Departmental Response to "A report of the External Review Team"
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, 10 Year Self Study Review

In the concluding section of the external reviewers' report, the reviewers listed eight "key areas" they believed were important "opportunities for growth" for the Department. Our response to the external review is organized around these "opportunities" which we have placed into two broad areas—1) ELPA's organizational structure and programs, and 2) the Department's identity, mission, and self-representation.

ELPA's Organizational Structure and Programs

Opportunity 1: Does each curricular track have an identifiable leader who is committed to the conduct and continuous improvement of that track?

ELPA has identifiable leaders for several of the strands in the program. Current identified leaders are described in the table, below.

Bruce King	PhD Cohort
Weijia Li	Global Higher Education
Elton Crim	Master's in Educational Leadership with an emphasis on higher education
Colleen Capper and Art Rainwater	Master's in Educational Leadership with an emphasis on K-12 leadership
Shari Smith	K-12 leadership certification programs
Rick Mason on the UW-Whitewater campus; Shari Smith on the UW-Madison campus	University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Co-Op Program

Programs that do not have an identified leader have historically been the responsibility of the Department Chair, in consultation with the Higher Education faculty for Higher Education related programming, and the K-12 faculty for K-12 related programming. Higher Education and K-12 faculty meet monthly to address business related to their specific strands, and make recommendations to the Department's programs committee and the full faculty for program changes. The department recognizes that it would be beneficial to have a faculty member lead K-12, higher education, and policy strands of the PhD and master's programs. A recent new hire in educational policy, and the promotion of three junior faculty members have enhanced opportunities to appoint individuals to these leadership positions. Our goal is to complete this process during the 2016-17 academic year.

Opportunity 2: Will the Department's structural commitment to the school leader certification master's program and to the new Wisconsin Idea Executive Ph.D. Cohort Program be sufficient to produce the numbers and quality of change-agent school leaders that Wisconsin's schools need--and that the field needs to see its leading universities produce?

The ELPA faculty are confident that the K-12 Executive PhD program and the new K-12 Masters Program will be sufficient to produce the numbers and quality of change-agent school leaders that Wisconsin schools need, and that the field needs to see its leading universities produce. The current K-12 Executive PhD program enrolls 24-25 students per cohort, and we admit a new cohort every 4 years. Many graduates of this program go on to leadership positions around the state. In addition, ELPA includes a PhD program for students interested in K-12 education, but who wish to pursue a traditional PhD program. This program continues to produce several graduates each year who go on to become professors at leading universities. The department will continue to consider whether to enroll a new K-12 Executive PhD cohort more often to bolster the number of graduates.

The revised ELPA K-12 Masters Program (approved summer 2016) will address the need for more graduates with a principal license who go on to lead schools in Wisconsin and nationally. Our previous K-12 Masters cohort program produced about 10 graduates a year, not all of whom were committed to principal work. The new program goal is to double our graduates each year, at 20 per year, nearly all of whom matriculate into principal positions. The program is bolstered by the collaboration and support of AWSA (Association of Wisconsin School Administrators) and by named ELPA Partnership Districts who will help recruit and support students in the program.

Opportunity 3. Can the tensions and apparently overlapping missions between the EPS program and the ELPA Policy track be addressed by structural or cultural changes?

The external reviewers raised important questions about ELPA's Policy Track, and how our relationship with the Department of Educational Policy Studies (EPS) impacts the track. The Department's Self Study report identified three concrete steps the Department wished to take to improve the Policy Track: 1) build on preliminary faculty conversations to crystallize the Track's purpose and curriculum, 2) develop a core educational policy course, and 3) explore the incorporation of field experiences for Policy Track students. Since writing the Self Study report the Department has made progress in all three areas, and this progress is described below. In moving forward on these areas, we plan to coordinate our efforts with our EPS colleagues and to explore potential areas of collaboration around our respective programs in education policy. We believe our strong relationship and collaborative work with EPS provides a strong starting point for this work. Examples of this relationship include: 1) EPS faculty regularly teach courses in ELPA's GHE and Executive PhD programs; 2) there are a substantial number of courses cross-listed in EPS and ELPA; 3) Borman, Diamond and Underwood are EPS affiliates; and 4) faculty

from EPS regularly serve on ELPA dissertation committees and vice versa. In addition to coordinating with EPS, we believe it will also be worthwhile to coordinate with the LaFollette School of Public Policy, another department on campus with which our faculty are affiliated and with which we have a good relationship. Below we provide an initial sketch of plans to improve the Policy Track.

Crystallize the Track's purpose and curriculum. With respect to the Track's purpose, in preparing for the Department's Self Study faculty identified four general competencies they would like graduates to possess: 1) the ability to critically analyze policy; 2) knowledge of how leaders can design and shape policy; 3) knowledge of policy implementation; and 4) knowledge of how to evaluate education policy. In revising the program as described below, faculty will review these competencies and revise as necessary.

As a first step in crystallizing the Track's programmatic focus, the Department constructed a map of the expertise of faculty affiliated with the Policy Track (see table below). This fall, we will conduct a thorough review of the existing Policy Track curriculum. The Policy Track already has a fairly substantial course array focusing on issues related to education policy. Using the map of faculty expertise and the existing curriculum as a starting point, we will undertake a further revision of the curriculum. In addition to reviewing ELPA courses we will also review courses in EPS and the LaFollette School of Public Policy, looking for areas in which additional cross-listing might mutually enhance programs in the three departments. As a concrete step in this process the Department has already committed to developing an introductory education policy course (see below).

Faculty Expertise	Faculty
Education policy	Hillman, Kelley, Persico
Inequality in education opportunities, outcomes and contexts	Borman, Diamond, Hillman, Persico
Policy implementation	Camburn, Hillman, Kelley, Persico
Politics of education	Kelley
Legal aspects of education	Mead, Underwood
Economics of education	Persico
Education finance	Goff, Hillman
School renewal and intervention	Borman, Camburn, Diamond, King
Quantitative methods in policy research (causal inference, experimental design, statistical modeling, survey research methods)	Borman, Camburn, Goff, Hillman, Persico

Develop a core introductory policy analysis course. As discussed in the Self Study, Policy Track faculty identified a need to develop a new course that would provide students with a solid understanding of basic issues in educational policy and an introduction to the field. In the Fall

of 2016, we will develop a course that focuses on the design, implementation, analysis and evaluation of education policies at different levels of the education system.

Field experiences for Policy Track Students. In preparation for the Self Study, faculty discussed the option of requiring students in the Masters policy track to complete an internship. Since the Self Study was written, the Wisconsin Collaborative Education Research Network (aka the Network) has built a Network Fellows program which places School of Education graduate students in internships in education organizations, including positions with Wisconsin state legislators. The Network is directed by ELPA faculty member Rich Halverson and the Fellows program is directed by ELPA alumna Laura Dunek. To date the Fellows program has placed a substantial number of ELPA students into internships. We will explore what it would take to provide all ELPA Policy Track Masters students with practicum experience in the Network Fellows program.

We also note that an additional possibility to build on courses and internships offered as part of the Interdisciplinary Training Program (ITP) directed by ELPA faculty member Borman. Borman teaches a core policy course for ITP, Education Policy across the Disciplines, the ITP seminar, and translational workshops. The ITP works with a network of local (e.g., MMSD, Milwaukee Public Schools, and DPI) and national partners (e.g., Mathematica, AIR, and various federally funded regional labs) who provide students with semester-long internships.

As previously mentioned, we have a strong starting point on which to build since the Policy Track already contains courses on education finance, education law, politics of education, school renewal processes and intervention, and quantitative research methods for policy research. We believe that all of the programmatic changes discussed above can be done within the confines of our current program approvals thus allowing us to deliver this revamped program to students very soon. For example, we have already identified an instructor (Persico) to begin teaching the introductory policy course in the Fall of 2017.

Opportunity 4: "The Higher Education Program area has requested its own separate degree program. This shift may protect and advance the program, or weaken the department and obscure clearly overlapping interests of departmental faculty."

The faculty in Higher, Postsecondary, and Continuing Education (HPCE) very much appreciated that the external review team raised this question. It fueled our ongoing conversation about whether we should continue to advocate for a separate program. After many months of spirited dialogue, the faculty in the HPCE strand maintain fidelity to its commitment to seeking separate programs in higher education at both the master's and doctoral levels. Operationally, we will seek to have HPCE be a named option within our Masters and PhD programs. Our justification is provided below:

Within the last several years, the elevation of the HPCE track—from the departmental to the university and beyond--has been nothing short of remarkable. Building on a solid foundation of faculty consisting of Professors Jerlando Jackson, Elton Crim, and Clifton Conrad, four new

professors have been added in the last six years: Professor Xueli Wang, Professor Rachelle Winkle-Wagner, Professor Nicholas Hillman, and Professor Weijia Li. Now consisting of seven faculty, the faculty in the HPCE strand have been extremely productive. With respect to faculty scholarship, the faculty in HPCE are among the most productive higher education scholars in the country (including many high-quality articles in the most prestigious journals in the field); HPCE faculty have had their books published by the nation's leading presses (The Johns Hopkins University Press and Harvard University Press); and HPCE faculty have secured significant external grant funding (over four million dollars of external funding secured by four faculty in the last several years). Moreover, the quality of faculty teaching and mentoring (four HPCE faculty have been singled out by ELPA students over the last few years for their teaching and/or mentoring) has been exemplary. In addition to their scholarly productivity and exemplary teaching and service, the HPCE faculty took the initiative to establish the master's program in Global Higher Education program several years ago.

Notwithstanding a widely-shared understanding that the HPCE track is well on the way to becoming one of the leading Higher Education "Programs" in the nation, HPCE does not yet have the national visibility and prestige of the leading higher education programs (such as the University of Southern California and the University of Michigan). Why not? To a great extent, this lack of national visibility and prestige is because HPCE is not recognized as a "program." To illustrate, the most recent President of the University of Wisconsin System learned only recently --when he was asked to be a part-time professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis--that "Higher Education" was a bonafide field of study at UW-Madison. Significantly, a decade ago the External Review Committee recommended (#6): "Develop an identity for Higher, Continuing, and Postsecondary Education (HPCE), including an integrated program . . . ."

In short, the single most important challenge facing the HPCE track is this: The lack of a distinctive programmatic identity for HPCE at the master's and doctoral level. In the absence of a distinctive program identity, HPCE is not well-positioned to seize emerging opportunities in the field of higher and postsecondary education that will only enrich and enlarge HPCE and ELPA.

More broadly, an HPCE identity as a bonafide "program" at the master's and doctoral level would go a long way toward providing a robust foundation for HPCE and ELPA to explore a wide range of innovations—such as an Executive Ph.D. program and short-term professional developmental programs to meet societal, statewide, university, and prospective students' needs—that would capitalize on the growing demand for HPCE graduates (such as athletics, diversity programs, strategic planning, institutional research, higher education funding, transfer from two-year to four-year institutions, and the growing emphasis on student learning and persistence for our nation's increasingly diverse population). A programmatic identity would elevate the national and international visibility and status of HPCE and ELPA.

The recent merging (July, 2016) of the Wisconsin Center for the Advancement of Postsecondary Education (WISCAPE) into ELPA—attached to the HPCE "strand" in ELPA—accents the benefits of having separate programs in HPCE at the master's and doctoral level. WISCAPE is already elevating the visibility of HPCE faculty and students and having separate HPCE programs will no doubt enhance the quality and visibility of HPCE and the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis as well.

For these reasons, the faculty in the HPCE strand ask that the Department request that HPCE be a named option in the Department's Masters and PhD programs .

The Department's Identity, Mission, and Self-Representation

Opportunity 5. Does the mission statement continue to capture the priorities of the current faculty?

When hiring new faculty, the Department uses as its primary criteria that the faculty member's scholarship and teaching must advance the Department's mission. This is a structural feature of the Department that we believe goes a long way to insuring close alignment of our mission with faculty interests and practices. The Department's mission was rewritten 5 years ago. When it was rewritten care was taken to insure that the mission captured the priorities of faculty members at that time. As the reviewers' appear to suggest, given a significant influx of new faculty since that time (6 faculty have joined the department since 2013 when the mission statement was revised), it is worthwhile to examine whether the Department's mission continues to capture the priorities of the faculty who have joined the Department since the mission statement was last revised.

On 12/16/13 the department adopted the following mission statement:

> *The mission of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis is to create, evaluate, exchange, and apply knowledge about leadership, learning, and organizational performance to prepare scholars and scholar practitioners who cultivate equity and educational opportunity in a diverse and changing world."*

To address the alignment between this mission and the "priorities" of recent additions to the Department's faculty, below we list their interests that we believe are aligned with two key themes in the mission statement.

Theme 1. The mission of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis is to create, evaluate, exchange, and apply knowledge about leadership, learning, and organizational performance.

Faculty member	Research focus
John Diamond	Leadership and organizational change, Educational policy, Policy implementation, Sociology of education,

	The relationship between schools and communities.
Peter Goff	Strategic Management of Human Capital (SMHC) in K-12 education organizations including candidate selection, strategic staffing to advance organizational performance, talent identification, talent development, and compensation.
Nick Hillman	Higher education budgeting and planning; state and federal higher education finance and financial aid policy
Julie Underwood	School law

Theme 2. [The mission of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis is to]…is to prepare scholars and scholar practitioners who cultivate equity and educational opportunity in a diverse and changing world."

Faculty member	Research focus
John Diamond	The influence of race and class on students' educational experiences and outcomes
Claudia Persico	Economics of education, inequality, education policy, and early childhood health
Rachelle Winkle-Wagner	Underrepresented students' access and success in college, doctoral education for students of color, the influence of race and gender on college experiences, and identity development

In our view, the preceding lists demonstrate that the research interests of new faculty members align well with the two major themes embodied in the Department's mission.

Opportunity 6: Does the Department authentically wish to assess whether it is having an impact that "prepare(s) scholars and scholar practitioners who cultivate equity and educational opportunity in a diverse and changing world," or will traditional measures such as graduates produced, positions obtained, and journal articles published continue to serve as a proxy for such assessment?

The Department is interested in authentically assessing impact. Two recent developments have enhanced opportunities for such assessment. First, the campus has recently implemented a requirement that all programs develop an assessment plan to provide information to assess program outcomes. One such outcome is to evaluate information from a dissertation rating form that each professor on a student's dissertation committee completes at the time of the dissertation defense. This information is used to identify the highest rated dissertations in K-12, Policy and Higher Education produced in the Department that year. While we have gathered this information for some time, it was not until the advent of the campus assessment

plan that we identified it as a useful source of information about the quality of preparation and student academic outcomes.

A second example of authentic assessment of student outcomes is the revision of our master's in K-12 leadership program, which will involve significant partnership with school districts, from recruitment to the program, to field placement, and ultimately hiring in these area districts. We have created an advisory board of these districts to provide us with specific information about the success of students in the program, for feedback into program development and for assessment of program outcomes.

Opportunity 7: Are faculty and students experiencing consistency between the equity aspirations of the mission and what takes place in academic programs, coursework, advising, and recruitment of an outstanding, diverse faculty and student body?

ELPA faculty appreciate the external review team raising this question after the review teams' discussions with ELPA students and graduates revealed inconsistency between the equity aspirations and mission of the department, and some students' experiences in the program. Informal conversations with current students in the K-12 program, prompted by the students themselves, reveals that this gap continues in the K-12 Executive PhD program and in the current K-12 Masters program. To wit, a current student in the K-12 Executive PhD program expressed disappointment in the content of some of the courses in the program and their lack of attention to equity issues. The student also expressed some disappointment in the lack of equity purpose with some of the students in the cohort program. A recent graduate of the K-12 Masters program also expressed disappointment in the lack of attention to equity throughout the K-12 courses—that while an initial course in the program centered on equity, students were expected to apply this lens throughout the rest of the coursework even though the courses themselves did not build on the department mission of advancing equity and opportunity.

To address this issue, K-12 faculty have met monthly all of the 2015-2016 academic year, and will continue to do so 2016-2017 for the express purpose of centering equity for all students in the K-12 Masters program—a revised program that has been approved by the School of Education. In collaboration with the Association for Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA), the faculty have adopted a framework for social justice leadership, developed leadership competencies based on that framework, and revised their courses to reflect an equity focus. The process has included individual meetings with faculty to consider how equity for all students might figure more centrally into the course, faculty sharing their revised syllabi at the K-12 team meetings and soliciting feedback from faculty on how to strengthen the equity dimensions of the course. The admissions process for the new masters program also centers on equity for all students.

A similar process has not occurred with the K-12 Executive PhD program, though with the overlap of professors between the two programs, we would expect to see some course changes toward this end in the K-12 Executive PhD program as well.

Going forward, the K-12 faculty will consider the addition of a question or two on course evaluations that would solicit student input on the extent to which equity for all students is addressed in the course and bring this consideration to the ELPA faculty. The new K-12 Masters program evaluation component will include this question, and on-going K-12 faculty meetings will provide a means to continually strengthen this dimension of our program.

Concerning recruitment of faculty related to the department equity mission, nearly all of the recent hires in the department take seriously the centrality of equity for all students in their research. Concerning the recruitment of a diverse student body committed to equity for all students, the centering of equity in the K-12 Masters program and that also currently exists in the higher education program and ensuring department communications (e.g., website) communicate this focus will encourage applicants who share this value.

Opportunity 8: **"While there is no reason to doubt that competition from other colleges and universities is having an impact on ELPA enrollments, there is reason to doubt that these other IHEs can compete with ELPA in the areas that make it distinctive. We recommend that ELPA faculty generate clear consensus on the distinctive identity and values of the Department's programs, students, and faculty, and communicate those more effectively to external audiences."**

The faculty in ELPA have used this feedback to further reflect on the mission and identity of the department. Here is the current mission of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis: "To create, evaluate, exchange, and apply knowledge about leadership, learning, and organizational performance to prepare scholars and scholar practitioners who cultivate equity and educational opportunity in a diverse and changing world."

After continuing discussion, ELPA faculty have chosen to maintain fidelity to this mission statement.