

To: Peter Langer, GCE Dean
From: Peter Taylor, Acting CCT Coordinator
Re: Status Report on the CCT Program
Date: 5/18/07

Preamble

In January, the CCT Coordinator, Nina Greenwald, went on medical leave for the spring. Dean Langer agreed with the CCT faculty's request that Peter Taylor step back in as coordinator for the semester and asked for a report on the status of the Program. By mid-February the immediate problems of adjusting for Nina Greenwald's withdrawal from teaching and getting enough students in the various regular and online sections had been addressed. After getting up-to-date course plans from students, a CCT faculty meeting was convened on 2/27 to move through the following phases in advance of a possible planning retreat:

- A. Getting on the same page about informing prospective students and covering ourselves (legally and ethically) about future staffing and courses.
- B. Clarification of what each CCT faculty member wants to contribute to CCT.
- C. Delineation of options/emphases for the Program (to be fashioned in light of B).

The CCT faculty has made progress on the three phases, but is not ready to make recommendations that could be included in this report. The faculty looks forward to working with the incoming Chair and Dean so we can move forward in ways that address individual and shared concerns and aspirations and that respond to new opportunities that might emerge.

Background facts

1. The number of students entering the CCT Masters program has dropped from 24-25 matriculants in the early '00s to 13±2 matriculants over the last three years.
2. Changes in Department of Ed. licensure requirements mean that teachers, who used to be 40% of the Masters students, can no longer use a CCT M.A. for professional advancement in public schools. In addition, requirements for M.Ed. students seeking licensure leave almost no room for CCT courses as electives.
3. The partnership with CCDE around the CCT certificate has built up to include 6 online sections, but these have yet to produce flow through from these courses to new certificate and M.A. applicants.
4. The GCE has no plan to seek authorization for a search for a second regular (tenure-track) member of CCT.
5. The GCE is not committed at this point to: a) continuation of a CCT lectureship (50% or 100%) after Nina Greenwald's position ends in August 2009¹; b) restoration of course release for program coordinators; or c) staff positions dedicated (at least some fraction of the time) to serving the non-Teacher Preparation programs (CCT and Instructional Design).
6. M.A. students take a minimum of 2 years to complete studies and typically 2.5 years.

¹ At the conclusion of the 2003 AQUAD review, the Graduate Dean put admissions to the CCT M.A. program on hold until a second faculty position dedicated to the Program was guaranteed.

7. 29 of the 32 current matriculated and active M.A. students plan to complete the degree by spring '09. 25 of these students plan to complete the degree by spring '08.²

Phase A: Informing prospective students of status of the Program

8. There is a tension in the CCT faculty discussions between: “Things (resources, student numbers, etc.) might get better in the future so we should not make a major decision now” and “We do not know that things will be better in the future so we need a plan that takes that possibility into account (i.e., a plan that ensures we serve students in a high quality program without the faculty sacrificing other commitments and aspirations).”
9. The majority view of the CCT faculty is that including text in the admission letter to alert prospective students of the limited resources and enrollments in the program would detract from student recruitment and give the administration an excuse to wind down the program. We have weathered past setbacks and can expect to do so again. The minority view (Peter Taylor) is that M.A. applicants should be informed so they can make their choices with full knowledge of the status of the Program (esp. facts 4& 5). If this notification is not official, our ethical and legal obligations to admitted students are likely to lead to continuation of the unrewarding conditions for some faculty, especially Peter Taylor (see #11 below).³

Phase B: Clarification of faculty members’ contributions and aspirations

10. Peter Taylor, wants to be able to devote more time to the work he came to UMB and CCT to do, namely, critical thinking and reflective practice around science in its social context. This includes having time to undertake his grant-funded research and workshops and to teach doctoral courses.
11. Peter Taylor has informed the CCT faculty that he would like no longer to have to:⁴
 - a. spend energy/time/well-being to contest/shift the College’s position about lines and resources for CCT (see Facts 4& 5);
 - b. put aside other interests and commitments⁵ to go full throttle to try to boost the numbers of matriculants in CCT M.A. to the earlier level;

² Course plans of current students (and educated guesses in a few cases where plans are not available) produce the following enrollments for 07-08, before new students are added: FALL 07 – CCT602, 7; CCT651, 11; CCT698, 8; CCT694, 5; SPR 08 – CCT601, 4; Phil 501, 8; CCT693, 4; total for all electives during the year, 12. As of 5/14, there are five complete M.A. applications for 07-08. These have been approved by the admissions committee, but not yet signed by the Program Coordinator.

³ The compromise/ consensus reached on 2/27 was to craft wording to inform applicants verbally in as encouraging a way as possible of the funding and staffing horizon for CCT and of the likelihoods for the future. (Along the lines of: “We have come through tight spots before, so we expect CCT to be able to again.”) This wording has not yet been developed and the informing of applicants has not yet happened.

⁴ Note: This does not mean Peter Taylor will not do this work, but indicates this aspiration as part of clarifying the parameters (phase B) to be taken into account during planning (phase C).

⁵ Personal and well as scholarly commitments.

- c. pick up loose ends and compensate for lack of administrative support in order to make sure that CCT fulfills its obligations to the students who have joined the M.A. program (as he has again done this spring);
 - d. postpone fellowship applications, leave, or grant-funded research in order to cover the varied demands of CCT administration; and
 - e. continue to meet and interact as CCT colleagues primarily around the uncertainties of CCT's future or administrative problems (e.g., cancellations of under-enrolled courses).
12. During this semester, Carol Smith has led the capstone synthesis seminar with the role of primary advisor distributed among the CCT faculty. Arthur Millman has agreed to lead the seminar in the fall. An expanded roster of core faculty prepared to teach this course relieves the pressure on Peter Taylor and Nina Greenwald to steward students through this final stage to graduation. Carol Smith and Arthur Millman have also agreed to offer their required foundation courses (Cog. Psych. & Phil.) every third semester, which reduces the chances of these courses being under-enrolled and frees the two of them to teach the synthesis seminar or an elective some semesters.
13. Other roles and tasks that individual CCT faculty members may take on are not yet clear (e.g., for when Nina Greenwald's appointment ends in August '09; in order to address Peter Taylor's aspirations [see #10 & 11]; and in order to meet the minimal conditions for sustaining the M.A. program [see # 15, below]).
14. Larry Blum will be on sabbatical 07-08 and Carol Smith for calendar year '08. Arthur Millman will chair the Philosophy Department from Fall '07 onwards.

Phase C: Alternative Paths ahead

15. The M.A. Program could be sustained in face of the facts (1-7) (and course enrollments could be kept above the minimum level) if:
- a. all or some of required CCT courses are offered 1 semester in 3 (as against once per year at present)⁶;
 - b. instructors in those courses find (more) ways to attract non-CCT students so as to buffer against the inevitable variations in enrollments in a small program;
 - c. innovations are pursued that open up face-to-face required courses to students participating from a distance (e.g., through WebCT-wimba or skype);
 - d. electives are offered on a 2 year cycle to preserve the range of electives that the diverse CCT students need;
 - e. the number of electives offered does not exceed the projected demand from CCT students and, for cross-listed courses, students from other programs;⁷
 - f. funding is assured for a dynamic, well-qualified instructor for CrCrTh 602 after Nina Greenwald's appointment ends (or the course is shifted to CCDE after Nina Greenwald's appointment ends);
 - g. a 100% replacement is funded whenever Peter Taylor (as the only professor full-time in CCT) takes leave;

⁶ Projected enrollment figures for required courses, given in footnote 2, indicate that some 07-08 courses remain vulnerable unless shifted to this lesser frequency.

⁷ Projected enrollment figures for electives, given in footnote 2, indicate that not all 07-08 electives are likely to be filled.

- h. CCT faculty members from CLA can serve as Program coordinator;
 - i. the particular, diverse administrative and program development work required to sustain a small graduate program is recognized by the Department and College;
 - j. (perhaps) the online sections are discontinued so as not to draw students away from the face-to-face sections and to reduce the high administrative load of getting such courses up and running. Nina Greenwald and Peter Taylor teach more sections out of the CCT program;
 - k. the CCT faculty can make time to update the curriculum in light of new developments in teaching thinking and facilitating reflective practice;
 - l. the smaller program passes muster in the 09-10 AQUAD review (see #19, below).
- Note: This is a minimal list. With modest additional resources (e.g., restoration of course release for CCT coordinator after Nina Greenwald's appointment ends), the CCT M.A. program could be more dynamic in its efforts to develop its curriculum and impact.⁸
16. The CCT Program could be shifted to a certificate-only program. Implications include:
 - a. Administrative and program development effort could be focused on the extending the partnership with CCDE to serve a wider national and international student body;
 - b. Courses that are required for the M.A. but optional for the certificate might be continuable if steps #15a, b, c were successful;
 - c. Nina Greenwald (in 07-09) and Peter Taylor (from hereon) would have to teach even more sections out of the CCT program, but all their required courses could be continued;
 - d. The reduced administrative demands could be covered by a faculty member and the assistant already funded by CCDE when Peter Taylor takes leave; and
 - e. Current M.A. students could be seen through to graduation with only a handful of independent studies needed to substitute for required courses not offered after AY 08-09 (provided no more M.A. students are admitted from hereon).
 17. One possibility that applies to both the continued M.A. program or the certificate-only program is to focus recruitment of students and curricula offerings around the strength of 4 of 5 of the CCT core faculty in critical thinking and reflective practice concerning science and the environment. Another possibility would be to focus the M.A. and/or Certificate in the two areas emphasized for the Certificate partnership with CCDE, namely, "Creative Thinking at Work" and "Science in a Changing World."
 18. The CCT Program could temporarily redirect admissions from the M.A. to the certificate until the new Dean and Chair are in place and have clarified the resources and decision-making practices under which the CCT faculty can make and implement a consensus plan for the Program's longer-term future as well as for immediate challenges of core faculty on leave, etc. (see #14). (M.A. applicants matriculating to the certificate could be guaranteed an automatic upgrade to M.A. if they could finish without individual faculty members having to run independent studies in place of required courses.)
 19. Whichever of the previous three paths is favored, would the CCT Program pass muster in the AQUAD review scheduled for 09-10? Enrollments in the M.A. Program and in individual courses have dropped since the 02-03 review; that review, although very

⁸ See 2003 AQUAD review documents, <http://www.cct.umb.edu/aquad03.html>

positive, did not result in restoration of resources (facts #4 &5) or clarity in the parameters and governance under which the CCT faculty could plan how best to use its energies.

20. The Program could be wound down in order to avoid another time-consuming and unrewarding AQUAD review and to avoid remaining in limbo while waiting for a decision on continuation of the current 3-year CCT lectureship. Some implications:
 - a. Most current M.A. students could be seen through to graduation in 07-09; only a handful of independent studies would be needed to substitute for required courses if they were not offered after AY 08-09 (see Facts 6 & 7);
 - b. Nina Greenwald would have to teach more sections out of the CCT program until her appointment ends;
 - c. Peter Taylor would extend his Science in Society teaching (e.g., through more courses in Public Policy, Science, Tech & Values, Honors, and Environmental Studies);
 - d. The other core CCT faculty would pick up courses in their home departments.