

To: Dean Clara Jennings
cc: Department Chairs Suzy Groden, Sandra Kanter, Ellie Kutz
From: CCT Faculty members Arthur Millman, Steve Schwartz, Carol Smith, Peter Taylor,
and endorsed by Larry Blum and Delores Gallo (faculty on leave)
Re: **The Departmental Location of the Program in Critical & Creative Thinking**
Date: 10 October 2000

At the present time, the Graduate College of Education (GCOE) is being restructured to give departments a stronger identity and make departments, not programs, the primary administrative and educational-delivery units of the college. The faculty of the Critical and Creative Thinking Program (CCT) began to discuss ways to maintain the Program's capacity to pursue the goals outlined in its June '00 AQUAD plan and continue to contribute well to the College's educational mission. The question of the most appropriate departmental location for CCT arose, which is the topic of this memorandum.

Background

In 1997 CCT was moved from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) to GCOE within the Department of School Organization, Curriculum and Instruction (SOCI). Delores Gallo and John Murray moved into SOCI (John retired soon after). The lines of regular CCT faculty members Larry Blum, Arthur Millman, Steve Schwartz, and Carol Smith remained in CAS.

At that time, departmental location did not seem critical to the CCT Program. Programs were the units through which graduate education was delivered; GCOE departments were assuming responsibility for personnel and some budgetary matters, but not for curricula, admissions, or program development. Within these parameters, SOCI probably seemed the obvious departmental location for CCT because the work of Delores Gallo focused on teaching in schools and many CCT students were teachers, albeit in mid-career and not seeking certification. Furthermore, the CCT Masters program did not fit in Counseling and School Psychology nor was it a Doctoral Program, the other alternative.

Now, however, the Leadership in Education Department includes a Masters program (Educational Administration) as well as the doctoral programs, making this department a possible alternative location. A comparison of the alternatives by CCT faculty resulted in our articulating a number of points that support moving CCT to Leadership in Education. **In favoring such a move, the CCT faculty want to emphasize their commitment to continuing to offer elective courses for teacher ed. students (and others), especially in the areas of critical & creative thinking and of science.** As the points to follow indicate, moving CCT need not detract from the Teacher Education goals of GCOE.

CCT's mission and student population

1. The mission of the CCT Masters degree program is "professional development for mid-career teachers and other educators and for leaders or change-agents in other kinds of organizations. CCT approaches this mission by providing its students with an understanding of the processes of critical thinking and creativity, and with ways of helping others develop these processes in a variety of educational, professional, and social situations" (June '00 AQUAD plan).

2. "The Program appeals to mature students who are motivated to transform their work and lives and are interested to learn from other students whose interests and backgrounds are

diverse. Many are educators: teachers and college professors, curriculum specialists, teacher educators, museum educators, or school administrators. Others are policy makers or personnel trainers in government, corporate, or non-profit settings. Some are artists, musicians, or writers" (ibid).

3. CCT is not primarily a program for teacher education. There are fifty-two current CCT students (matriculated, or admitted, but deferred), whose specialization in their CCT training and careers span many areas: curriculum change (7 students), corporate training & coaching (7), college teaching & services (7), philosophy & moral ed. (7), classroom teaching (5), school change/professional development (4), social services delivery (4), sport and outdoor education (4), fiction and expository writing (4), education in other settings (4), and the internet (2) (the total adds up to more than 52 because some students' interests are split). Of the fifty-two, only thirteen are P-12 teachers or were before taking leave to join the program.

CCT's relationship to Educational Leadership programs

4. CCT can readily be seen as an educational leadership program, provided one recognizes that:

- a) education takes place in many government, corporate, non-profit, and informal settings; and
- b) many CCT graduates take leadership roles that are not official administrative ones as they strive to fulfill the needs of their schools, workplaces, and communities, adapt to social changes, and collaborate with others to these ends.

These aspects form the basis of two new partnerships:

- i) with Ed. Admin. to offer a Concentration in "Facilitating Reflective Practice" within its Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (pending formal approval); and
- ii) with the Division of Continuing Education to offer CCT's existing graduate certificate with a special theme of "Dialogue and Collaboration in Organizational Change," targeted to "change-agents" in business and education (planned for 2001).

5a. CCT as a Program shares with the doctoral programs a focus on scholarly research and the challenge of getting students to complete an original piece of research and writing. Three of the seven required CCT courses concern the processes of research, writing, engagement and evaluation. Over 200 theses and, more recently, syntheses have been produced by students since 1980. A significant fraction of graduates have gone on to doctoral studies in education and other fields. If CCT were in the same department as the doctoral programs, more CCT students might undertake theses, rather than syntheses, partly restoring CCT's scholarly output of earlier years. From the other side, doctoral students have been advised and taught by CCT faculty, in particular by Delores Gallo, whose summer 1998 doctoral seminar, "Critical and creative thinking in academic writing," was warmly received.

5b. The Ed. Admin. program's school change action research emphasis matches CCT's emphasis on reflective practice and, for a significant fraction of CCT students, on organizational development. With these shared concerns, CCT and Ed. Admin. are natural supporters as Masters programs.

6. Currently CCT is a small program in a large department dominated numerically and programmatically by Teacher Education and certification. If moved to Leadership in Education, CCT would be one of four approximately equal size programs shaping that department. Such a setting could be reasonably expected to recognize and support CCT's

distinctive mission. Moreover, SOCI would be free to focus on its central mission of teacher education and certification.

7. CCT is involved in outreach work that parallels units associated with Leadership in Education—NERCHE and the Boston Writers Project. In the spring of this year, CCT initiated "Thinking for Change" (provisional name) to extend CCT's impact beyond its formal programs of study: "Thinking for Change aims to catalyze, facilitate, and support the efforts of people in all kinds of organizations to take initiative and generate constructive change" (Prospectus, April 2000). The first activity of this unit was a professional development workshop in July, primarily for college teachers, on fostering critical thinking about biology and society. The second project is a Think Tank for Community-College Teachers of Critical Thinking, modeled on NERCHE's successful think tanks on issues in higher education, which began at the start of October and will meet five more times this year.

8. Although CCT has not traditionally focused on inner city schools, it can contribute to the special role Leadership in Education is taking in that area. The addition to CCT since 1994 of Larry Blum's courses on multicultural and anti-racist education connects the program more directly to GCOE's urban mission. CCT's approach to mid-career professional development should also allow it to help GCOE and UMass Boston respond to external pressure to improve education in inner city schools.

9. There are precedents in Leadership in Education for cross-college arrangements and appointments that CCT also requires. Four of the regular CCT teaching faculty have tenured appointments in CAS. Cross-college institutional arrangements to formally recognize this are not only overdue, but also advisable to help secure continuing CAS contributions to required CCT courses (CCT601, 602, Phil 501, Psych 650) and electives (CCT652, CCT627). This would also regularize the inclusion of CCT faculty from CAS in promotion and other reviews for the CCT faculty in GCOE.

CCT features unaffected by relocation

10. Moving CCT out of SOCI should not disrupt Peter Taylor's progress as a junior faculty member. His fourth year review was conducted primarily by faculty members outside SOCI. Indeed, the chairs of the review committee and CPC were in Leadership in Education and two of the other three members of the review committee were CCT faculty from CAS. Peter's collegial connections span both departments and beyond GCOE, so a cross-department/cross-college review would also be appropriate for his upcoming tenure review.

11. CCT courses allow students from other programs in GCOE and in nursing to fulfill requirements for courses in critical and creative thinking and in teaching in the different subject areas, especially in mathematics and science. In its core courses and electives, CCT enrollments depend on cross-program, cross-department, and cross-college students, in particular from Teacher Ed., the doctoral programs, and nursing. This would not change with a change of departmental location.

12. Moving from SOCI would not result in CCT faculty teaching fewer courses used by M.Ed. students, and, conversely, staying would not result in more. When Delores Gallo returns from medical leave, if both full-time CCT faculty teach six courses, Peter Taylor could replace the part-timer co-teacher in Creative Thinking (CCT602) and offer one of his science electives (CCT611, 640, 670) every semester. Moral Education (CCT620) would have to be dropped

unless taught by a part-timer and, the only other CCT course regularly taught by a part-timer, The Dialogue Process (CCT616) is not offered through GCOE, but through Continuing Education. (Since the fall of 1998, other CCT courses have been taught by part-timers, but only to cover for Delores Gallo being on medical leave, for Peter Taylor's initial semester CLR, and while he participated in the CIT faculty seminar on teacher-research.)

13. CCT aims to play "a significant role in a strong and distinctive GCOE [and UMass Boston] contribution to educating math and science educators, a role that combines CCT's emphasis on conceptual change in students and understanding science in its social context" (June '00 AQUAD plan). In the summer CCT initiated an Institute in Science, Education, and Society, and this year Peter Taylor is a co-PI in an Eisenhower grant for professional development for secondary science teachers from South coast schools. These efforts promote teaching innovation from the angles of both curricular and school/college change, and so span the two departments.

Summary

CCT's intellectual and programmatic fit with Leadership in Education is strong and the fiscally neutral move could be made without undercutting GCOE's ability to contribute to improve education in urban schools. Indeed, the move would affirm the long-standing and the emerging contributions of CCT faculty to the College's mission.