Response to FAC Issues (April 13, 2016)

On April 7, 2016, the Faculty Affairs Committee met and agreed to support the proposal for the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership contingent on three major issues being effectively addressed prior to this proposal being brought before the Senate for a vote. If these issues are not suitably addressed, the Faculty Affairs Committee withdraws their support from the proposal.

We request that responses to these issues, including tracked changes for any alterations to the proposal document, be distributed to the members of the Faculty Affairs Committee no later than Tuesday noon the same week as a scheduled Thursday Academic Senate meeting on which this proposal would be brought before the senate.

The three issues are as follows:

1. The process for selection and evaluation of faculty members in the program must clearly articulate with existing policies and procedures as described in the University Handbook and the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The proposal describes a procedure that is separate from and inconsistent with existing policies and procedures. This is particularly the case where language suggests that the Graduate Group and Membership Committee will be using evaluation of peer and student evaluations for new or continued affiliation with the program. There is no mechanism by which the Membership Committee can review materials from Personnel Action Files, although materials in those files would likely be relevant to the decision whether to include and retain a faculty member in the program. Neither of these groups have the right to access to faculty peer evaluations or SOCIs from courses taught by instructors. In the interest of protecting faculty and protecting the confidentiality of the RTP process, language needs to be included that indicates that these groups will not be viewing these materials as part of this evaluation. If the program plans to develop their own peer and student evaluations that will be conducted separately and in addition to RTP-related evaluations, then details need to be provided about how this will be administered, because this could also create potential issues. An additional issue arises for “adjunct” faculty teaching in the program: what unit will these faculty be hired and evaluated through? This must be clearly stipulated because it relates to how they will be evaluated and there should be clear procedures in place for who sees their peer evaluations and student SOCIs. Similar questions arise about the inclusion and evaluation of administrators at CSUB.

The Committee raises some interesting concerns here that we share. We do not believe our policies are inconsistent with existing policies and procedures, but two things became clear as we worked through the details of implementing our policies. First, we will need to follow our procedures carefully to avoid infringing on faculty rights and protections. Second, all cross-disciplinary programs—including ours—will need more guidance from the Senate in the form of new policies on the evaluation and recruitment of faculty in cross-disciplinary programs. Currently there are at least four other cross-disciplinary programs on campus found in the catalog (MS in Administration, MBA, MS in Science Education, Hawk Honors Program). We know of no university-wide policies that specify who within these interdisciplinary programs is allowed to view student evaluations, yet we are sure all programs would say they would not invite back a poor teacher (but how would they know if someone was a poor teacher without access to student feedback?). Likewise, there are no university-wide policies about where SOCIs from cross-
disciplinary programs go. For example, where would the SOCI for an adjunct teaching a SCI class in the MS in Science Education program go? Biology? Chemistry? Science Education (which would raise the other problem you have anticipated... what department reviews an interdisciplinary RTP file)?

Here is how we plan to implement our policy about “acceptable student evaluations.” We will continue to follow the campus practice among some of the schools whereby deans receive scored SOCI packets and distribute them to the chairs of each department. This is true for the SOCIs of tenured, tenure-track, and lecturer faculty. The chair has the option of viewing the SOCIs before distributing them to their faculty. In our case, the Director of the DPEL, acting like a chair, would similarly receive SOCIs for all EDLE (the code for Educational Leadership) classes before forwarding them to faculty and their PAFs. The Director would have access to no other student evaluations besides EDLE SOCIs. The Director could then report, in general terms, on the acceptability of student evaluations to the larger Graduate Group. The Graduate Group would then consider this as well as the several other criteria in the appointment and renewal of Graduate Group members and re-hiring of adjuncts. Unit RTP committees would have access to EDLE course evaluations along with the faculty member’s disciplinary SOCIs. There has never been a challenge to our processes and we felt it was reasonable.

Since there is no current policy on the home department of adjuncts in cross-disciplinary programs, we would hire them through the home department of the DPEL Director (currently the Department of Advanced Educational Studies) until a university-wide policy was developed instructing us to hire differently. These adjuncts would receive RTP evaluation as part of the regular cycle within this department. Administrators teaching in the DPEL do not undergo RTP evaluation, and student evaluations of teaching are not necessary for their performance evaluations. Nevertheless, in order to satisfy DPEL policy, the Director would also review administrator’s SOCIs for their EDL courses; SOCI summaries would be “stored” in their administrator PAFs.

We welcome a campus-wide dialogue on these processes and perhaps the Senate could lead this discussion and invite input from our program and the other four interdisciplinary programs. We look forward to the development of policies that we could all follow together.

2. Various aspects of the criteria for inclusion and evaluation of faculty are unclear and incongruent with existing policies and procedures, and they appear to be inconsistent with the checks and balances normally associated with democratic processes. These issues need to be corrected and the program language modified to protect faculty both within and out-side of the program. This includes:

a) The composition of the Committees. Committees, particularly the executive committee and membership community should not be selected from and by only members from the group. It is particularly problematic that the membership committee contains only the director of the program and two members appointed by the executive committee. Further, the Executive Committee has the power to appoint the subcommittee that would make decisions about retention of members of the Executive Committee. This creates the potential for a small group of faculty to have unchecked control over who gets to be part of the small group that selects them. There must be open elections, most likely school-wide since this is an intra-school program, for these positions to ensure that there is accountability and potential for change and that faculty that may wish to join the program have fair review.

The subcommittee structure proposed has worked very well at Fresno State, the model for our program. Nevertheless, because FAC is concerned about the possible motives of the small subcommittees, the DPEL team will make a recommendation to the Graduate Group that for two years they suspend the subcommittee structure and make all decisions as a committee of the whole which would include all
members of the Graduate Group. After two years, they can revisit the trade-offs. A larger group, with more varied opinions and fewer opportunities to collude, will naturally produce checks and balances against the tyranny of the few that you suggested could occur.

We do not believe that school-wide or university-wide elections are the process by which other cross-disciplinary programs choose participating faculty (i.e., MS in Administration, MBA, MS in Science Education, Hawk Honors), and for good reason. On the face of it, it seems strange to suggest taking decision-making responsibilities away from faculty who are most highly invested in the program and giving these responsibilities to faculty who may have no interest and/or expertise in Educational Leadership.

We want to assure the FAC and other members of the campus community that the DPEL would welcome greater faculty participation in the DPEL. We have nothing to gain and everything to lose by becoming unnecessarily restrictive and cliquey. As we have previously discussed in the Senate, the DPEL hopes to ramp up the preparation of appropriately trained faculty for the program so we will have a robust pool of potential instructors and dissertation chairs for the future.

b) Criteria for affiliated faculty. The statement on page 18 that affiliated faculty are expected to participate in at least one activity within their [five-year] term raises that possibility that any faculty member who engages in professional scholarship in any discipline could be an affiliated faculty member of the DPEL. These issues are further confused by the inclusion on page 93 of some individuals who have not taught in the joint program and by the inclusion of the resume of a faculty member who is not on the list.

Let us break this into two pieces. First, could a faculty member who did nothing more than engage in “professional scholarship in any discipline” be an affiliated faculty member? The answer is clearly “no” because they must also satisfy criteria 2b.i-v. If they satisfied these other criteria then they could (although their applicable research must be related to educational leadership), but what would be the motivation for someone becoming an affiliated faculty, and going to meetings and such, if they didn’t want to participate in any meaningful way?

Second, the list of 15 Graduate Group members on p.93 includes faculty who have applied and been accepted as core or affiliate members. Some of these faculty have taught classes; others have supervised dissertations; others are preparing to teach courses in the future. To make this clearer, we have modified the table in Attachment IX.A-1 to include an asterisk for Graduate Group faculty who have applied and been accepted, but have not taught for the DPEL. The faculty member who was not on the list but included in faculty vitae (A. Kebede; Attachment IX.D) is a faculty member who was recently approved and assigned a course to teach in Fall 2016. His name is now included in the table of Graduate Group faculty.

c) Standards for Instructional faculty within the program. The comment on page 39 that the Executive Order “does not allow parity between T/TT and adjunct faculty” ignores the need for consistent standards. Since the program is in Educational Leadership, the core faculty members should have expertise in Educational Leadership. Additionally, other faculty members should have expertise explicitly connected to Educational Leadership, and those expectations should be spelled out.

Our original comment that the requirement for teaching core courses in the EdD “does not allow for parity between T/TT and adjunct faculty” was only meant to address FAC’s original concern about “instructor requirements that are the same for both T/TT faculty and adjunct/lecturer instructors.” Our point was that the Executive Order does not allow them to be the same. For example, only doctoral
faculty who are tenured or tenure-track, or administrators, may be in the core faculty; a lecturer cannot. That, however, was not our complete answer to that question. We also referred readers to section IX. Faculty for more information on faculty eligibility to teach.

Expertise in Educational Leadership is explained in the answer to the next item.

d) Faculty support for the program. Other graduate programs require five core faculty members in the discipline. A doctoral program should have at least that many in the specific discipline of the program. Please include information that shows that at least 5-7 core or affiliated faculty members have degrees specifically in the field of educational leadership.

In order to understand our answer to this concern it is important for readers to understand how an EdD in Educational Leadership is different from the kinds of doctoral programs that most faculty know. The Educational Leadership doctorate is intentionally interdisciplinary, consistent with the Executive Order that allowed the CSU to offer EdDs in Educational Leadership. The idea is that students can learn Educational Leadership best from experts in several different fields and from practitioners (e.g., school superintendents) who use their leadership skills every day. The program is designed to produce practitioners who will learn the content and skills needed to become better leaders in their communities and who will use their research skills to investigate important local issues. Graduates of EdD in Educational Leadership programs are not expected to become academics. Recruiting for professors to teach in Ed Leadership programs, therefore, involves looking for faculty with expertise that is relevant to interdisciplinary training, not necessarily graduates of EdD programs. So when FAC asks about “expertise explicitly connected to Educational Leadership,” this will often involve a faculty member who does not have an EdD in Ed Leadership, but someone who has expertise in a field related to educational leadership. For example, we have a business faculty member whose expertise is in organizational leadership; we have Sociology, Social Work, and Psychology faculty with expertise in behavioral research methodology; and we have faculty from Advanced Educational Studies who are experts in educational policy. For this program, having 5-7 experts in Educational Leadership would mean having 5-7 faculty with expertise in relevant areas. The DPEL has one EdD in Educational Leadership graduate, the interim director, who was an educational leader in the community for many years before he came to us. But he is the exception for EdD programs. If we had to name a single program that was most closely related to Educational Leadership on our campus, it would be the Department of Advanced Educational Studies; we have five faculty from that department within the Graduate Group.

Our standards for the program are consistently applied. Graduate Group faculty must have a doctorate and all participating faculty, including adjuncts, must have expertise in an area related to an area of Educational Leadership. Once the program is approved, the DPEL Director will send out a call to all members of the CSUB faculty to apply to be in the DPEL Graduate Group. The application process will be open to all interested faculty across the campus. We hope to recruit more highly qualified faculty to the program.

3. The mission and goals of the program must be clearly integrated with the existing structures and processes for graduate programs at CSUB. The proposed program needs to be thoroughly integrated into and supportive of other graduate programs on campus. This was requested previously and not addressed. The program structure needs to clearly articulate with existing graduate services and committees and our university-wide graduate goals. A clear statement about active participation in the Graduate Coordinators Council (presumably the reference to the Graduate Council on page 36 should be to the Graduate Coordinators Council), an outline for potential interactions and activities that will enhance the Graduate Student Center, and a curriculum and program mission that meets the Graduate
Program Learning Outcomes of CSUB must be incorporated into the proposal. The proposal authors may wish to reference CSUB Academic Senate Resolution 1213015 which contains the CSUB graduate mission and learning outcomes.

Let’s first begin by looking at what the FAC originally asked for and what we provided. The FAC asked that we provide “Clear language addressing the relationship of this program to existing graduate programs on campus, particularly as related to increasing the graduate culture among faculty on campus and through a commitment of participation of individuals associated with this new program with the existing graduate coordinators council.” We provided a clear statement of support of CSUB graduate programs in section XVI. Doctoral Culture: “The doctoral-level culture will build on the graduate culture that has been growing at CSUB, especially since the funding of the Graduate Student Center. The DPEL program director will serve on the Graduate Council” (excuse our mislabeling of the Graduate Coordinators Council—if it is mislabeled this is due in part to the fact that this title is nowhere to be found in the university catalog and a search of the CSUB website produces zero relevant hits).

We understand that there may also have been some concern about our response to a similar question brought to us by the AS&SS when they asked: Will students be utilizing the Graduate Student Center? What impact will the EdD program have on the Graduate Student Center resources and services? We responded: The DPEL has not used the Graduate Student Center in the past, but if the Center stays open, it might be worth investigating future collaborations.” This was intended as a statement of support, but since we had heard that the Center lost its funding, we qualified the statement acknowledging this possibility. We are happy to change our response to “if the Center stays open we will investigate future collaborations.”

We are enthusiastic about working with other graduate programs, but it should also be understood that the DPEL may have less in common with existing graduate programs than they have with each other. The DPEL will have unique needs (dissertation prep vs. masters thesis, night and working adult program versus traditional daytime masters) and we are required to provide (and pay for) services for our students that masters programs may not require. Since the DPEL has not previously had control over resources on our campus (i.e., finances were managed by Fresno State), it would make sense for us to get our program off the ground and attend meetings of the Graduate Coordinators Council before committing to specific collaborations with other graduate programs. But let us be clear: we want to be team players who work together with other graduate programs on campus.

In our proposal, we included a mission statement for the School and DPEL program in section XIV. Assessment and Accountability. We provided a matrix of DPEL curriculum versus the CSUB EdD system Core Concepts (think of these as SysLOs), and a matrix of the DPEL curriculum versus program outcomes. Nothing in the new program proposal, however, requested mapping of the curriculum onto the graduate program ULOs. This matrix can, of course, be created but it will require the reconvening of the Graduate Group. Since this was a new request, it is unreasonable to expect this matrix in the less than one week we were given to respond. We will commit, however, to completing a curriculum by Graduate ULO matrix in Spring quarter. Looking at other program’s SLOs and ULOs, it is clear that Graduate ULOs do not drive SLOs; we anticipate that the necessary Procrustean fit can be accomplished.

The committee also recommends that the following items be addressed.
1. The date of approval from the SSE predates the proposal by many months. It is impossible for the SSE curriculum committee to have properly reviewed a proposal in 2015 that was not written until 2016.

The date of approval on the routing form matches the day the chair of the SSE Curriculum Committee (SSE CC) was asked to sign the routing form. The SSE CC approved the program many months earlier based on the WASC Substantive Change format they were provided. Backdating the routing form would have been dishonest. Nevertheless, nothing in the curriculum changed between the original proposal and the new format proposal submitted more recently to the Senate. The DPEL submitted the new format to the Senate, not because it is the required format for WASC or the CO, but simply because the Senate subcommittees asked for it. There is nothing new in terms of curriculum.

2. Page 9 of the proposal refers to having impact by “in particular by producing researchers for the Kern County Superintendent of Schools” and in the next paragraph says the service area “needs doctoral qualified educational leaders who can connect with and make a difference in the education of children in the southern Central Valley.” The balance between the narrow focus of one organization and the broad focus of children in the region is unclear.

The DPEL is designed to produce educational leaders in our community (including the Kern County Superintendent of Schools) who can bring new leadership and research skills to their work in order to improve the state of education in our community. Unlike many graduates of PhD programs who have to focus on either practice or research, graduates of the EdD are encouraged to focus on both research and practice.

3. The list of members of the Community Advisory Board on page 15 is not consistent with the description of the Community Advisory Board on page 17 or with the bylaws.

This is correct and an oversight in our recent application of the bylaws. As you noticed we have an appropriate complement of community participants but we are short on DPEL participants. We will forward this observation to the Graduate Group so it can be corrected before the next Advisory Committee meeting.

4. No letter of support from the Biology Department is included for Dr. Kloock, and there is no clear mechanism for identifying the appropriate source of letters for administrators who want to teach in the program nor who will be responsible for approving their assigned time releasing them from their administrative duties.

In section VII.C., we provided letters from six department chairs who agreed to work with the DPEL in the future without committing to releasing any particular faculty for any particular purpose. The letters were from chairs who responded to our email. Biology did not respond so we do not know whether Biology will allow Dr. Kloock to participate or not, if he wants to continue with the Graduate Group. Dr. Kloock has served as a dissertation committee member in the past and has not taught for the program.

The department chairs from the home departments of our two administrators were among the six who responded (Dr. LeGue for Dr. Schultz, and Dr. Paris for Dr. Stark). Administrators, however, are not eligible to receive reassigned time for teaching, so they will do it as a voluntary activity on their own time.

5. There is no clear mechanism in the bylaws for the selection of the founding faculty for the program.
Since this is a transitioning program not a new one, Bakersfield faculty who were in the Graduate Group as part of the joint-doctoral program will become the “founding” faculty of the standalone program. They will retain their status as core and affiliated faculty.

6. While the committee understands the intent limiting faculty members to teaching one course per year, the committee encourages to the proposers to consider policies that support the possibility that students might benefit from more interaction with some faculty members.

Through the years, the Graduate Groups of both the Bakersfield and Fresno DPEL programs have discussed the pro and cons of limiting the faculty to one course per year. To date, they have always come down on the side of the one course limitation. Most members believe that the current policy gives students a broad base of views, exposing them to eight or nine different campus faculty. Nevertheless, the Graduate Group could choose to reconsider this policy, as they will others, in the future.

7. The proposed catalog copy is missing some elements that are required for standard catalog copy.

We modeled our catalog copy after other graduate programs we saw in the catalog. If there is a standard template, we will be glad to model it and revise our catalog copy in the future. We would expect other graduate programs to do so as well. Currently, there seems to be little standardization in graduate program catalog copy (see pp. 193-257).

Note on Changes to Documents:

On p. 16 (renumbered p. 21) of the proposal (Faculty Workload Matrix), an error was discovered and corrected. There were no other changes to the body of the proposal.

Attachment IX.A-1, 2015-16 CSUB DPEL Faculty (renumbered p. 93) was revised to address 2b. above.