Annual Assessment Report

Academic Year: 2016-17
Department: Education
Program(s): Adult and Higher Education, Masters of Education (M.Ed.)

1. What Was Done

Master’s comprehensive examinations were administered to five master’s students successfully defended their comprehensive exams and graduated during the AY16-17. We currently have 14 active master’s students.

2. What Data Were Collected

All five master’s students passed their comprehensive examinations (100% pass rate). Of these five students, one student has moved forward to pursue a PhD in education.

3. What Was Learned

Master’s committee chairs meet with master’s students prior to taking their comprehensive examinations to discuss the format and expectations for the comprehensive examinations. As a result of faculty transparency regarding comprehensive examination expectations, students pass the comprehensive examinations solely based on their mastery of the core program knowledge.

Increasingly, we have more Master’s students who finish and want to transition into the doctoral program. As a result, the AHE faculty are working on how to differentiate the Master’s comprehensive exams from the doctoral comprehensive exams, especially in the foundations area of higher education.

Faculty observation and student anecdotal evidence have pointed to a potential concern that spring-admitted master’s students do not cohere into the program as well as fall-admitted master’s students.

Anecdotally, students are interested in graduate assistantships. These assistantships provide them with authentic learning in bridging theory with practice and financial support for their education.

4. How We Responded

Program faculty were pleased to see the results of the master’s comprehensive examination process and plan to continue meeting with students at the point when they are ready to schedule their comprehensive examinations.

The program faculty are in the process of revising the comprehensive exam process to provide those students with a strong higher education background with a unique and authentic exam experience when they move into the doctorate. The faculty are in the early stages of this potential revision and will seek graduate student input in the exam process.

To alleviate concerns about cohort cohesion and to facilitate the hiring of graduate students into a growing number of program graduate teaching assistantships, the program has moved to an annual admissions cycle in order to start all new graduate students together in the same semester rather than allowing for admission in both fall and spring. Additionally, program faculty included a message in admissions letters to all graduate students to reach out to their assigned advisor in order to enroll in prescribed coursework for the first semester.

The current deadline for enrollment into the Med program is April 1. To address growing
interest in graduate assistantships, the AHE program has initiated an early preferred deadline (Feb. 1) for those students who want to be considered for a graduate assistantship on campus.