Unit: Graduate School of Education

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The Graduate School of Education had six major goals in 2014-2015 and each of the major divisions, programs, and centers had its own goals which are detailed in the GSE Annual Report. The six School goals were:

- Search for a dean
- Enrollment growth of 5%, especially in certificate programs in teacher education
- Prepare the institutional self-study in anticipation of NCATE/CAEP reaccreditation
- Produce a report that guides strategic planning as GSE moves toward 2020.
- Support continuous program development and improvement, and support international initiatives.
- Plan to celebrate 100 years of Education in the City, the GSE centennial year 2015-2016

Two of the goals, the search for a dean and the preparation of accreditation reports, were accomplished successfully. One, the support of continuous program development and improvement, remains in progress. The remaining three were not accomplished. Enrollment, especially in teacher education, continued to decline; the 2020 Advisory Committee dissolved itself without producing a report; and the University decided to focus its support on the 175th anniversary of the founding of St. John’s College, not on the centennial of the founding of GSE.

Continuous Improvement

As part of its commitment to excellence, GSE engages in a continuous improvement review process of its academic programs. The evaluation of effectiveness utilizes a variety of “tools”, some developed locally, others provided by external accreditors and regulators. Detailed descriptions of the review processes can be found on the GSE website under the “About” tab, where policies and procedures that guide the reviews, and the reports from accreditors and regulators, can be found. The mission and vision statements of GSE, with its Conceptual Foundation, which provide the foundation upon which GSE academic programs rest and upon which the indicators of quality and effectiveness are derived, also can be found on the website.

Each of the GSE professional preparation programs that lead to state certification is evaluated periodically by a Specialty Professional Association (SPA) to determine whether the program meets the SPA standards. Over the past two years, GSE has submitted evaluation reports to 22 SPAs for its teacher education, leadership preparation, and advanced certificate school psychology programs. Those SPA reports are on the website. All of the reviews yielded positive
results, referred to as “national recognition” by the SPAs. Achieving those recognitions is a prerequisite for the next major evaluation, unit accreditation.

During the academic year, twelve programs submitted reports to their respective professional associations seeking accreditation or recognition as meeting standards. All programs that were reviewed were successful in being accredited or recognized. Among those accredited were the School Counseling and Mental Health Counseling programs both accredited by the Masters in Counseling Accreditation Council, a new accreditor in those fields. For the first time in the School’s history all of its professional preparation programs are accredited or have recognized status by their professional associations.

GSE is accredited as a single, complex “unit” by the Council on Educator Preparation Programs (CAEP), formerly known as the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In 2015-2016 CAEP will visit GSE to determine its eligibility for continued accreditation. During the current academic year, an NCATE work group has been preparing the Institutional Report (IR) that must be submitted to CAEP in August, 2015. The preparation of the electronically-submitted IR is guided by a template provided by CAEP that requires detailed evidence that demonstrates how the unit is meeting the several CAEP/NCATE standards. The evidence comes from the numerous sources of data collected from students, field supervisors, cooperating professionals, the State Education Department, and the city Department of Education. All of the evidence is stored in a complex database that utilizes the Tk-20 platform and Blackboard.

The two professional psychology doctoral programs in GSE are accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). The Counseling Psychology program was reviewed by APA in 2013-2014 and was awarded a full seven year reaccreditation. The School Psychology program submitted a self-study to APA in August, 2014 and had a site visit in April 2015, the outcome of which is pending. Preparation of the accreditation reports and of the yearly Annual Reports requires the presentation of evidence of accomplishment, not aspirational statements. The evidence is provided by the numerous data gathering “tools” used by the programs and stored in Tk-20 and Blackboard.

The master’s programs in Mental Health and School Counseling engaged in intensive evaluations as they prepared applications for accreditation from the Masters in Counseling Accreditation Council (MCAC); those applications were submitted in Spring, 2014. Following a site visit last Fall, the programs were awarded accreditation by MCAC. Again, numerous sources of evidence were aggregated in the preparation of the report.

GSE submits reports to federal and state agencies, all of which require data that are collected from student records, faculty evaluations of student progress, faculty activity reports, surveys of cooperating field professionals and employers, and performance results on the many certification exams our students take. All of the data sources are stored in Tk-20, Blackboard and/or Banner and allow for the preparation Title II, PEDS, USNWR, and assorted SED reports.

GSE is a member of the Eduventures Schools of Education Collaborative and participates in surveys that develop benchmarks against which “operational” effectiveness can be gauged. Eduventures provides reports that focus on operations such as marketing, recruitment, website, resource allocation, and community involvement.
The GSE “tool box” is large and contains numerous tools used for data gathering and evaluation. The most comprehensive guide to those tools is the GSE Assessment Handbook, retrievable at:


Challenges

The most critical “underachieved area” in GSE during 2014-2015 was enrollment. Both the number of students enrolled and the number of credits taken were below the goal and below the budgeted gross tuition revenue. The shortfalls resulted almost entirely from the continuing declines in the initial teacher education programs that were once the largest programs in GSE. The declines are similar to those reported at most teacher education institutions locally, regionally, and nationally. Soft signs from local and state sources suggest the declines may be bottoming out and some slight upward trends may begin to be noticed. Given the University’s one hundred year commitment to providing highly qualified educators to schools both public and private in the city and surrounds, it is inconceivable to consider closing the under-enrolled teacher education programs. Teacher preparation is deeply embedded in the mission of the University, not just in GSE. As the School celebrates, quietly, its one hundredth year, consideration should be given at the University level to investment in GSE by allowing for the redevelopment of its alumni association, by restoring the position of director of marketing and communication, and by providing funds to market the University’s presence in the northern suburbs.

A second area of underachievement was in the redesign of the EdD degree, which currently is focused on educational administration and leadership. GSE has been involved in the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) project for three years, yet the faculty have made little progress in the redesign of the degree program to one that incorporates strands in higher education and teacher leadership, and that focuses on the development of “doctors of practice”. The market for a CPED recognized program is large both in the city and in the suburban areas north and east of the city. Encouraging greater and faster progress in redesign may help off-set lowered enrollments in teacher education programs.

A third area of underachievement was in the unrealized growth in the several advanced certification programs developed over the past three years in special education and in bilingual education. The State Education Department (SED) requires that teachers working with special needs and English language learners have certifications beyond general education. The federal government has increased its vigilance to ensure that school district personnel working with these learners are properly credentialed. Those factors were expected to lead to a great increase in enrollment in the programs GSE recently had approved by SED. The meager support to market the programs in the budget, coupled with the absence of funding available from school districts to provide tuition support to teachers, accounted for the underachievement experienced this year. The potential in these areas remains strong.

A fourth area of underachievement was in planning for the celebration of the School’s centennial anniversary. The decision to ignore the anniversary made at the University level reflects the ambivalence of the University regarding the place of graduate, professional education in the institution. A golden (or perhaps diamond) opportunity to highlight the great contributions of GSE to the University and the extended metropolitan area unfortunately has been ignored. There may yet be time to correct this, were there the will to do so.
The School will go into the next academic year with the fewest instructional staff lines in almost two decades. Two senior professors went into full retirement and one resigned to take a position elsewhere. As of this point in time, no decisions have been made about continuing the appointments of a visiting assistant professor in ELAP, about the continuing appointment of an instructor to support the TFA cohorts, and about the reappointment of the Research Scholar who teaches advanced psychometrics and statistics courses and serves as the expert methodologist on dissertation committees across the several doctoral programs.

The final major risk was alluded to above. Absent a clear and visible commitment by the University, the weakened condition of GSE may worsen, leading to a further reduction in support at a time when there are opportunities to improve that condition.

Opportunities

On July 1, 2015 a new dean will take over leadership of the Graduate School of Education. During the Spring semester the current and new deans met regularly to ease the transition in leadership. The new dean also met with many members of the faculty and administrative staff and was provided with detailed information and documentation of School and University policies, procedures, and practices. The greatest opportunity for GSE is to have new leadership coming from outside the institution that has the potential to move the School forward academically and administratively, with new programs and sustainable enrollment.

Almost the entire leadership in GSE will change going into the 2015-2016 academic year. In addition to the new dean, there will be changes in the office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and in the chairs’ offices in the three divisions. New associate chairs also will be appointed. The scope of the changes in academic leadership is the greatest in the School’s history and will have a potentially positive impact on the School.

The primary goal for GSE in 2015-2016 is to make a successful transition in leadership that allows for the development of a set of specific GSE-wide goals. Clearly, enrollment growth is a primary goal but the strategies and tactics needed to reach that goal are in the domain of the dean and the new leadership team to decide. The specific goals presented below were put forward by the divisions and programs.

Centers and Institutes

GSE is a complex organization that supports six centers and institutes, each of which contributes in important ways to the mission and goals of the School.

Founded in 2006, the Center for Educational Partnerships has as its mission to engage our partner schools, districts, and governmental agencies in the process of helping teachers, school leaders, and other professional staff work more effectively to help all students, regardless of background, learn at higher levels. The Center conducts its work by drawing on the best scholarship and applying that cutting-edge knowledge to the challenges of the classroom and schools. Its work is research-based and outcome-oriented.

The Center serves over 150 schools, 2200 k-12 teachers, 150 administrators, and 50,000 K-12 students throughout New York City, Westchester County, and Long Island. Located at the
Lincoln Center Campus, the Center has two other program office locations at the Rose Hill Campus, and a program office at the Westchester Campus that house contract and grant funded programs. The Center again oversaw the Partnership Support Organization contract from DOE that provides operational responsibilities for 35 city schools distributed across four boroughs; DOE advise the University in mid-spring that it was ending the PSO program and terminating contracts as of 6/30/15.

The Center is the external sponsored programs office for GSE. In 2014-2015, the Center submitted approximately 15 proposals to city, state, federal, and philanthropic agencies. New awards were received by the Center to operate the Regional Bilingual/ESL Regional Network, to serve as a partner with four high needs-low performing city schools designated as community schools by DOE, and to provide school building leadership preparation to teachers in faith-based schools. The awards will generate approximately $4 million dollars annually and $17 million over the life of the grants. Vendor contracts for coaching services were renewed and a new agreement was signed with Jazz@Lincoln Center to collaborate on professional development for area educators. The Center once again led the University in the generation of external funding.

The Center for Catholic School Leadership and Faith-based Education, called a "national exemplar of service and partnership" by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, is the center of the outreach, academic, and service programs for Catholic and faith based school educators, administrators, and students in GSE. Its mission is propelled by the strategic plan of the University and mission of the University to foster the intellectual, moral and religious development of its students and prepare them for leadership in an urban and global society. The Executive Director of the Center was invited to membership on the European Council for Catholic Education, was invited to present by the Hole See at conference in UNESCO, and was invited to participate in the World Congress, Educating Today and Tomorrow in Vatican City. The Emerging Leaders Program for Christian Schools in collaboration with Kirchlichen Pädagogischen Hochschule Wien/Krems provided a seminar in Vienna where the Executive Director presented a week of lectures for emerging Catholic school leaders from the following countries: Norway, Albania, The Czech Republic, Ukraine, Romania, Austria, Scotland, Poland, Germany, Sweden, The center has been in dialogue with officials of the University of Glasgow on the development of a digital platform program in Catholic School Leadership that will be marketed worldwide. The Center is responsible for implementing the Title-IIA tuition support contract awarded by DOE.

GSE supports two academic and professional training organizations, referred to as the Hagin Centers and Psychological Services Institute, that support the professional development of students in the mental health counseling, counseling psychology, and school psychology programs. PSI was awarded a second grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) that will provide approximately $177,000 that will fund mental health services in two city schools provided by graduate students under the supervision of PSI.

GSE supports two organizations whose services are directed primarily to communities and organizations outside the University. The Human Resiliency Institute, which is fully funded by gifts and external contracts, provides resiliency workshops to veterans, airline employees, and other travel industry workers. The Bernard Schwartz Center for Media, Public Policy, and Education is involved in the production of films, in collaborating with other associations to
provide for discussion of major public policy issues, and with leadership development in the arts and entertainment. The Center is fully supported annually by external benefactors, including Bernard Schwartz.

In summary, GSE is a complex, multifaceted school that stands among the most highly regarded and rated education schools in the city, state, and nation. As it enters its one hundredth year of significant contributions to the University and the wider world, GSE is poised to rise to the challenges and opportunities that await in its second century of service. May it have a happy centennial anniversary.