



**Werklund School of Education  
Bachelor of Education  
Curriculum Review Report**

**Executive Summary**

**July 25, 2014**

## **Program Context**

In 2013-2014, the Werklund School of Education engaged in a curriculum review process for the Bachelor of Education Program. The B.Ed. curriculum review process is a formative component of the overall quality strategy and is focused on continuing development. Through this work, data have been gathered that examine individual courses, as well as the integration of the courses to form a comprehensive program of study. The mapping process provided insight to gauge the extent to which individual courses align with both the Bachelor of Education program goals and the Alberta Education Competencies. From the analysis of the various data, recommendations and an action plan have been developed to guide ongoing improvement of the program.

It was essential to conduct the curriculum review during the 2013 – 2014 academic year for two reasons. First, the Bachelor of Education degree is a two-year after-degree program that went through significant changes in 2010 – 2011; it has not been subject to a systematic review since then. Second, Alberta Education, which issues teacher certifications in the province, released new teaching competencies (referred to in this document as Alberta Education Competencies) in 2013. It was vital to ensure that the Bachelor of Education program was meeting the new competencies; additionally, it was important to document how competencies were being enacted in the program.

## **Guiding Questions**

In Fall 2013, the Bachelor of Education curriculum review team engaged in rich, collaborative discussion to determine the critical questions and concerns that would need to be examined as part of the curriculum review process. The team identified the following nine guiding questions for the review process:

1. How well are our program goals reflected in the courses and assignments? Is there adequate scaffolding?
2. Looking at the scope and sequence of the courses within the program, are there any overlaps and gaps in learning outcomes? If so, where/what are the overlaps and gaps? Are the courses sequenced properly? How well do they interface with one another? Is there continuity? Do they inform that bigger conversation?
3. How well are we meeting the new Alberta Education Competencies in the Bachelor of Education program? Are there any Alberta Education Competencies that are not being addressed adequately, and if so, what are they?
4. Does faculty understand how their courses fit into the larger picture? Further, are they able to effectively communicate this to students, other instructors and to the greater community?
5. To what extent do the three main pieces (plenary, seminars and field experience) fit together in an integrated manner, and how are they taken up in the classroom?
6. Is there a division between what students perceive as occurring in the classroom vs. what is occurring in the field? If so, where is the disconnection?
7. How well do B.Ed. students clearly identify and relate to what they are studying in the program?
8. Do the semester themes align with the program? How are they visible in course goals and the program?
9. Are there conflicts in our approaches, goals or philosophies which threaten the integrity of the program? If so, what are they?

## Action Plan

Through broad consultation with students, partner teachers, and academic staff, the curriculum committee found that the current program has a great number of strengths, and that graduates of the program are well prepared for the role ahead of them and typically are able to find suitable employment. However, it is possible to find ways of improving any program. This section was developed to address shortcomings in the program and enhance student learning as a result.

Responses to the nine guiding questions were summarized in the previous section. The following action plan was generated based on those responses. Each recommendation emerged from at least one, and often more than one data source. Specific strategies took shape through discussion by academic staff members, and then by the curriculum review committee; they were thereby a result of broad consultation and lengthy discussion.

Between curriculum reviews (the current document and the review to be done in 2018 – 2019), this action plan will guide changes to curriculum with the express purpose of enhancing student learning and strengthening the program. For the curriculum review Interim Report, due in January 2017, we will examine each of the recommendations and evaluate the progress made. It is anticipated that some changes to the Action Plan will need to be made at that point, either because certain recommendations will be fully addressed and no longer needed, or because they have become irrelevant.

The following chart outlines the recommendations, along with the timeline in terms of short- (within a year), medium – (two to three years) and long-term (four to five years) goals. The third column identifies the individual or team responsible with implementing the recommendations.

Recommendation	Timeline for Implementation	Lead Responsibility
<p>Foster ongoing education of academic staff and students in terms of the progression of clear links and increase explicit alignments of course outcomes and program goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to discuss how semester themes map across the program on professional development days</li> <li>• Course coordinators meet regularly with their instructional teams to foster a strong working knowledge of how course work informs field experience and vice-versa</li> <li>• Suggest having meetings or workshops on Mondays in 2014 – 2015 as it is a non-instructional day.</li> <li>• Refine the School’s website to clearly articulate the key components of the program.</li> <li>• Inform students of program changes earlier and using various communication channels.</li> <li>• Consider using lecture opportunities to</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs in Education (UPE)

share program information with students.		
<p>Create greater alignment of the Alberta Education entrance requirements with the undergraduate program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing conversations with other Faculties and Alberta Education, along with the Office of the Registrar.</li> </ul>	Short-term	Associate Dean of UPE
<p>Provide explicit outcomes related to the legal, ethical, and moral framework in Field Experience courses related to the work in school placements.</p>	Short-term	Director of Field Experience
<p>Greater focus on assessment in EDUC 460 and 535: Specialization I and II courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on formative and summative assessment.</li> <li>Foster linkages between assessment taken up in the Specialization courses and practice in the Field Experience courses.</li> </ul>	Short-term	Specialization Course Coordinator(s)
<p>Evaluate the design of the Specialization I and II courses to ensure that they meet the unique needs of teaching in diverse discipline areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fostering greater opportunity to unique assessments that reflect the work of the discipline.</li> </ul>	Short-term	Specialization Course Coordinator(s)
<p>Further develop specific aspects of increased professionalization of learning in the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the professional code earlier in the program.</li> <li>Seek guidance from the Registrar's Office about the possibility of an attendance policy.</li> <li>Develop an attendance policy if appropriate.</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Associate Dean of UPE
<p>Continue to encourage the design and facilitation of courses using signature pedagogies to foster greater opportunities for instructors to engage students in learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design courses using one or more signature pedagogies.</li> <li>Host educational development sessions to learn how to design using a particular</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Associate Dean of UPE Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning Course Coordinators

<p>signature pedagogy, as well as how to facilitate learning with it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide orientation to students for the use of signature pedagogies so they develop an appreciation for the nature and expectation of the work.</li> </ul>		
<p>Provide greater modeling through professional development opportunities for academic staff to continue to increase engagement with students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host sessions for instructors to share strategies and techniques for student engagement.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Associate Dean of UPE Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning (T&L) Course Coordinators
<p>Foster a broader understanding of technology integration in practice and provide support for technology integration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide workshops through the instructor course team meetings</li> <li>• Host workshops during planning days (such as the orientation in September)</li> <li>• Provide focused workshops on identified areas of need such as creating criteria to assess digital products.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Associate Dean of UPE Associate Dean of T&L
<p>For purposeful integration, continue to foster the continuity of courses during the semester and intra-semester.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create opportunities for instructors in the various programs in the semester to talk about the work and course assignments.</li> <li>• More opportunities throughout the semester and during the year for instructors to engage in purposeful discussions about their courses, instructional strategies, assignments, and assessment.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Associate Dean of UPE Associate Dean of T&L Course Coordinators
<p>Provide specialization course sections (EDUC 460 Specialization I and EDUC 535: Specialization II) for Drama, Visual Arts, and Music. Also, differentiate between elementary and secondary within these specialization courses in each of the three Fine Arts areas.</p>	Medium-term	Associate Dean of UPE Undergraduate Programs in Education Council (UPEC)
<p>EDUC 440: Field Experience I and EDUC 430: Pragmatics of Learning and Teaching are to have</p>	Short-term	Associate Dean of UPE Director of Field

the same instructor to foster greater connection between theory and practice/course content and field experience.		Experience
<p>Develop a database to track information related to building student capacity as researchers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify information to be tracked (e.g., number of grants, conference presentations, etc).</li> <li>Develop a process for when and how the data will be analyzed and communicated to key stakeholders.</li> </ul>	Medium-term	Associate Dean of UPE Associate Dean of Research
<p>Annual exit survey will launch in Fall 2014 for the purpose of gathering data on student experience in the program and initial employment after convocation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a process for when and how the data will be analyzed and communicated to key stakeholders.</li> </ul>	Short-term	Associate Dean of UPE
<p>Hire academic staff who are aligned with the philosophy and principles of the profession.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop criteria to guide the hiring practices.</li> <li>Provide orientation of the program goals to new academic staff.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Associate Dean of UPE
<p>Further enhance the development of the digital portfolio to be used across the program that will include evidence of student learning progress through examples of work and reflection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a digital/electronic portfolio is the final/capstone assignment for Semester two students in EDUC 455: Professional Development and Lifelong Learning. This assignment could be extended <i>throughout</i> each student's program to house artifacts created in other courses/semesters.</li> <li>Develop a working group to establish a process and protocol for the digital portfolio.</li> <li>Provide orientation and guidelines of contributions to the portfolio for academic staff.</li> </ul>	Short- to Medium-term	Associate Dean of UPE Associate Dean of T&L Associate Dean of Research

<p>Add a lab component to the EDUC 445: Individual Learning plenary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a working group to establish the lab component of the course.</li> <li>• Establish processes and protocols to be used for the lab component.</li> </ul>	<p>Medium-term</p>	<p>Associate Dean of UPE Undergraduate Programs in Education Council</p>
<p>Develop explicit links of assessment throughout the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed formative assessment in EDUC 460: Specialization I and summative assessment in EDUC 535: Specialization II. This would feed into the deep way that assessment is taken up through problem-based learning in EDUC 555: Assessment (fourth semester).</li> <li>• Purposeful conversation by the course instructors in terms of assessment practices being taught, as well as being used in the course.</li> <li>• Through Field Experience courses, providing explicit links for students to see assessment in practice.</li> </ul>	<p>Short- to Medium-term</p>	<p>Associate Dean of UPE Course Coordinators</p>
<p>Develop a repository of ELL (English Language Learner) resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosted on the Teaching Community site of the Taylor Institute of Teaching and Learning.</li> </ul>	<p>Short- to Medium-term</p>	<p>Instructors Taylor Institute Teaching and Learning Community website</p>
<p>Explore various ways to connect with the larger community through formal and informal conversations.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Partner Research Schools Director of Field Experience</p>
<p>More meetings with Field instructors to discuss what is occurring in the courses and to foster a greater understanding of the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To bring them together with other instructors in a more purposeful way.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Associate Dean of UPE Director of Field Experience Instructors</p>
<p>For semester two and three, Field and Specialization instructors are to have a better understanding of the topics and assignments in</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Associate Dean of UPE Director of Field Experience</p>

<p>each other's courses; these two groups need to engage in conversation about how the work of the Field can inform the course work and vice versa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This also can be taken up in the formative assessment work.</li> <li>• A possibility is to have an extension of specialization assignments that can be taken up in the Field Experience. The assignment can be made due at the end of the Field Experience.</li> </ul>		<p>Course Coordinators Instructors</p>
<p>Continue monitoring the placement of EDUC 530: FNMI History, Education and Leadership course and explore a service learning component.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Associate Dean of UPE</p>
<p>Instructors to develop an understanding of the difference between standard expectations/learning outcomes vs. freedom to individualize teaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership by course coordinators to help instructors to work from a common course outline yet allow for individualization of teaching</li> <li>• Orientation for students to develop an understanding that standard expectations/learning outcomes may be achieved using various strategies and activities of their instructors.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Associate Dean of UPE Course Coordinators Teams of Course Instructors</p>