

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Academic Program Review
College of Arts and Sciences

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHER EDUCATION CENTER (UTEC)

EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

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CAMPUS VISIT

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Draft reviewed and approved by: UTEC Faculty and Staff and the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences

The review team read the self-study written by faculty in the Undergraduate Teacher Education Center (UTEC), reviewed the curriculum, course syllabi and evaluations; interviewed faculty, students and staff; and met with the Dean, Associate Dean and other relevant members of the campus community. Prior to their visit, the reviewers were provided with USF's Vision, Mission, Values Statement, 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.**

The external review team gave the Center a rating of VERY GOOD. They described the Center as “remarkable,” and emphasized the ways that “UTEC has become a dynamic, innovative, student-centered program that’s effectively responded to California’s needs and shifting landscape,” and that the Center has succeeded “with limited resources and an unusually small staff.” The review team commended the Center “for accomplishing so much with so little.” Their report also noted the “distinct” nature of the Center, “both within USF and within traditional models of teacher preparation” in regards to the 4+1 curricula and the position of the Center in connecting the College of Arts & Sciences and the School of Education.

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

The reviewers articulated four major recommendations and encouraged “CAS, UTEC, and [S]OE leadership to focus on building strategic sustainability initiatives that will position USF as a leader in undergraduate teacher preparation.”

- 1. *Enhance Collaboration and Coordination with the USF School of Education (SOE):*** the review team saw “tremendous opportunity for USF to offer a more robust and inclusive undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation pathway(s) by de-siloing the existing structure and initiating strategic collaboration and coordination between CAS, UTEC, and SOE.” They recommended: reallocating “existing resources to create new revenue”, co-creating “an identifiable USF teacher preparation brand that meets the needs/interests of the Local Educational Agency”, co-hosting events to build awareness of the curricular opportunities such as speaker series or webinars, and re-engaging “regular spaces for leadership, faculty, and staff dialogue.”

2. ***Focus on Continuous Improvement, with Attention to State Priorities:*** the reviewers recommended “strategically collecting and analyzing program, alums, and employer data” to “generate valuable information to drive program decision-making and continuous improvement.” They also encouraged the Center to use these data to understand where UTEC can align with educational priorities from the state.
3. ***Establish Formal Agreements between CAS, SOE, and UTEC:*** The external reviewers’ report recommended working to formalize agreements between academic units to ensure the sustainability of the Center long-term. Formal agreements will be particularly important for the Center to expand programming.
4. ***Build a Robust IHE-LEA Collaborative:*** The reviewers reported that “establishing strong, consistent partnerships with individual schools within the local LEA [Local Educational Agency] that share similar beliefs and values related to equity, diversity, and inclusion” will:
 - a. “establish a consistent pool of field placements”
 - b. “ensure all UTEC students have a similar clinical practice experience”
 - c. “create spaces for ongoing communication and thought partnership between UTEC and LEA staff, and”
 - d. “ensure the LEA and UTEC are working in concert to support their aspiring teachers.”

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

Specific recommendations from the report are included below, organized by area:

1. ***Vision, Mission, and Values:*** The review team offered recommendations to “strengthen the support and presence of UTEC on campus,” which include refining the marketing of the program and expanding university stakeholders to better articulate the unique nature of the Center and its position between CAS and SOE to current and prospective students.
2. ***Program Administration:*** The reviewers reported being “consistently impressed by the

[UTEC staff's] individual and collective depth of knowledge related to high quality teacher preparation, their shared commitment to the success of their students, their consistent, high touch collaboration and thought partnership, and the deep and broad partnerships UTEC has cultivated with University faculty across the campus.” With this said, the review team reported areas for growth in regards to documenting the “institutional knowledge [of the UTEC Director] to ensure the sustainability of the program over time.” They also recommend increasing support for the program, suggesting the addition of a program assistant or coordinator “charged with managing field placements, monitoring day-to-day budgets, maintaining databases, and overseeing data collection for reporting purposes,” and reducing “redundancies in their work here and that which occurs in SOE.” They also recommend reworking the program advising structure to increase sustainability and increasing the level of support of the Center’s Academic Director to strengthen “robust, positive relationships and partnerships with faculty and department heads across campus.”

3. ***The Quality of the Program Curriculum, Faculty, and Students:*** In an effort to improve the transition from the undergraduate programming in CAS to the graduate courses offered through SOE, the reviewers recommended working with SOE faculty and administrators to better understand “the nature of the UTEC courses, program plans, and student profiles.” They also encouraged the Center and administration to utilize the “seismic financial investments” from the state of California to make USF more financially affordable for students. They also discussed strengthening the four-year curricular pathway and reinvesting in local partnerships with community colleges and LEAs.

4. **In the opinion of the external review committee, is the program following the University’s strategic initiatives?**

The reviewers’ report reiterates the alignment between the goals and priorities of the Center and those of the institution overall. “The relationship between UTEC and USF’s stated mission

should be noted as a sincere and felt strength of UTEC,” the report. “In particular, the program’s student-centered approach embodies the institutional commitment to ‘educating hearts and minds to cultivate the full, integral development of each person and all persons’.” The reviewers noted that students “praised the relationship they cultivated” with instructors and UTEC staff, as well as UTEC’s commitment to the USF mission and continuity of the Center’s programming. UTEC also demonstrates strong alumni relationships, to the extent that UTEC graduates have returned to teach courses and host current students in their SFUSD classrooms. The reviewers also found that “the Jesuit value of *cura personalis* is well evidenced in UTEC programs. Specifically, the ‘care of the whole person’ is most visible in the intricate and complex advising and student success.”

5. In what way is the program contributing to the goal of making the University of San Francisco a premier Jesuit, Catholic urban university with a global perspective that educates leaders who will fashion a more humane and just world?

UTEC exemplifies excellence through their “careful and intentional field placement experiences that align with the SOE classes’ content” and the “deep and authentic attention to justice and equity” represented by the UTEC course content. The 90 hours of field placement experiences are noted as an “incredible undertaking” for students and offer hands-on learning with students and educators in the larger Bay Area community. In addition, “SOE faculty members described UTEC students as having ‘criticality’ and ‘intersectional’ frames, as well as ‘sophisticated language’ that helps them to engage in ‘sharper analyses’ in the complex racial and educational justice space.” The external review team reported a “consistent agreement that the core leadership and administration team [in UTEC] are deeply committed to the mission of the University and the academic and professional success of its students.”

6. 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 next step is for the Dean and Associate Deans to meet with the UTEC staff and discuss the action plan based on the self-study and reviewers' report. Based on the reviewers' suggestions, the Office of the Provost could assist the program by: formalizing agreements between CAS and SOE related to UTEC programming and organization, assisting in growing partnerships with LEAs for student fieldwork placements as well as other institutions to grow transfer pathways and recruitment into the undergraduate teacher education program options.

7. What general comments or issues, if any, are crucial to understanding the reviewers report?

No additional information is necessary to understand the report.