Tentative name: Educational Studies or Teaching and Learning

Norma Gonzalez, Professor and Head, Department of Language, Reading and Culture
Bruce Johnson, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Teaching and Teacher Education
LRC and TTE faculty and staff

1. Department of Teaching and Teacher Education
   Academic programs:
   Ph.D. in Teaching and Teacher Education
   M.A. in Teaching and Teacher Education
   M.Ed. in Teaching and Teacher Education (Teach Arizona) (with secondary teacher certification)
   B.A. in Elementary Education (with optional teacher endorsement in bilingual education)
   B.A. in Early Childhood Education (with teacher certification)
   B.A. in Secondary Education (with teacher certification)
   B.A. in Physical Education (with teacher certification)

2. Department of Language, Reading and Culture
   Academic programs:
   Ph.D. in Language, Reading and Culture
   Ed.D. in Language, Reading and Culture
   Ed.S. in Language, Reading and Culture
   M.A. in Language, Reading and Culture
   M.A. in Bilingual/Multicultural Education
   M.Ed. in Bilingual/Bicultural Education
Three-Page Justification

- Explanation of how the reorganization or consolidation will strengthen the unit’s teaching, service, and research, or creative activities, and thereby advance the University in accordance with the UA Strategic Plan, 2009-2013

Universities of the stature of the University of Arizona are in competition for resources, students, reputation, and opportunities at a national and international level and must redefine themselves in national and international terms, as well as in terms of the state and the land-grant mission. Beyond the context of higher education, the economy and population of Arizona are continuously growing in size and diversity at a rate that is among the fastest in the nation.

These combined contexts create conditions that would be addressed by a proposed merger of the Department of Teacher and Teacher Education (TTE) and Department of Language, Reading and Culture (LRC) in the College of Education. Both Departments are integral to the mission of teacher preparation in the State of Arizona and the consolidation would be beneficial to the land-grant mission of the University to prepare educators for the state. An important component of this merger would involve the maintenance of program integrity and “brand” identifiability in terms of the current stature and reputations of the Departments.

The UA Strategic Plan calls for increasing undergraduate and graduate enrollments that reflect the growth and diversity of the state, including increased student diversity and support for traditionally underrepresented students, as well as making substantial progress towards becoming a federally recognized Hispanic-Serving Institution. LRC was awarded the Likins Inclusivity Award this year, in part for the diversity of its faculty, students, and staff. In conjunction with TTE, whose students are in large part first-generation college students or from underrepresented populations, the new unit would address serious issues of diversity and educational equity.

Further, the UA Strategic Plan highlights several key missions and strengths of both LRC and TTE. Strategic Direction I calls for preparing more teachers (especially in STEM fields), targeting underserved areas first. Both Departments have a strong record of working with teachers, administrators, parents, and students in high-need schools, including schools of poverty, those with large numbers of English-language learners, and schools with difficulty attracting and retaining STEM teachers. Our partnership efforts include TTE’s Cooper Center for Environmental Learning and the Regional Science Resource Center with Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) and LRC’s Literacy Lab, Math Cats, and Word Cats tutoring programs. Our new unit will enhance these efforts by bringing together faculty with expertise in STEM education, language and literacy, STEM and educational equity, and complex research methodologies for studying these phenomena. In addition, the new unit combines nationally recognized expertise in educational access and community scholarship that is grounded in multiple pathways to educational pipelines. We also have several new initiatives aimed to increase the number of teachers we certify, including expanding recruitment in high schools and community colleges, marketing non-traditional programs to those already in the workforce, and changing our secondary teacher preparation programs to allow students to get a degree in their content area and teaching certification in addition to that rather than majoring in Education.

The new unit would also serve Strategic Direction III (Provide World-Class Research that Improves the Human Condition in Arizona and Beyond). LRC and TTE scholars have national visibility in community scholarship and civically engaged scholarship. According to their 2007 APR report, LRC is poised to achieve prominence at the state, national, and even international level in at least four areas: (1) indigenous language and education, (2) bilingual/biliteracy early childhood education, (3) reading/language arts for...
diverse populations, and (4) the study and use of international children’s literature. All of these areas would be enhanced by consolidation with Teaching and Teacher Education.

Three areas identified in this Strategic Direction as the focus of research and outreach activities that are critical to our state’s future are particularly well aligned with the proposed new unit: (1) Climate, Environmental, Water, and Energy Sustainability; (2) Southwest, Native American, Borderlands, and Latin American Studies; and (6) Creative Arts, Languages, and Language Acquisition.

Finally, both LRC and TTE meet the goals of Strategic Direction IV (Partner with and Serve the People of Arizona). As noted briefly above, we have many partnerships in our community, many more than can be described in this paper. The teaching and research in both Departments are in a real sense defined by our connections to serving the critical needs of our state and local communities.

- Explanation of how the reorganization will raise the unit’s and the University’s ranking or reputation

The merging and consolidation of two strong units will create additional opportunities for collaboration along the educational spectrum. TTE and LRC are currently collaborating on an Early Childhood Certificate that spans both Departments. Given the emphasis of the State of Arizona as well as the nation on early childhood programs and policies, the new unit will be a player in advancing policy, particularly with the First Things First initiative. Early Childhood Education as an area of critical importance to the state and to the achievement of equity and excellence in K-12 education. There are a limited number of excellent higher education programs in early childhood education and a limited number of nationally prominent faculty in this area. Although Arizona State University has established a niche in early childhood education, the need state-wide and nationally is great, and there is opportunity for the University of Arizona to establish national prominence in early childhood education with a focus on biliteracy/bilingualism. LRC has already established a nascent reputation of excellence in the area of early childhood education, focusing on children developing in bilingual/biliterate contexts and who are English language learners. Faculty members conduct research in related areas, including early literacy development, English language learners, and relationships among families, schools, and communities related to learning opportunities. The consolidation between TTE and LRC would propel the unit further into national prominence. More importantly, these faculty members will be able to provide the state and the nation with the research needed to develop educational programs that will help ELL students and bilingual/biliterate students thrive through classroom instruction. Additional strengthening of the early childhood faculty in the Teaching and Teacher Education Department would also contribute to national prominence.

With the changing demographics of school districts throughout the nation, the academic achievement of ELLs will continue to be a major component of educational policy at all levels. TTE and LRC faculty are visible players nationally in formulating language policy, and a consolidation will foster deeper engagement with these issues. Currently TTE and LRC share faculty whose interests overlap in terms of reading and literacy in elementary, secondary, and adult levels. The recently approved State Reading Certificate will be more readily accessible to inservice teachers within a consolidated unit.

International children’s literature is an integral component of how LRC/TTE would position itself internationally with a goal of promoting educational equity and excellence. In brief, given the increased diversity of the State of Arizona and the nation (as well as the increased need for international understanding), international children’s literature provides teachers with tools to promote reading achievement, enhance motivation for learning, and promote intercultural understanding. With the additional resources of the proposed merger, the international children’s literature effort has promise of achieving national prominence.
In addition to these strengths, LRC and TTE have collaborated on a number of STEM grants and programs which have strong potential for future directions. The TTE Science Scholars program admits Ph.D. students with a strong interest in teaching science to linguistically and culturally diverse populations. These students are enrolled in LRC as their minor Department, but a merger would facilitate their coursework. Plans are already underway to expand this program to include mathematics education Ph.D. students. In addition, both LRC and TTE have been integral to CEMELA, the Center for the Mathematics Education of Latino Students. Both units have doctoral students who are CEMELA Fellows. A consolidated unit with strengths in both STEM and multicultural and social equity issues would be well positioned for enhanced grant funding and a national reputation.

LRC was awarded the Likins Inclusivity Award this year and is firmly committed to issues of diversity. This mission is equally shared with TTE. A consolidated unit would foreground rather than marginalize these issues within teacher and administrator education at the University of Arizona. LRC is a broadly interdisciplinary unit with anthropologists, developmental psychologists, psychologists, and literacy researchers. Likewise, TTE incorporates academics from a broad range of disciplines. This broad-based disciplinary foundation would enable preservice and inservice teachers to ground themselves in social theory as well as practice, a necessary component for highly qualified teachers.

In addition, LRC has sponsored AILDI, the American Indian Language Development Institute, for over 20 years. This institute has brought together scholars from all over the world to engage with issues of language revitalization and language endangerment. The presence of AILDI has fostered the growth of indigenous graduate students and scholars within the College of Education. Currently LRC has one of the highest numbers of indigenous students in its graduate programs on campus. This strength would be leveraged by a consolidation because the U.S. Department of Education funds teacher education programs for Native students. This is also an area of high interest for TTE faculty who are engaged in Environmental Education.

LRC is primarily a graduate Department with strengths in anthropology and education, language and discourse, sociocultural theory, multicultural theory, indigenous education, literacy, biliteracy and multimodal literacies, reading and adolescent literacy, language policy and planning, linguistics in education, language revitalization, children’s literature, and language and culture in education. TTE has graduate program strengths in math and science education, environmental learning, multicultural/bilingual education, equity and social justice, teacher education, literacy, early childhood education, and curriculum. Both of these strong graduate programs would enhance and be enhanced by the proposed new unit.

- Description of the processes of consultation with Deans, Heads, faculty, staff, appointed personnel, and students and the extent to which this proposal has the support of those affected (with the understanding that it may not have been possible to conduct full consultation with all parties at this point in the process).

In both Departments, multiple meetings were held with Department faculty, staff, and students. Some of these meetings were held with each of these groups within Departments, and other meetings were with all of the groups within a Department together. The two Department Heads also meet with each other and with the Dean and Heads of other Departments in the College of Education. These ideas were also presented to the Professional Preparation Board, an advisory group made up of local school district administrators and representatives of teacher preparation programs in other colleges at the UA. There is broad approval for the LRC/TTE merger. That said, faculty and staff in both Departments note that we have already been working on these initiatives over the past few years and have made substantial progress. Many feel that a merger of the two Departments is not necessary for this progress to continue but that if a merger is required, the LRC/TTE merger is absolutely the right one.
The new unit would have one Department Head instead of two, so there would be some savings in Department Head costs. We do not anticipate that there will be any less need for support staff. Our degree and professional preparation programs will remain intact, and we aim to increase our student numbers, per the UA Strategic Plan. Although there may be some reduction in staff support in consolidation of offices, etc., there will be a corresponding increase in the need for staff support for expanded initiatives in grant-funded research projects and in outreach efforts. In the long term, we anticipate that the increased need for staff in research and outreach can be funded through those efforts rather than by state money, but that will take more than one year to get in place.

We also will see increased income from outreach initiatives. TTE in particular has had great success in generating substantial revenue through outreach, and LRC has made significant efforts in that regard. Bringing the two units together will allow for even greater efforts in this area.

Grant proposal writing in the Departments has also increased a great deal over the last few years. Some of the recent proposals have been joint efforts between LRC and TTE faculty. We are likely to see many more joint proposals in the new unit. In addition, sharing of resources for such things as identification of funding opportunities and budget preparation will be enhanced.

Summary of Budget Savings

1. Enhanced revenue from Research and Outreach Collaborations $300,000
2. Cost Savings from Curriculum Consolidation (.20 FTE of five faculty @ $70,000 (plus ERE)) $ 90,000
3. Cost Savings from elimination of one Department Head $ 15,000 to $20,000
4. Joint Intellectual Activities Cost Savings (e.g., shared colloquies, etc.) $ 10,000