

Early Childhood Education & Child and Youth Care Program Review

Faculty of Professional Studies

Dean's Summary

Submitted by:

Dr. Rosetta Khalideen, Dean of the Faculty of Professional Studies

Accepted by:

Senate in November 2011

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee in September 2011

Program and Unit Review: Early Childhood Education/Child and Youth Care (ECE/CYC) Department

University of the Fraser Valley

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Dr. Rosetta Khalideen, Dean, Faculty of Professional Studies

The Program and Unit Review focused on the following areas:

1. Assessment of the quality of the academic programs within the department
2. Measurement of the programs' quality in relation to the standards of the University
3. Measurement of the programs' quality in relation to the standards of the ECE/CYC professional community
4. Measurement of the programs' quality in relation to the standards of the community
5. Assessment of the effectiveness of the department's organizational structure
6. Assessment of the department's ability to meet the needs of its students
7. Assessment of the department's strategic directions and their fit with the University's strategic plan and educational plan

In accordance with UFV Policy 210.15 (Academic and Program Unit Reviews), I provided the ECE/CYC department with a scope letter as attached. The department delivered its finalized self-study to me in January, 2011. On May 17th and 18th, 2011, an external review committee made its site visit to UFV.

The reviewers met with faculty, staff, administrators, and students. The review committee was provided with the ECE/CYC department's self-study report, including the curriculum vitae of faculty and staff; the University's strategic plan; and reports from UFV's Institutional Research department. The review committee submitted its report at the end of May 2011. On June 24, 2011, the ECE/CYC department provided me with its response to the review committee's report.

The external review committee's findings about the program were very positive. The committee states in its report that "Faculty have dedicated themselves to [the department's] programs and have served the community and their students very well. They have built a strong connection between the community and the university. They have collaborated with the Sto:lo Nation in the delivery of programs in the community. The ECE and CYC faculty are very experienced both as 'academics' and as practitioners – they have, to use the ECE expression, 'worked on the floor'".

The following are my comments on the external review committee's recommendations, the department's response to the recommendations, and the possibilities for implementations of the recommendations. It should be noted that the implementation of some of the recommendations will be dependent on the availability of funding.

Recommendation 1: The CYC program will investigate the possibility of offering 1st year Child and Youth Care courses.

The department has indicated that this process is already underway at the CYC Curriculum Committee.

Recommendation 2: CYC will explore the potential for a CYC certificate program with the Sto:lo Nation, similar to the ECE Family Care certificate.

The ECE Family Care certificate was initiated on the request of the Sto:lo Nation, based on their perceptions of the educational and developmental needs of their communities. The ability to implement this recommendation will depend on whether the Sto:lo Nation feels that this would

appropriate programming to meet their needs. The CYC department has indicated that they will approach the Sto:lo Nation to suggest that they consider offering CYC programming to their communities.

Recommendation 3: The ECE/CYC department explore the development of an intercultural course either within the department or in collaboration with other faculty across the university.

The department has indicated that it fully supports this recommendation and will investigate how a course of this sort could be developed and approved.

Recommendation 4: The ECE program will introduce special needs content in first semester courses as an essential part of curriculum.

The department curriculum is to some degree constrained by the current ECE Registry Training Profile, which the department adheres to for licensing purposes, which does not include a separate course in special needs at the certificate level. The department has indicated that it will explore ways in which special needs content can be incorporated into existing course structures.

Recommendation 5: The ECE program will introduce content on mental health to prepare students before their first practicum to understand the impact of parental mental health on the stress levels of children.

The department has indicated that it will examine ways in which this content can be introduced to students in courses that would be completed prior to their first practicum experience. The department notes that the Ministry of Child and Family Development, which administers the ECE Registry Training Profile, is expected to soon revise this document to include content on both this and the subject referenced in Recommendation 4.

Recommendation 6: The ECE/CYC department will expand the pool of sessional instructors.

The department has been proactive in this regard by participating in UFV's regular advertising for sessional instructors and by adding several new sessional instructors over the past two years.

Recommendation 7: The ECE and CYC programs have designated rooms designed to meet instructional needs.

While the department strongly supports this recommendation, the ability to implement this recommendation is restricted by the space shortage at the Abbotsford campus where the programs are based. The department also has limited control over which classrooms it is assigned in which to deliver its courses.

Recommendation 8: UFV will develop a counselling/group work classroom with cameras and one-way glass viewing area to be shared by CYC, Social Work and potentially other programs.

The department has indicated that such a collaboration would be of great value to its programs and its students. However, as noted in the response to Recommendation 7, there are space constraints on the Abbotsford campus that would limit the opportunity for this facility to be constructed; there would also likely be financial considerations in adding the proposed features to a classroom space. As dean I will support the program in its advocacy of this facility's inclusion in future facilities and budgetary planning.

Recommendation 9: ECE and CYC programs will have Smart (electronic) Classrooms.

The implementation of this recommendation will depend on the rate at which UFV is able to provide more smart classrooms, and the demand for such classrooms from other UFV programs and departments.

Recommendation 10: The ECE/CYC department develop a research/scholarly activity agenda.

The department indicates that increased scholarly activity and research will be a priority, and that this issue will be discussed at the 2011 departmental retreat. The inclusion of a requirement for individual faculty work plans in the new Collective Agreement will provide me with an opportunity to review faculty activities around scholarly activity and research, and to support faculty in their planned activities whenever possible.

Recommendation 11: The number and type of practicum site visits be standardized to a minimum of two visits and that one of the visits be the final feedback session.

The department indicates that its current practice is to conduct two visits for all practicum placements, and that the only exceptions to this practice are made when a strong student needs less supervision or when it is apparent that a student needs more intense supervision. The department will attempt to standardize the frequency and format of all practicum visits in order to ensure that students receive appropriate levels of feedback and guidance.

Recommendation 12: The ECE faculty will review their selection process in consultation with ECE practicum supervisors to determine if additional suitability factors need to be considered.

The department indicates that there are several interests that must be balanced in choosing practicum supervisors, including:

- The suitability of the supervisor
- The readiness of students to be assigned to a particular setting
- The protection of a vulnerable population of children and youth
- Fairness and equity in the selection process itself

The department has already been participating in discussions around these issues involving educators, licensing authorities, accreditation bodies, and employers. It will be examining its selection process as a result of this recommendation.

Recommendation 13: The CYC faculty will consider offering additional summer courses to meet student demand.

The department is somewhat restricted in its ability to address this recommendation, since several of their programs are structured around a cohort basis. If courses in these programs are offered in the summer, students may be compelled to take the courses then, regardless of whether this scheduling meets their needs. However, the department has indicated that the CYC curriculum committee will consider the feasibility of summer programming.

Recommendation 14: Faculty overloads should be reduced so that the ECE/CYC department will be able to build a larger sessional pool and schedule the sessional work.

The allocation of overloads, and faculty's right to teach overloads as available, are regulated by the Collective Agreement. The department notes that its full-time B faculty have been voluntarily reducing the number of overloads they teach, which has created more opportunities for sessional employment.

Recommendation 15: The review committee further recommends that, where possible, sessional work be regularized.

The regularization of sessional work is regulated by the Collective Agreement. At present, there is no process for regularization that is within the control of the department.

The review committee's report makes two additional suggestions within its report. First, it suggests that students taking the Family Care Certificate program, offered through UFV's Continuing Education program, be made aware that while Continuing Education credits are accepted in this UFV program, these credits may not be transferable to all other post-secondary institutions. I have asked the ECE/CYC department to work with Continuing Education in ensuring that students are informed of this. Second, it is suggested that a certificate similar to the Family Care Certificate but focusing on youth might be of interest in the community. I have asked the ECE/CYC department to consider whether such a certificate might be feasible.

Conclusion:

I congratulate the ECE/CYC department for its commitment to and enthusiastic participation in this process, and I extend my thanks to the external review committee for their work and their insights. The committee concludes that "the ECE/CYC department is successful, innovative and respected in the community, [and that] the recommendations we have offered in this report are intended as potential ways to make two strong programs even stronger". The ECE/CYC department is to be commended for receiving these favourable comments, and I look forward to supporting the ECE/CYC department as it moves forward in the next five years.