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On behalf of the faculty in the Department of Educational Policy Studies (EPS), I am pleased to submit the EPS Self-Study Report, which was prepared by the department faculty in accordance with the university’s Academic Program Review (APR) procedures.

The EPS APR Committee was chaired by Dr. Richard D. Lakes. The department held two retreats to evaluate each academic degree program’s areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. The faculty also considered ways to work collaboratively across program areas and to strengthen its professional education and global initiatives. The faculty also situated this work within the context of the university’s new Strategic Plan. I have reviewed the committee’s report and agree with their findings and recommendations. A brief summary follows:

QUALITY: The Department of Educational Policy Studies (EPS) is comprised of three program areas, Educational Leadership (EPEL); Research, Measurement and Statistics (RMS); and Social Foundations of Education (SF). We are a federated-department, and work closely together toward achieving the highest levels of instruction, research, and service as indicated in the report.

CENTRALITY: The department and its programs are aligned with the strategic plans of GSU and the College of Education (COE). Goal 2 of the GSU Strategic Plan states “to strengthen and grow the base of distinctive graduate and professional programs.” Our department is aligned with GSU Initiative 1 of Goal 2 as well: EPS is well positioned to increase the trend of GSU providing the academy and public and private enterprises with minority students holding graduate degrees. EPS has a long history of commitment to graduating minority students. The EPS minority graduates comprised 36% of all Ph.D. minority graduates in the College—earning the
College a top ranking as the eighth producer of African-American Ph.D. graduates and the 13th producer of minority Ph.D. graduates in education nationally, according to *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*.

VIABILITY: Many EPS course offerings are required core courses for graduate study in the College of Education. Two of the EPS program units—RMS and SF—service the other departments in this regard. In addition, the SF unit teaches “Investigating Critical and Contemporary Issue in Education” (EDUC 2110), an area F offering in the undergraduate curriculum at University System of Georgia (USG) institutions. All of the RMS faculty sit on graduate student dissertation committees as research methodologists throughout the College. Also, EPS faculty serve the state with core and elective online course offerings through the Georgia On My Line (GOML) program. The EPS degree programs in Educational Leadership (EPEL) provide high-quality preparation for urban teacher leaders as well as current and aspiring school administrators.

STRATEGIC FOCUS: The placement of EPS graduates at research-intensive and teaching universities aligns with COE Strategic Plan, Goal A11 to “increase the placement rates of doctoral graduates in research universities.” EPS graduates are also routinely placed in academic positions as research scientists in metro institutions, or as assessment specialists in LOCAL school districts or state government. Some have taken high-level supervisory positions in higher education administration both within Georgia and in other states. All EPS degree programs cater to the unique needs of cities and focus on the issues of most concern, while drawing on the strength and mission of the university: supporting its urban community.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE ANALYSIS: In addition to state funding (Fund Code 10) resources, the GOML online programs generate an additional funding stream, which enhances EPS support of graduate students and faculty research. The current university structure for reporting funded research lists PIs only, which does not recognize the significant levels of funded research that many EPS faculty are engaged in as Co-PIs, research methodologists and content experts on grants and contracts across the college and in other colleges as well.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: In order to appreciate fully the complexity of the EPS degree program and faculty research structures, it is important to review its historical context. EPS was created when the College of Education underwent reorganization. Programs that at the time seemed disparate were combined into fewer administrative units. In 1998, in an effort to bring unity across these programs, the EPS faculty agreed to form a single doctoral program with concentrations in each of the units. In 2001, the EPS faculty identified the need for a degree program that was focused upon the active school administrator, a Doctorate in Education.
(Ed.D.) in leadership, targeted to working professionals in K-12 schools. The Ed.D. will admit its first cohort in the summer of 2012.

FACULTY STATUS: Over the past three fiscal years, the department lost six tenure-track faculty members due to non-renewal, tenure denial, or job transfer. During that same period the department hired eight faculty members: four tenure-track, two clinical, and two visiting. The department is currently searching for four new tenure-track faculty and one clinical faculty member to support current programs, to expand research productivity and to support a high-quality doctoral program.

FACULTY RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY: Over the past three years, EPS faculty members have published 129 scholarly articles, nine books, and 44 book chapters. In addition, many EPS faculty have served as Co-PIs and/or research methodologists on funded grants and contracts across the College of Education and in the College of Arts and Sciences.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT: Student enrollments have declined over the past 6 years due to the admission of an unusually large cohort of doctoral student in Fall of 2005. The decision to admit such a large cohort was not made by program faculty and the consequences of top-down decisions have been quite difficult and wide-spread. In response to this challenge, the faculty determined to admit fewer students in subsequent years, which helps explain the drop in enrollments. Student retention and credit hour generation also reflect the long-term consequences of admitting a cohort in 2005 that was much too large for department resources to support.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: EPS faculty members have assessed the extent to which the department has met the eight goals set forth in the 2005 APR self-study. I support these findings and trust that the university will support the goals and objectives specified in the study and the strategies proposed to achieve those goals.

Respectfully submitted,

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