

IT WAS A REMARKABLE YEAR

Progress, Transitions and Challenges

*A Report to the Faculty
of the
Graduate School of Education
and Professional Development*

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Recently, on a long Sunday flight from Seattle to Charleston, I found myself reflecting on the upcoming academic year. I quickly realized that we here in the GSEPD do not always formally acknowledge the end of one year and the beginning of the next. The nature of our mission and the student population we serve cause these transition points to blur and become almost non-existent. For those of us who have spent substantial portions of our careers here, it is just business as usual.

In retrospect, I think we have missed opportunities to reflect on our achievements. Faced with all of the tasks and issues on our agenda for the coming year, I found myself reflecting on the accomplishments of the past year. IT WAS TRULY A REMARKABLE YEAR - A year of progress, challenges and transitions.

County, Regional and Statewide Delivery of Graduate Programs

Fundamental to our very existence and our primary strategic initiative is the delivery of graduate programs across the state. In 2001-02, in addition to our ongoing programs in Huntington, South Charleston and Beckley, we provided access to at least one complete master s degree program in more than 35 counties across West Virginia. Students from all 55 counties in the state were enrolled in GSEPD courses during the past year. _____

Student Enrollment. During the summer, fall and spring semesters of 2001-02, GSEPD faculty provided a total of 801 course sections, an increase of 53 course sections over the previous year. Likewise, we generated 27,415 student credit hours in the past year, an increase of 1,886 student credit hours over the previous year. Similarly, our student enrollment (duplicated count) of 9,380 reflected an increase of 690 enrollments over the previous year.

County and Regional Programs. Our continuing commitment to cohort programs on a county and regional basis was very evident during the past year. In addition to maintaining more than 15 programs that were underway, we initiated some 15 new cohort programs in Leadership Studies, Elementary Education, Counseling, Middle Childhood Education, Special Education, Reading and Spanish.

Statewide Initiatives. Professional development programs in Middle Childhood Education, School Attendance and Social Services, Library/Media Specialist and Teaching English as a Second Language have been developed as Internet-based programs and are now available statewide. We made progress with our efforts to address low- incidence populations statewide as we completed our first cycle of students in the Teaching Visually Impaired Program and started a second cohort in January.

In a related initiative, we signed an agreement with the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) to develop a similar statewide program to train teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing. The target date for initiating this program is Fall 2003. In cooperation with the WVDE, we also provided professional development courses statewide for teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and, working with the eight RESAs, provided graduate courses as a part of the WVDE Alternative Assessment Training.

In November, we received the assessment results for the first cohort completing our National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) candidate support program. Thirteen of the 16 candidates completing the program achieved NBPTS certification. This 81 percent success rate is substantially better than the national success rate of about 50 percent.

Collaborative Programs with Other Institutions. In response to the collaborative agreement provisions of SB 647, the GSEPD has developed several cooperative programs

with undergraduate institutions. Master of Arts Program (MAT) collaborative agreements have been developed with Fairmont State College and Shepherd College. Forty-eight students are enrolled in these programs, scheduled to be completed in Fall 2003.

With Glenville State College, we initiated a third collaborative program, a content-focused master s degree program for classroom teachers in 11 counties in central West Virginia. This program has 30 participants and will be completed in Fall 2003.

Other Outreach Initiatives. GSEPD faculty are also involved in a number of other outreach initiatives. In Spring 2001, Marshall received funding to participate in Project ACCLAIM. Marshall will receive \$1,000,000 of a five-year \$5,000,000 National Science Foundation program designed to improve math education in the Appalachian region. A significant portion of this initiative is focused on regional capacity building through the provision of doctoral level training in math education. I anticipate that the GSEPD will become a much more active participant in this program in the next two years. Cooperating institutions include the University of Tennessee - Knoxville, Ohio University, the University of Louisville, and the University of Kentucky.

In Fall 2001, GSEPD faculty received funding for eight Eisenhower Professional Development Program grants. The total funding for these grants was in excess of \$300,000 and was used to provide support for professional development opportunities in math, science, technology and reading for more than 250 teachers in 12 county school systems. We have received funding for more than 20 of these grants in the past five years.

Since Spring 2001, we have developed and delivered 12 online graduate courses designed to meet the professional development needs of West Virginia s school

personnel. These courses have been designed to respond to WVDE and other state initiatives, such as Character Education, Multicultural Education, Dealing with School Violence, Special Education for the Classroom Teacher, Using Technology in the Classroom, and K-12 Reading Instruction. More than 600 students from all 55 counties in West Virginia have enrolled in these courses.

The role of the Regional Center for Distance Education and Professional Development has continued to evolve and expand during the past year. The Center has been responsible for a significant increase in the marketing and promotion of GSEPD activities and has coordinated the development and implementation of our online professional development courses. Effective July 1, 2002, the Center also assumed overall responsibility for our third-party contract efforts.

We made significant progress relative to our outreach activities through the Community Services Clinic located in Dunbar. Following a year in which we had to relocate the Clinic from its previous head-quarters, we have been able to focus our efforts on developing the appropriate support systems needed for clinic operation. During the next year, we will conduct a careful review of the Clinic and make some strategic decisions regarding its future role as a part of our instructional and outreach efforts.

Development of Doctoral Programs

Some of the most significant activities in the past year have been related to the role of the GSEPD in doctoral education. In March 2002, Marshall University received approval from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association to offer independently the Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership. This action was the result of some 20 months of preparation and allowed us to begin the transition from a 20-year-old cooperative arrangement to an

independent program. This process was completed July 1, 2002, with 41 students transitioning from the Cooperative Program to the Marshall University program. In addition, the first class of six Marshall students was accepted into the program in late July. The net effect is that we will begin Fall 2002 with 47 students in the Marshall University Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership.

In a related initiative, the WVU-MU Cooperative Doctoral Program in Education (Ed.D.) in Curriculum and Instruction was initiated in South Charleston. The first course was offered in Spring 2001, and some 25 students have been admitted to the program.

Prevention Resource Center

Because the majority of its activities occur out of the sight of most GSEPD faculty, I often worry that we do not completely understand and fully appreciate the work and accomplishments of the Prevention Resource Center (PRC). Located at the Edison Elementary School in South Charleston, the PRC staff has grown to some 40 full-time and 12 part-time people. During the past fiscal year, the PRC submitted 20 proposals seeking more than \$4,500,000 in external funding. To date, these proposals have resulted in more than \$2,700,000 in grant and contract funds. The PRC has been responsible for securing more than \$7,000,000 in external grant and contract funding since 1997-98. During the past year, we increased the involvement of GSEPD faculty, and other MU faculty, in activities of the PRC.

Technology-Based Delivery

Consistent with our School mission, we remain committed to innovative approaches in addressing educational and

community needs and to technology's major role in these approaches. This commitment was most evident during the past year.

We expanded our use of WebCT as a mechanism to support and facilitate our course and program delivery. The net effect is that we improved student access to our courses and programs. As noted earlier, we had student enrollment from every county in West Virginia during the past year—a statement we could not have made prior to the adoption of WebCT as an instructional delivery platform.

In addition to the impact on delivery, the GSEPD has become, collectively, a very potent source of knowledge and expertise related to development and delivery of online instruction. Faculty are routinely invited to submit manuscripts, present conference papers and conduct workshops based on what we do and have learned. GSEPD faculty members have provided faculty development/technical assistance for online instruction to most other institutions in West Virginia and several out-of-state institutions. Again this year, our annual WebCT Conference was well attended and has allowed us an opportunity to share our expertise across the state. Most knowledgeable folks in West Virginia would, I think, quickly acknowledge that GSEPD faculty are the state leaders in the development and delivery of online instruction.

I am often amazed at what we have been able to accomplish in a relatively short period of time. When asked about this at conferences and meetings, I respond that we are mission driven and that we are not afraid to take risks and have truly internalized Michael Fullan's concept of Ready-Fire-Aim. It is this approach, reflected in a Can Do attitude coupled with a real commitment to work in a collegial manner, that has resulted in the transition to a more technology-based delivery system.

We were again able to devote more than \$85,000 in the past year to upgrading computers, software and other equipment

necessary to support our efforts. Fortunately, we are able to generate funds for this support through our grants/contacts program. Although we do receive some institutional support for such expenditures, it provides only a small percentage of funds needed to maintain our desired level of technology.

Faculty Development

During the past year, we acknowledged and supported the strategic importance of providing adequate opportunities for faculty to grow and develop. Again, because of our commitment to generating external funds, we were able to support more than 60 faculty development activities for GSEPD faculty this past year, amounting to more than \$75,000. Most of these activities involved participation in a conference or workshop, and more than 80 percent included a paper presentation by GSEPD faculty. Not surprisingly, many of these papers and presentations were related to technology.

Faculty development activities took place here in West Virginia and in several other states and in foreign countries. International activities included faculty presentations in Australia, British Columbia, Scotland and China.

Faculty Accomplishments/Recognitions

GSEPD faculty were very active during the past year. Although it is impossible to acknowledge all of these accomplishments in this document, a few were particularly noteworthy. Teresa Eagle, Beverly Farrow, Rudy Pauley and Barbara O Byrne were promoted to Associate Professor. Tom Caron was promoted to Professor and Michael Cunningham was awarded tenure. Powell Toth received a MU Distinguished Service Award and Teresa Eagle received one of the Graduate Advisor awards. Teresa was also recognized as the

Best Professor in the Charleston area by the Charleston Newspapers. Paul Leary was awarded a Fulbright grant for study in South Africa in Spring 2003, and Rudy Pauley received a national award for Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Technology.

Merger Implementation

This past year, more steps were taken in implementing selected aspects of the 1997 merger. At the institutional level, we are, I think, approaching completion of this process. For example, the role of the Graduate Council within the MU Faculty Governance structure appears to have been resolved. Merging of budgets for next fiscal year also reflects a major step forward.

We do, however, have some remaining challenges within the College of Education and Human Services. Following a year in which several proposals were considered and agreements were adopted, we must all now work to implement these agreements for graduate programs shared by both campuses.

Accreditation/External Review

Our focus on external review and accreditation intensified during the past year. Our preparation for the Fall 2003 NCATE visit is at the forefront of this strategic initiative. We developed and submitted our program folios for review by the national specialty associations. Folios for Leadership Studies, Reading, Mental Impairment, Behavioral Disorders and Learning Disabilities have been reviewed and received full approval. Folios for School Psychology and Visual Impairment are currently in the rejoinder cycle. We are awaiting the results of the review of the Math Through Algebra I program.

Our preparation for NCATE at the Unit level has been, at best, sporadic. A major focus over the next year will be on this 2003 visit.

We will be jump-starting this effort as we develop and put in place a unit and program level candidate performance-based assessment system. We are probably at least 18 months behind in our preparation and have much work to do in a short period of time. I am confident that GSEPD faculty can accomplish what needs to be done.

In addition to the NCATE review, we are also preparing for a fall 2003 focused visit from the North Central Association, a follow-up visit in relation to the fall 2001 site visit to review the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. We have made major strides for this visit, but several issues are institutional in nature and outside of the scope of the GSEPD or COEHS to resolve. Plans are being developed to address these issues during the 2002-2003 academic year.

In June 2001, all degree programs received full approval from the Higher Education Policy Commission as a result of the five-year legislatively mandated program review. Subsequently, the Early Childhood Education Program was selected for a special program review because of low graduate productivity. This process resulted in a recommendation to continue the program.

External Funding/Grants

A sixth strategic direction guiding our efforts in recent years has been a focus on increasing our participation in the external grant and contract process. We were quite successful in this effort during the past year. Our productivity in terms of third-party contracts increased significantly over the prior year. These contracts generated more than \$1,200,000 and accounted for 278 course sections and 4,338 student enrollments. Over the past five years, the GSEPD has been responsible for almost \$5,000,000 in third-party course contracts, providing support for 1,245 course sections and 18,315 student enrollments. This five-

year process has produced 347 contracts with sponsoring agencies and organizations.

Our total grant and contract productivity also increased significantly. Overall, GSEPD faculty generated more than \$4,500,000 in external funding during the past year. These funds came from a wide range of state and federal agencies and organizations. As noted earlier, more than \$2,700,000 of these funds were generated by the efforts of the Prevention Resource Center. The remainder came from such agencies as the West Virginia Department of Education, the Higher Education Policy Commission, RESAs, county school systems, and federal sources.

Two additional grants not included in these totals will be formally announced in late August. The first is a projected \$200,000 agreement with the NBPTS for recruitment and support of candidates seeking NBPTS certification. The second is a three-year, \$2.1 million agreement between IBM, the WVDE and Marshall University. This project is focused on using the IBM Learning Village Program as a part of initial teacher preparation programs and professional development efforts for inservice teachers.

Visibility/Relationships

Our seventh strategic initiative has focused on expanding our relationships and increasing the external visibility of the GSEPD and its activities. Although most of our day-to-day activities generally involve some sort of collaboration with another agency or organization, we have forged new relationships and are renewing/nurturing existing ones.

Much of our progress is informal in nature; however, I will note four examples of recent progress. Consolidating third-party contract efforts in the Regional Center for Distance Education and Professional Development has already resulted in new and improved relationships with school systems and RESAs. Second, our increased interaction

with state school superintendents is a step in the right direction. We need to be involved with this important group. Third, our collaborative relationships with several undergraduate institutions have opened a new era for graduate education within West Virginia. These relationships will be invaluable as more institutions move to provide graduate education. Finally, the willingness of the WVDE to partner/ collaborate with higher education institutions has increased dramatically over the past two years. I truly believe these partnerships are in the best interest of those involved and will benefit West Virginia.

Our effort to increase the marketing and public relations efforts related to the GSEPD is coordinated through the Regional Center for Distance Education and Professional Development. In 2001-02 we invested more than \$35,000 in newspaper advertising, magazine advertising, information sessions and brochure development and distribution.

Challenges and Transitions

The past year was truly a remarkable year. I continue to be amazed that we were able to accomplish so much. At the same time, I recognize that the next few years, and particularly next year, will bring continuing transitions and a number of challenges.

In terms of challenges, first and foremost is the financial shortfall forecast for the state. Current projections are for as much as \$200 million in the next fiscal year. Reductions of this magnitude could potentially result in budget reductions of 10 percent. Such a situation would require us to examine carefully what we are doing. There is a limit to the concept of "doing more with less." We will need to monitor continuously and evaluate potential responses to this challenge as the year progresses.

A second challenge is to ensure that we maintain our commitment, both philosophically and practically, to technology-based programs and course delivery. Our use of technology-based delivery strategies has made a huge difference—we truly are providing students increased access in places and in ways we probably never imagined five years ago. We must stay on the cutting edge, and search for new sources of support for equipment, software, and funds for faculty development.

A critical transition relates to faculty. In the past four years, we have added 14 new faculty members to the ranks in the GSEPD, more than a third of the total. We need to be particularly diligent about providing the appropriate levels of support and mentoring as we help the individuals grow in their understanding of and commitment to the School mission.

The Fall 2003 NCATE and NCA visits pose special challenges for us in the coming year. NCATE, with new standards, the unit organizational structure, and the focus on the development of a performance-based assessment system, is a daunting task. Concurrent preparation for the NCA visit is part of a larger developmental process that also has major institutional components.

Our move into doctoral education creates both transitions and challenges. In addition to the administrative and logistical issues associated with this transition, we must also work to create an organizational culture that is supportive of doctoral education. Issues quickly emerge as we consider how to achieve an appropriate mix of research, teaching and service reflective of a doctoral program in an organization that has historically focused primarily on teaching and service. Ensuring the availability of resources to support this transition becomes a major task.

With all these challenges, I am confident that we will confront them, develop reasonable solutions, and forge ahead. This has been our approach for more than 30 years.

Concluding Comments

In assembling information for this report, I happened to review what we have identified as thematic strands in our strategic plan. In reality, these 10 concepts are more accurately characterized as core values or commitments which undergird our mission and fuel what we do. In essence, they help describe who we are as an organization and faculty. These commitments/core values include:

- " being student focused
- " mission driven
- " inclusive
- " interactive
- " internally and externally collaborative
- " focused statewide and regionally
- " community oriented
- " accepting of diverse faculty roles
- " organizationally flexible; and
- " technologically oriented.

These commitments/core values have served us well in the past. I believe they will continue to do so in the year(s) ahead.

In closing, I do not think anyone would question that the past year was truly A REMARKABLE YEAR. We had major accomplishments, faced several challenges and dealt with a number of transitions. Despite the upcoming challenges, I fully anticipate that the coming year will be equally as REMARKABLE.