

DATE: July 24, 2008

SUBJECT: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Research

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The proposed degree major in Educational Psychology and Research currently exists as a concentration under the Ph.D. in Education and, as a concentration, has been highly productive for the last 40 years. The proposed independence of the Ph.D. degree major will enable the Department to market the program with greater clarity about the focus of the degree (Educational Psychology and Research, not Education generally) and can thereby attract a greater number of talented applicants for the applicant pool. As a concentration, the program has produced 35 graduates in the last five years and expects 9 graduates in 2008. Nationally, graduates in this major pursue a variety of professional careers, such as university and college faculty and researchers and practitioners in government and private sector services.

PROPOSED START-UP DATE: Fall 2008

Commission staff reviewed this program proposal according to the academic standards adopted by the Commission on January 29, 1997. Each relevant standard is referenced below.

1.1.20A MISSION: The mission of the program is to meet the needs of society and the profession by educating students with varying interests within the broad field of educational psychology, preparing students with diverse backgrounds for leadership roles, fostering interest in research, and facilitating improved professional practices.

1.1.20B CURRICULUM: Depending on the concentration selected, a student must complete 85-100 semester hours for degree completion. All students must complete a common core of courses, a research core, a concentration, a cognate area, and a dissertation. The four proposed concentrations now exist as specialty areas.

Adult Education, preparing professionals for employment in a wide range of settings in adult literacy, continuing higher education, business and industry, government and community-based organizations, volunteer agencies, and professional and staff development programs.

Applied Educational Psychology, preparing professionals for learning and development research and applications of statistics and measurements.

Collaborative Learning, preparing professionals for employment in schools, government, and business to lead collaborative learning processes and engage in action research within the context of their own professional practices.

Evaluation and Assessment, preparing graduates to design personnel evaluation systems and create sound evaluation and accountability practices in a range of settings.

1.1.20C ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

Projected Program Productivity: Enrollment projections are based on actual enrollment patterns over the last six years.

| Year | Fall Full-time Headcount | Fall Part-Time Headcount | Graduates |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | 29 | 41 | 9 |
| 2 | 29 | 41 | 9 |
| 3 | 29 | 41 | 9 |
| 4 | 29 | 41 | 9 |
| 5 | 29 | 41 | 9 |

Admission to doctoral study in Educational Psychology and Research is based on consideration of four criteria: scholarly promise, as reflected in professional record and formal recommendations; intellectual aptitude, as evidenced in GRE verbal, quantitative, and written exam scores and previous graduate GPA; professional goals and aspirations that are compatible with the program goals declared in a letter of interest or interview; and writing skill, as demonstrated in a writing sample. Retention is continuously monitored. Graduation requires successful completion of all course work, the written and oral comprehensive exams, and defense of the dissertation.

1.1.20D FACULTY: The external consultant observed that the faculty of eight evidences strong research and scholarly activity and diversity in cultural and ethnic representation. The eight full-time faculty members can appropriately support the program.

1.1.20 E LIBRARY REOURCES: Library resources are appropriate.

1.1.20F ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION: The program will continue to be administered by the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling within the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences. Each concentration has a faculty coordinator.

1.1.20G SUPPORT RESOURCES: The consultant judged all necessary resources to be in place.

1.1.20H STUDENT/EMPLOYER DEMANDS: Student demand is documented in the increasing number of applicants from a diverse group of interested students. Employer demand is demonstrated by the successful employment of graduates.

1.1.20I COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONS: N/A

1.1.2J EVALUATION: Program quality and productivity as a separate degree will be evaluated by the THEC post approval academic review process and that of the University. Review criteria include: number of graduates, teaching and mentoring success, levels of scholarship from faculty and students, publishing record of faculty and students, and community outreach.

1.1.2K EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES: Existing facilities are adequate.

1.1.2L DUPLICATION: No other Ph.D. programs in Educational Psychology and Research are offered in Tennessee.

1.1.20M EXTERNAL JUDGMENT: Dr. Tom Burnham, Dean, School of Education, The University of Mississippi, conducted a site visit and proposal evaluation. Dr. Burnham's review strongly affirmed the UTK case for establishing a free-standing Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Research.

1.1.20N COST/BENEFIT/SOURCE: The University has prepared a budget analysis documenting expenditures for program personnel and operating and anticipated revenues from tuition, fees, and external resources. Converting the concentration to an independent degree program will not create new recurring costs and revenue is expected to be sufficient for continued program operation. The only one-time expenditure associated with the proposed action is the nominal cost for consultant evaluation of the proposal and site visit.

1.1.30 POST APPROVAL MONITORING: An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following approval. The review will be based on benchmarks established in the approved program proposal. At the end of this period, campus, governing board, and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. The benchmarks include, but are not limited to, enrollment and graduation, program cost, progress toward accreditation, library acquisitions, student performance, and others set by the institution and agreed upon by governing board and Commission staff. As a result of this evaluation, if benchmarks are not met during the monitoring period, the Commission may recommend that the governing board terminate the program. The Commission may choose to extend the period, if additional time is needed and requested by the governing board.