

Cover Page

Name of the proposed unit: Educational Policy Studies and Practice

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List of the current units that will be reorganized or consolidated:

1. Center for the Study of Higher Education
2. Educational Leadership Program

List of the existing academic undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, and if appropriate at this time, a list of the proposed reorganized, eliminated, or newly formed academic programs:

1. Center for the Study of Higher Education
 - Ph.D. in Higher Education
 - M.A. in Higher Education
2. Educational Leadership Program
 - Ed.D. in Educational Leadership
 - Ed.S. in Educational Leadership
 - M.Ed. in Educational Leadership (with administrative certification)

Body of the Proposal

1. Discussion of the advantages to students, employers, and the University of Arizona of the reorganization of the academic programs

Nationally, and in the state of Arizona, educational systems are increasingly characterized by a P-20 policy focus. Our proposal to combine the K-12 focused Educational Leadership program with the postsecondary-education focused Center for the Study of Higher Education to create a P-20 Policy Studies and Practice Department taps into the dominant discourse and perspective of education and policymakers today. In the merger, both the Center for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) and the Educational Leadership Program (EDL) would maintain their core functions and programs, consistent with professional career paths and state certification requirements as well as reputational identity. However, the combined unit would facilitate and encourage research, instructional, and service/outreach initiatives, particularly in the area of educational policy, in ways that are consistent with the objectives of the UA Strategic Plan, with the land-grant mission of the UA, and with enhancing the educational access and success of underserved populations in the region.

Furthermore, the particular research strengths of the respective units are well suited for a P-20 focus. For example, numerous faculty members within the CSHE have recently focused their research efforts at examining how the experiences of middle school and high school students impact their likelihood of college attendance and success. This emphasis within CSHE will be greatly enhanced by greater interactions with the EDL program. A sound understanding of the multiple pressures faced by principals and superintendents will help higher education students and faculty develop a better understanding of the potential for curricular enhancements within middle and high schools that could help promote greater educational opportunities. At the same time, this emphasis will also benefit the EDL program by highlighting the important role that principals and superintendents can play in promoting college access and success.

As we discuss below, this merger will present an opportunity to substantially improve and expand our curriculum. So, students will clearly benefit from an expanded range of course offerings. The increased usage of the other program's courses will increase the number of faculty members with whom a student interacts; this increased access will prove especially beneficial to doctoral students as they plan their dissertation work and seek to utilize faculty expertise. Finally, students will be introduced to important perspectives from other levels of the educational system. These new perspectives will be greatly valued by their future employers. CSHE students will graduate with a greater understanding of the K-12 educational system, which will allow for a better understanding of the forces that shape students access to college and their subsequent success. EDL students will finish knowing more about the challenges that students will face upon graduation from high school, which will help them design a learning environment that best prepares students for those challenges.

2. Discussion of any changes or eliminations of the existing undergraduate and graduate programs

This merger will not result in the elimination of specific programs as neither unit contains a larger number of separate programs and the merger of educational degrees would make little sense given the varying curricular and certification requirements across programs. But it will result in the alteration of the curriculum in both programs. Some areas of overlap have been identified, which will allow us to combine courses so that we can realize cost savings and/or offer new courses to improve the educational experiences of the students from both programs.

3. Explanation of how the consolidation will strengthen the unit's teaching, service, and research or creative activities

This consolidation creates a number of opportunities. It will enhance the ability of faculty in both programs to make greater contributions to the undergraduate general education and honors programs. Currently, EDL offers EDL 200, A Global Perspective on Schooling, as part of the undergraduate program and several undergraduate leadership course. The Project SOAR service-learning courses in CSHE are important contributions that the Center makes to the undergraduate program at the University. Given the scholarly expertise of our faculty, additional undergraduate courses such as sociology of education, higher education and society, equity and social justice, and educational policy (to name a few) could be developed and offered by the combined faculty which would help to meet the growing demand for courses and to generate additional funding to support the activities of the Department and the College.

Graduate education in both programs will also be strengthened, most notably in the area of policy. Multiple faculty from both units have an interest in policy, and both units currently offer classes in this area. These separate classes can be aligned so that they form a sequence and could even be combined with several other courses to create a policy minor. A strong sequence of policy courses would likely draw students from a number of other programs both from within and outside the College. This would enhance the university as a whole.

Service opportunity abounds as both programs have successfully engaged the local community. Faculty members in the EDL program have engaged local superintendents, principals, and business leaderships in joint workshops, seminars, collaborative research and other activities. Faculty and staff have provided a number of professional development opportunities through UA LINKS and other initiatives. CSHE faculty members have also been connecting with principals and superintendents in their efforts to promote college access and success through Project SOAR and other programs. Clearly, these initiatives can build upon each other in a manner that ensures even greater impact in the future.

In terms of research, the P-20 focus of the Educational Policy Studies and Practice department will create opportunities for leveraging state and national support for research and policy analysis contracts. In a broad sense, the department will focus on how organizations, institutions (both formal and informal), official policies (and informal practices), and educational professions affect outcomes across local, national, and international (multi-cultural and diverse) contexts and how organizations, institutions, policies, and professions are themselves affected by societal,

economic, and political pressures. A central and ongoing area of research will be examining educational/social policies and interventions used by public and private pre-K-20 educational organizations and professionals and how they impede and/or promote educational transitions, success, and social equity. There are increasing similarities between educational policies that shape the schools and those that shape higher education, yet the academic literature is relatively silent on this connection. Our combined unit will feature such connected policy analysis. Similarly, there are increasing numbers of partnerships between schools and universities, and again, the academic literature is relatively silent on this subject. Further, there are transition points that are relatively understudied in the schools and higher education literatures, with most work focusing on either students in school or on students in college. Our partnership will facilitate the sort of transition studies between sectors that several CSHE faculty are currently pursuing. The social and professional networks of the EDL faculty, combined with the work of these faculty on school culture and “turnaround” schools, can help inform the analysis of CSHE faculty of pathways into and through college. Each of the above areas represents a strategic research niche for our faculty in their research. Each represents a significant opportunity for enhancing the already strong grant productivity of faculty in the combined unit.

4. Explanation of how the reorganization will raise the unit’s and the university’s ranking or reputation

Both units already have very strong reputations. Over the past two decades, EDL has prepared outstanding leaders who are now superintendents, associate and assistant superintendents, district office personnel, principals, and assistant principals. This success has resulted in strong support of the unit by school superintendents. The faculty boasts of having two former superintendents (both recipients of the Superintendent of the Year Award), a former principal, a former assistant superintendent for curriculum, a former dean, and an endowed chair. EDL faculty have been active in securing outside funding from local school districts, the State of Arizona, and federal agencies to continue their work in school climate and culture and school change. EDL is home to grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the Arizona Department of Education, several local school districts, and recently has received a grant to create online certification courses. In the past year grants to the US Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control and the Helios Foundation were submitted.

The CSHE faculty is also extremely productive, as reflected in their high national ranking. The unit was ranked number fourteen last year in the *U.S. News and World Report* and has been among the top 20 programs (ranging from eighth to eighteenth) over the past two decades. The CSHE faculty is grant active, with current grants from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Education (GEAR-UP), the Helios Foundation, the Women’s Sports Foundation, the Association for Institutional Research, and the Pima Education Research Collaborative (PERC). In this academic year, our faculty have submitted additional letters of inquiry and grant proposals to the Lumina Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health.

As described above, this reorganization will provide both programs with the opportunity to improve their educational offerings, their research, their potential for revenue generation, and

their service to the local community. As a result, we would expect the reputations of both programs to grow even stronger over time.

5. Discussion of the meetings that your team held to vet this proposal with faculty, students, appointed personnel, staff, and relevant external constituents.

Both units held meetings to gather concerns and advice regarding this merger. When individual faculty members, staff members, and students requested additional discussion, individual meetings were held to further explain the consolidation and solicit feedback.

6. Summaries of comments from the groups impact by the reorganization along with a tally of the faculty votes for, against, or abstaining on the proposed transformation plan.

The primary concern expressed regarded the integrity of the programs. The Educational Leadership program has been designed to address the particular needs of its students, the demands of important external constituencies, and the particular process by which knowledge is usually created within this field of study. The same is true for the Center for the Study of Higher Education. Multiple individuals expressed concerns that the merger would remove those elements of each program that were designed with these considerations in mind.

Junior faculty raised concerns about the tenure process, as they wanted to ensure that expectations would not be altered from what had been communicated in the past. Staff members were concerned about the impact this merger would have on their positions.

Votes: All tenure and tenure-stream faculty in the Educational Leadership program and the Center for the Study of Higher Education were given the chance to vote on the proposal. Anonymous paper ballots were used for voting.

Results: Unanimous vote to merge

	Educational Leadership	Center for the Study of Higher Education
Yes	5	6
No	0	0
Abstain	0	0

Budget Page

The higher education unit presently contains seven tenure-stream faculty, one part-time adjunct assistant professor, and one administrative assistant. Of those seven tenure-stream faculty, one is currently on leave and a second is currently serving as the Associate Dean of the college. The educational leadership unit presently contains five tenure-stream faculty, one senior faculty fellow, 1 adjunct instructor, and one administrative assistant (.80 FTE) and 4.8 grant funded FTE.

As discussed earlier in this proposal, this merger will allow both units to achieve greater efficiencies in their curriculum. This will also reduce instructional expenditures in both programs as we will be able to increase class sizes and consequently, rely less on adjunct instructors. The savings will likely grow as we will be able to more fully realize efficiencies over time.

The instructional impact of this merger on the budget may be even greater on the revenue side. The combined strength of the two units will allow us to engage more fully in undergraduate education, which will result in a substantial increase in credit-hour production from increased offerings of Tier II courses. Our graduate education offerings will be enhanced through a more comprehensive set of policy courses and possibly a policy minor, which will attract students from other programs. We will also be better positioned to engage in fee-for-service workshops, certificate offerings, research grants, and policy analysis contracts that will create new revenue streams.