



UNIVERSITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO

School of Education

**Academic Program Review
University of San Francisco
International and Multicultural Education MA and EdD Programs**

**Campus Visit:
October 20-21, 2017**

**Reviewers:
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And
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The review team read the self-study written by the faculty in the department; reviewed the curriculum, course syllabi and evaluations; conducted class visits; interviewed faculty, students and staff; and met with the Dean, Associate Deans and other relevant members of the campus community. Prior to their visit, the reviewers were provided with USF's Vision, Mission, Values Statement, the department's self-study and other university materials.

- 1. How did the external review committee rate the quality of the program – excellent, very good, good, adequate, or poor? How does the program compare with benchmark top-tier programs nationally? Please provide a brief rationale for the external review committee's rating.**

In considering the quality of the program, the team considered its comparative quality to four well-known, top-tier programs: UCLA's Social Science and Comparative Education, Boston College's International and Higher Education, University of California Riverside's Department of Education, Society, and Culture, and the University of Toronto's Social Justice Education: "Those departments, in different ways, are peers to the content and mission of this department. The IME department compares positively to these top-ranked programs, while maintaining a unique identity in its focus on social justice education that attends to U.S.-based issues and global patterns of inequity. We also kept in mind that the context of this department and the larger university is a liberal arts institution, so teaching and responsiveness to students is a high priority. We modulated our comparison of this department to other departments, some of which are public R1 institutions, with those differences in mind."

"We found this department to be outstanding relative to these comparable programs for three main

reasons: the passion and dedication of the faculty, the vibrant, dedicated students, and the close, community feel of the program. This is a clear strength of the department, and one that makes it unique in the academy, whose culture tends to be more competitive, isolating, and individualistic. In our discussion of the curriculum, student experiences, and faculty, we provide recommendations on how the department can strengthen and build upon its well--- established strengths.”

“We rank IME as a “very good” program and with some improvements in identity clarification, faculty and staff hiring, as well as a transparent process for decision---making and strategic planning, they could easily reach the caliber of being an “excellent” program. It has the potential to compete nationally with top tier programs in liberal arts and more research--- intensive institutions. In fact, one of the strengths of the program is the presence of faculty who have had strong research backgrounds. We suggest that this rigor and expertise enriches the program, and it also presents the program with a hybrid liberal arts and research---productive identity. This can, at times, send mixed messages to students who have enrolled in an EdD program. We address this more fully under the section dedicated to students, in making the mark as an excellent program, we suggest that have a targeted impact and identity is in the best interest of the school. We are confident that the school and department leadership is more than capable of guiding the school and department through a process that will yield this targeted impact.”

2. **What are the most important general issues that emerged from the external review process?**

- **Key Issue:** MA and EdD students are in the same classes, without much differentiation

One of our major findings in our review was the tension of having MA and EdD students integrated in most courses in the IME. The challenges that were brought to our attention focused on the lack of rigor, particularly for doctoral students or too much rigor for some students, mainly those who were in the MA program. Also, the overlap of the curriculum between the MA and EdD has deterred some students from continuing from the MA to the EdD. The majority of students felt that there was significant repetition between the content and style of instruction of the courses.

- **Key Issue:** Attrition

As noted in the department review, attrition is an issue, and this is related to attracting a working student population with many other demands in their lives. The passion and responsiveness of the faculty is a strength in this area, but it needs more depth and the support of dedicated staff

3. **What specific recommendations for improving the program’s quality has the external review committee made to the Dean?**

- **Revisit the Department name and brand:** With changes in IME’s curriculum content, we recommend that IME revisit their name and brand to better align with the shifting focus. This also will address the shifting interests and needs of students.
- **Engage in a curricular review:** We also recommend that prior to committing to a name change, that the IME department engage in a curricular re-mapping process that considers the effectiveness and responsiveness of the current structure. This process should begin with

surveying students' intentions for entering the MA and EdD programs and their career, vocational, and personal goals. The process should also include an inventory of the core faculty's expertise which we further discuss in the next section.

We also recommend that there be clear, but flexible curriculum guides for both the MA and EdD programs. Although we do not recommend that the programs be completely separate, we do suggest that IME consider the possibility of having fewer overlapping courses between the two programs so as to create distinct and purposeful experiences. This may encourage more students to continue on from the MA programs to the EdD programs

- **Faculty Hires:** We concur with the department's self-study in which they seek approval for two-tenure track hires. There is no question that the department is stretched to meet the needs of its students, and this also compromises the ability of the department to have a clear structure for pathways through the doctoral program and provide consistency across theory, methods, and dissertation-related courses. We suggest prioritizing Black studies, Indigenous studies, and perhaps raciolinguistics in these searches.
- **Staff Hire:** As noted in the section under goals and mission, we concur with the department's request for a full-time staff person. This person can help to systematically support and track data on students' progress and success through the course and fieldwork. We recommend hiring staff and putting structures in place, such as strong orientation and support groups to lighten the load that students have largely self-initiated to persist through the program.
- **Develop stronger student support procedures:** We recommend providing a stronger orientation for students, and having more support for students as they progress through the program, including support for academic writing in the form of a dedicated course.

4. In the opinion of the external review committee, is the program aligned with the strategic initiatives of the University and the School of Education?

The department is clearly in line with the social justice mission of the University of San Francisco and the larger Jesuit mission of being people for others. The course offerings, and the curriculum feature consistent engagement with theories and research on inequity, oppression, and human rights issues. There is no doubt from the perspective of the reviewers that the vitality and importance of this department will only continue to grow as the planet contends with increases in xenophobia, nationalism, separatism, and outright colonialism.

5. What is the timetable for the response to the external review committee's recommendations for program improvement? What can the Office of the Provost do to appropriately respond to the review?

The Department will complete the School of Education Action Plan template in the fall 2017 semester. The Action Plan details the proposed actions needed to address the recommendations of the report. The Dean's office will then assess resources and develop a response to the report. This response will identify if anything needs to be brought to the attention of the Office of the Provost.

