TO: David Sanders, Chair CoRGE
Cc: CoRGE committee of MFS
Date: October 29, 2013
FROM: Liz Davidson, Petra Lenz, Daniel Harris-McCoy
RE: Subcommittee action on two issues:

8.14 Degree Proposal: Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Technology

Liz, Petra and Daniel each reviewed the full program proposals posted on the CoRGE Issues list and discussed our ideas and concerns via email. The following summarizes our assessment and recommended steps for the CoRGE committee on these issues.

8.14: Proposal for a Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Technology

Summary: In 2007, the College of Education initiated a specialization in Educational Technology as part of the COE-wide Ph.D. program in Education. The first students were admitted in 2008, the program is running at a steady-state of 50 students in various years/stages, and seven (7) students have graduated in 2012 and 2013. The Department of Educational Technology, with the full support of the COE Faculty Senate, requests that this program be renamed “PhD in Educational Technology” and the locus of control be separated from the college-wide COE PhD program and the remaining six sub-specialties. Although the PhD specialization has operated for six (6) years, the proposal is put forth as a “new program” with full explanation of rationale, learning objectives, appropriateness for UHM and financial assessment.

Justification: Please see pg. 4 of the proposal. Highlights include: (i) Educational Technology has developed as a field within the larger discipline of Education, with distinct areas of practice and research, and thus of PhD level curriculum and research practice. (ii) Academic and professional positions for graduates typically designate “PhD in Educational Technology”, and thus renaming the degree will improve students’ visibility and potential in the job market. (iii) A program with 50 PhD students in steady-state can be more closely managed within the host department, rather than as part of the COE PhD program (now the largest on campus). (iv) The COE Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate endorse this change, and note that other COE specializations will remain in the unified program. (v) The program has operated for 6 years; no additional resources or departmental changes are projected or requested.

Subcommittee assessment: The proposal is well documented, the process followed is thorough (new program vs. “just a name change”), and the justifications are persuasive. The program has demonstrated effectiveness and contribution in 6 years of operation. One minor question: Since the Educational Technology Department’s charge is educating PhD students and guiding their research on the use of cutting-edge technologies in educational settings, is there an unstated need for technology resources?

Subcommittee recommendation: The subcommittee recommends endorsement of this proposal. The full CoRGE could discuss the proposal Oct 30. If other members have questions, these could be drafted and sent to the ETEC Department Chair, who in turn can be invited to Nov 20 meeting. If there are no questions, a vote can be taken Oct 30 and if positive, the proposal passed on to the MFS.


Summary: The Renewable Energy and Island Sustainability (REIS) group proposes a cross-disciplinary certificate program to train graduate students pursuing degrees in a cross-section of related areas in the College of Engineering and College of Social Sciences, through course work, research projects, internships, and interactions with local energy industry on issues, solutions, and entrepreneurial opportunities associated with clean and sustainable energy. The certificate proposal is an outgrowth of
work in the REIS program, begun in June 2009, funded by grants from UHM, US Department of Energy, and “strong relationships with HECO.” Two mandatory courses (ECON 636, ME 610) have been offered as special topics and are now approved as permanent courses. Various other courses in engineering, natural sciences, and social sciences would fulfill curriculum requirements. The certificate program would be further planned, managed, and evaluated by REIS faculty, who are listed on pg. 10 of the proposal.

**Justification:** Highlights of the justification include: (i) Importance of work on sustainability and clean energy in Hawaii and elsewhere; (ii) Need for workforce development of employees with knowledge of these topics; (iii) Opportunity for students living in HI to obtain advanced training; (iv) Support for and workforce demand from HECO and the local energy industry generally; (v) Anticipated availability of grant funding to support research and students in the future.

**Subcommittee assessment:** The educational goals and emphasis of the certificate appear to be well founded and important areas for the Hawaii economy, suitable for UHM, and valuable to students seeking work in this area in Hawaii or elsewhere. The subcommittee did identify a number of questions about the proposal, including:

(i) **Required funding:** Page 9 states that the certificate program will “initially require no new resources from UHM and only require very modest resources from year 3 on.” The extent or use of this funding is not clear, e.g., for graduate research positions? Certificate administration? Research project resources? Faculty? The paragraph states that resources “will come” from DOE, State of Hawaii, and UHM grants, but grants listed were issued in the past and should have been completed (latest end date June 2013). Are these grant funds not yet expended and therefore available? What funds do exist at this point for the program since “no new resources” are requested but will be “worked out with UH”?

(ii) **Student demand and associated costs:** There are no projections of certificate enrollment, curriculum costs or revenues, or completion rates for the certificate. At several points undergraduate students are mentioned. Will they be allowed to take the certificate courses or program as well?

(iii) **Impact on student completion of graduate work:** Pg. 6 of proposal lists requirements. Will the certificate increase the time to degree, as students take the REIS core courses and complete internships and group research projects? Will curriculum integrate with or substitute for other graduate program activities? For example, Pg. 6 notes that all students are expected to publish a peer-reviewed paper in addition to their Masters or PhD thesis.

(iv) **Clarification of certificate administration:** The proposal is vague about who specifically (by title) will ensure that meetings happen, students are reviewed, and the efficacy of the program is evaluated regularly and corrective action taken. Is there a governing unit such as a department or college faculty, other than REIS? Is there a responsible administrative role in REIS?

(v) **Relationship with HECO and other community stakeholders:** What is the nature of this involvement, beyond HECO employees perhaps serving as lecturers? Will students be offered a paid internship or conduct research as part of a GA for HECO, for example?

**Sub-committee recommendation:** Given the vagueness of the proposal in these areas, we recommend a discussion of the proposal by the full CORGE, and the list of questions noted above be added to or modified to reflect others’ concerns. Questions may then be forwarded to the proposal sponsor/contact for response and an invitation to attend a CORGE meeting issued, to present the program and address questions. An explanation of what approvals have already been sought and received (e.g., from Graduate Council?) should be included. If the proposal is discussed on Nov 20th and 27th meeting, the proposal sponsors could develop a response over the holiday break and meet with the committee in January before final vote.