degree programs, most of which lead to teacher licensure in the state. The master's programs range in credit hours from around 30 to over 70, with the higher credit hour programs reflecting coursework in teacher education as well as the specialization area leading to licensure. Those with fewer hours, such as the master's degree with a BCBA emphasis, require fewer hours but do not lead to a teaching

license. The PhD program requires 75–76 hours, the majority of which are in research, including 17 hours for dissertation research.

While internal reviewers largely limited themselves to descriptions of Department standards, external reviewers were more evaluative in their report. In this regard, external reviewers identified several clear strengths in graduate-level education. These include: 1) the Department's efforts to serve teachers and other professionals in the state through its distance education capability; 2) on-campus and distance offerings that are buttressed by positive relations between the Special Education Department and local education agencies; 3) receipt of numerous personnel preparation grants from the state, and 4) students' appreciation for their faculty's support of their scholarship and research.

While Department curricula are strong overall, external reviewers reported several areas of the master's curriculum that warrant improvement. First, external reviewers suggest an expansion of the MS program, noting that in the past six years only one student has completed the MS degree (which requires a thesis). Second, external reviewers learned from their discussions with current students that: 1) there is a "need to conduct a review of required courses in order to eliminate overlapping content and redundancy"; 2) many master's students "would like our own classes" because taking co-listed courses with undergraduate students diminishes their learning opportunities; 3) there "should be a closer relationship between course content and subsequent licensing or certification exams"; 4) faculty should clarify course competencies and outcomes in syllabi, and 5) students should learn "more relevant skills through required practicum and fieldwork experience."

Some areas of the doctoral curriculum also require attention. Doctoral students indicated to reviewers that they would welcome additional opportunities to better prepare themselves for research productivity after graduation, including more opportunities to learn and practice research skills and more opportunities to co-publish with faculty members. Specific student suggestions about courses and learning experiences related to research and how these might be improved included recommendations that: 1) "research-related courses be offered in specific, logical, standardized sequence"; 2) coursework include "more and better content in data analysis, with adequate opportunity to practice their skills in this area"; and 3) "student teaching experiences occur in a specific sequence so that all students acquire competence in planning and teaching college courses in special education."

In support of the suggestion that the PhD curriculum might be improved, the external reviewers noted that only 2 of 12 recent graduates landed positions in R1 universities (University of Hawaii and Utah State University), with most graduates remaining in Utah employed (mostly as therapists) by local or state education systems/agencies, other service agencies, or small colleges. Specifically, external reviewers asserted that "as an R1 institution, the U of U should be producing more graduates who are adequately skilled and inclined to be significant contributors to the research in special education, and who are competitive as faculty members at R1 institutions throughout the U.S." This being said, the Graduate Council noted that a broad range of career options are valued.

Program Effectiveness and Outcomes Assessment

According to the self-study, the Department collects and analyzes a variety of data at different stages to evaluate the effectiveness of programs. Both formative and summative assessment activities are used to improve teaching and learning and modify courses and experiences across programs as needed. Specific learning outcome assessment procedures are in place for each of the degrees offered by the Department. In

brief, outcomes are assessed via GPA, competency and licensure exams, feedback surveys, and employment data. Additionally, at the graduate level, outcomes are assessed through qualifying exams, and research/thesis proposals and dissertations. A new qualifying exam procedure was implemented for the master's degree in 2016, and it appears to be working well.

It is noted that retention and graduation rates are high. According to the self-study, more than 95% of master's students (including "license only") and 79% of doctoral students have successfully completed degree requirements over the last several years. Employment outcomes for students at all levels are high. External reviewers noted, however, that improved procedures for ongoing and systematic follow-up with graduates and employers would allow the Department to better evaluate its programs and make relevant periodic adjustments in its curriculum.

Facilities and Resources

The previous report noted inadequate facilities as one of the more significant issues for the Department. This deficit has been addressed, as the Department has recently made a move to the new Beverly Sorenson Arts and Education Complex. This is a state-of-the-art building with classrooms and video conferencing capabilities. The building also has student lounge space, a research hub, and an auditorium. All faculty have office space and computers with various technology capabilities. Students do report some issues with technology that are disruptive in class time. Internal reviewers noted that Department faculty lose valuable class time when they are faced with troubleshooting problems; reviewers recommend access to technology support when instruction is being provided.

Personnel resources are viewed as adequate, and staff members are praised by faculty and students. In addition, the Department's administrative assistant, academic advisor, and executive secretary report high levels of job satisfaction, and point specifically to a positive work environment and good leadership by the Department Chair. The academic advisor, who represents a new addition to the staff team, has made improvements to the record keeping process that are especially appreciated by students.

Finances remain the Department's most significant resource concern. According to the self-study, the Department's revenue is generated primarily from productivity funds, contracts with the Continuing Education and Community Engagement (CECE) Office on campus, and grant salary release. The Department's major expenses include faculty salaries, adjunct teaching costs, and Department operations, with the self-study and internal and external reviews concurring that all three areas warrant continued attention. First, while the Department's average faculty salaries are comparable to national averages, certain individuals remain underpaid due to issues of compression. Moreover, career-line faculty salaries are well below those offered by local agencies and public school systems. Second, adjunct instructor costs for the teacher education core are approximately \$32,000, which corresponds to a \$24,836 annual Departmental loss for providing these courses to majors outside of the Department. Finally, Department finances are vulnerable in the sense that they are reliant on sources (cited above) subject to fluctuation.

COMMENDATIONS

1. The Department has a clear mission statement, supporting beliefs, and statement of faculty commitments. Notably, the Department faculty is committed to providing a quality education to its students, and its achievements (despite limited resources) are significant.
2. The Department has several grants, currently totaling over \$4 million and including two leadership grants from the Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education. All Department faculty are currently serving as grant PIs or co-PIs.
3. The recently added BCBA program is enjoying notable success, with applications outnumbering available slots.
4. The Department is collegial and interactive, both intramurally and extramurally. Notably, the Department engages with school districts across the state and has a 15-year history of offering courses and classroom support through the Utah Education Network.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Department is encouraged to engage in a strategic hiring plan that includes planning for phased retirements, a review of the number of faculty and areas of coverage (breadth vs. depth), and hires that add to diversifying methodological and multidisciplinary approaches.
2. The Department should continue to pursue opportunities to develop a fuller research culture. The Department should incentivize faculty to seek research funding. In addition, the Department should assure that doctoral students receive adequate professional preparation in research, collaborate with faculty on research, are supported by research funding when available, and co-publish research with major professors and other faculty in nationally recognized refereed journals. A related measure of success would be placement of PhD students in research-focused academic positions.
3. The Department should undertake a curriculum mapping process to address redundancy between courses. In addition, content for master's students should be more clearly incorporated into co-listed courses if separate courses cannot be offered.
4. The administration should continue to conduct evaluations of the workloads of career-line faculty and adjustments should be made where necessary. Also, in the event that future initiatives are undertaken in the Department, such as new research activities, it is recommended that the duties of career-line faculty not be expanded but that their number be increased.
5. Diversity continues to be a challenge for faculty and student recruitment. Collaborating (on joint or shared appointments, interdisciplinary degrees, etc.) with programs with more diversity at the University could yield better results. Expanding development efforts for scholarships would bolster student recruitment, including those from diverse backgrounds.

Submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Graduate Council:

Anthea Letsou (Chair)
Professor, School of Medicine

David F. Blair
Professor, Department of Biology

Arul Mishra
Professor, Department of Marketing

Fernando Rubio (Undergraduate Council Representative)
Professor, Department of World Languages and Cultures

College Name
All

Department Name
Special Education

Program
All

Faculty Headcount

		2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
With Doctoral Degrees Including MFA and Other Terminal Degrees	Full-Time Tenured Faculty	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Full-Time Tenure Track	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	5	5	3	2	2	2	2
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
	Total	16	15	13	13	13	13	13
With Masters Degrees	Full-Time Tenured Faculty							
	Full-Time Tenure Track							
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	4	4	5	5	4	4	5
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track							
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Total	4	4	5	5	4	4	5
With Bachelor Degrees	Full-Time Tenured Faculty							
	Full-Time Tenure Track							
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track							
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty							
	Total							
Total Headcount Faculty	Full-Time Tenured Faculty	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Full-Time Tenure Track	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
	Full-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	9	9	8	7	6	6	7
	Part-Time Tenure/Tenure Track	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-Time Career Line/Adjunct Faculty	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
	Total	20	19	18	18	17	17	18

Cost Study

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Direct Instructional Expenditures	2,135,673	1,986,513	2,150,137	2,181,858	2,057,217	2,083,836	2,093,317
Cost Per Student FTE	12,473	11,538	13,431	14,186	16,176	13,352	13,899

FTE from Cost Study

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Full-Time	17	16	16	16	19	19	19
Part-Time	3	3	2	3	4	6	7
Teaching Assistants	0	0	1	1	1	3	1

Funding

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Total Grants	520,574	374,268	456,133	384,765	455,143	931,061	1,003,703
State Appropriated Funds	1,567,640	1,584,633	1,643,968	1,848,857	1,835,941	1,819,102	2,036,263
Teaching Grants	483,284	350,627	355,776	320,465	455,143	721,029	970,870
Special Legislative Appropriation							

Differential Tuition

Student Credit Hours and FTE

		2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
SCH	Lower Division							
	Upper Division	2,895	2,881	2,683	2,370	1,835	2,007	2,119
	Basic Graduate	1,312	1,385	1,250	1,394	1,233	1,536	1,357
	Advanced Graduate	183	138	164	103	88	248	243
FTE	Lower Division							
	Upper Division	97	96	89	79	61	67	71
	Basic Graduate	66	69	62	70	62	77	68
	Advanced Graduate	9	7	8	5	4	12	12
FTE/FTE	LD FTE per Total Faculty FTE							
	UD FTE per Total Faculty FTE	5	5	5	4	3	2	3
	BG FTE per Total Faculty FTE	3	4	3	3	3	3	2
	AG FTE per Total Faculty FTE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Enrolled Majors

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Undergraduate Pre-Majors	13	10	28	22	18	25	22
Undergraduate Majors	52	48	54	45	29	30	26
Enrolled in Masters Program	45	50	33	33	39	57	56
Enrolled in Doctoral Program	12	9	7	7	6	15	15
Enrolled in First-Professional Program							

Degrees Awarded

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Undergraduate Certificate							
Graduate Certificate							
Bachelors	23	22	21	28	15	13	9
Masters	25	36	14	32	17	29	39
Doctorate	1	4	3	1	2	0	1
First-Professional							



Memorandum of Understanding Department of Special Education Graduate Council Review 2017-18

This memorandum of understanding is a summary of decisions reached at a wrap-up meeting on April 26, 2019, and concludes the Graduate Council Review of the Department of Special Education. Daniel A. Reed, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Elaine Clark, Dean of the College of Education; Susan S. Johnston, Chair of the Department of Special Education; David B. Kieda, Dean of the Graduate School; and Katharine S. Ullman, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, were present.

The discussion centered on but was not limited to the recommendations contained in the review summary report presented to the Graduate Council on November 26, 2018. The working group agreed to endorse the following actions:

Recommendation 1: The Department is encouraged to engage in a strategic hiring plan that includes planning for phased retirements, a review of the number of faculty and areas of coverage (breadth vs. depth), and hires that add to diversifying methodological and multidisciplinary approaches.

The Department has just completed a successful search, hiring two tenure-line faculty. These new departmental members will deepen research expertise as well as diversifying methodology. In particular, one of them specializes in implementation sciences -- a perspective that is already prompting plans for collaborative research. With the Dean's support, the Department has devised a unique approach to filling an anticipated line that will become available in two years, following the phased retirement of a senior colleague. Faculty plan to use professional networks and links to minority-serving institutions to identify candidates from diverse backgrounds and extend invitations for them to visit Utah *prior* to opening a job search. The following academic year, the Department will open the job search, keeping it on an early timeline with the hope that they have generated interest among particular individuals and can keep things moving ahead of the curve. It is a challenging recruitment landscape due to a wave of retirements occurring in the field as a whole, yet the Department has proven themselves to be competitive as a destination, and they have been very thoughtful in terms of how to achieve their strategic hiring goals. This approach might be used in future years as well, with at least one additional retirement anticipated.

Dean Kieda inquired about projected workforce needs, as well as the capacity of the Department. There is a pressing need for Special Education teachers, which Chair Johnston pointed out is largely due to the gap in attracting students to the field in the face of salary projections that do not keep pace with tuition expenses. The Department puts much effort into securing funds for tuition support and finds that, without this barrier, many students are interested. While the Department has capacity for increased numbers of students, they may have to use new or modified teaching models as class sizes increase.

Recommendation 2: The Department should continue to pursue opportunities to develop a fuller research culture. The Department should incentivize faculty to seek research funding. In addition, the Department should assure that doctoral students receive adequate professional preparation in research, collaborate with faculty on research, are supported by research funding when available, and co-publish research with major professors and other faculty in nationally recognized refereed journals. A related measure of success would be placement of PhD students in research-focused academic positions.

There have also been recent successes in securing research grant funding, but the Chair acknowledged that support and incentives are important to help wider expansion in this area and has included this in the current budget. The faculty have also been systematically identifying shared needs with respect to obtaining research awards and searching for common solutions. Among other things, this led to productive meetings with the Vice President for Research, Andy Weyrich, who pointed them to the Study Design and Biostatistics Center as a route to solving the need for more robust statistical design and analysis in research proposals. With an MSTAT program track within the College of Education, Dean Kieda additionally suggested further involving these students. Chair Johnston felt that their self-study may not have fully portrayed the current status of graduate student publications. In the coming year, it would be useful to analyze these trends, including co-publishing with professors and the journals in which they publish, in order to get an accurate baseline and determine if enhancing these efforts should be prioritized. While doctoral students had brought up limitations in exposure to varied methodologies, this was more likely a problem in communication with students who are in early stages of the program. The Department is developing new practices to make this information available, as well as creating a document that summarizes all of the coursework opportunities that address methodology. They also plan (in Fall 2019) to survey doctoral students to get feedback on required and elective methodology courses, as well as suggestions for additional courses. A full review of doctoral program curriculum/program of study is planned for 2019-2020 to examine its alignment with the broad goal of this recommendation aimed at fully integrating graduate students into the research culture.

Recommendation 3: The Department should undertake a curriculum mapping process to address redundancy between courses. In addition, content for master's students should be more clearly incorporated into co-listed courses if separate courses cannot be offered.

This recommendation was well-received and a schedule of review and revision over the next two academic years is in place. Dean Kieda raised related questions about support services for distance students. First, do distance students know about resources available to them? Specific examples discussed included online writing resources (<https://writingcenter.utah.edu/graduate-services/e-tutoring.php>) and library resources. Second, what gaps in support do distance students have? The Graduate School would be interested in learning about these observations, as this knowledge will help in our efforts to ensure that all graduate students have access to central services that support successful and timely degree completion.

Recommendation 4: The administration should continue to conduct evaluations of the workloads of career-line faculty and adjustments should be made where necessary. Also, in the event that future initiatives are undertaken in the Department, such as new research activities, it is recommended that the duties of career-line faculty not be expanded but that their number be increased.

A new document to guide review of career-line faculty has been conditionally approved, but is awaiting final official approval from Academic Affairs. Chair Johnston and Dean Clark felt this would provide the foundation for a much more informative and fair review of career-line faculty workloads and clear communication of expectations related to their roles and responsibilities. The Chair is using annual meetings, FAR reviews, and formal reviews to keep workloads adjusted. Given the option that many career-line faculty have to work in the field at comparable if not higher salaries, the Chair and Dean are involved in efforts to ensure their salaries are competitive. Additionally, they seek ways to leverage aspects of academia that career-line faculty find attractive, such as supporting travel for conference attendance and in some cases, if of interest to a career-line faculty member, opportunities to be involved in research. While it is clear that thoughtful consideration is being given, Dean Kieda suggested that written policy on workload would be helpful, especially with an upcoming transition anticipated in the chair position.

Recommendation 5: Diversity continues to be a challenge for faculty and student recruitment. Collaborating (on joint or shared appointments, interdisciplinary degrees, etc.) with programs with more diversity at the University could yield better results. Expanding development efforts for scholarships would bolster student recruitment, including those from diverse backgrounds.

The Department considers this a high priority and their planned approach to bolstering diversity is multifaceted. At the faculty level, they will implement a recruitment process aimed at attracting diverse candidates (see Recommendation 1) and they will brainstorm about new and existing collaborations at their Fall 2019 retreat to identify other potential opportunities and models for diverse hiring. At the student level, they have designed a minor in Special Education that is now in the last steps of the approval process. This will allow them to reach a wider student audience and recruit them to the Department's graduate program where students with this minor could earn a master's degree plus licensure within an accelerated timeframe. They will soon be in a position to advertise this minor and track its impact over time. Finally, the Department recognizes that finances are a barrier for students and has placed a high priority on offering scholarships and funded positions for all levels of training. They plan to focus on this, in collaboration with Dean Clark, with the college Development Office. Their efforts will include identifying alumni who may want to become involved with these initiatives. The Department has an articulation plan in place with Salt Lake Community College, which they will be able to leverage further with greater resources for scholarships. The Graduate School will be interested to learn the outcomes of these and other efforts, and encourages the Department to explore opportunities with our Diversity Office as well (<https://gradschool.utah.edu/diversity/>).

Memorandum of Understanding
Department of Special Education
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Chair Johnston has done a commendable job of creating a roadmap that builds on the feedback received during this review. SVP Reed expressed appreciation for the efforts that she and faculty have made in responding to this review and in addressing the critical need for training in this discipline.

This memorandum of understanding is to be followed by regular letters of progress, upon request of the Graduate School, from the Chair of the Department of Special Education. Letters will be submitted until all of the actions described in the preceding paragraphs have been completed. In addition, a three-year follow-up meeting may be scheduled during AY 2020-21 to discuss progress made in addressing the review recommendations.

Daniel A. Reed
Elaine Clark
Susan S. Johnston
David B. Kieda
Katharine S. Ullman



David B. Kieda
Dean, The Graduate School
July 3, 2019