

Appendix A: The Program's Journey

When the Master of Arts degree in Critical and Creative Thinking at UMass Boston was established in 1979-80, three interrelated objectives were stated:

- to improve the critical and creative thinking skills of the program participants;
- to help the participants achieve an understanding of the phenomena of critical and creative thought, and to think through the problems and issues concerning these phenomena... explored in the intellectual community; and
- to translate this understanding into significant classroom or other educational practice in various subject areas.¹

The founding faculty—Bob Swartz, Steve Schwartz, and Delores Gallo²—came from philosophy, psychology, and education, respectively. When the program began, there was only one specialty area, Moral education and moral issues, and participants were teachers and administrators from local schools.

By 1986, two additional specialty areas—Literature and Arts, and Mathematics and Science—had been added and faculty members Arthur Millman and Carol Smith³ had been hired in Philosophy and Psychology, respectively, with a 50% commitment to CCT. Theses and capstone syntheses completed since then have shown students pursuing their personal and professional development in the creative arts, government and social services, and the corporate sphere, as well as in education, broadly construed. A gradual evolution has continued. By the time of the scheduled review in 1994-95, dialogue had emerged as an exciting new theme, which led to the addition of the fourth specialty area, which came to be called Workplace and Organizational Change. The original emphasis on critical and creative thinking in mostly philosophical and psychological terms has been enriched by the faculty and students paying more attention to the social influences on critical and creative thinking and to the supports needed to foster such thinking—or, more accurately, to foster critical, creative, and reflective practice.

A number of strands have contributed to the evolution of the Program towards social concerns and organizational change, including: Larry Blum's contributions since the early 1990s to antiracist education; Peter Taylor's emphasis on the life and environmental sciences in their social context since his appointment as the second fulltime CCT faculty member in 1998; and Nina Greenwald's work on problem-based learning, especially in the biomedical sciences. Student interests in facilitating organizational change have grown substantially since 2000, but a wide range of students' interest persists. Significant numbers of CCT students still work in areas such as writing and the creative arts and general classroom teaching—sometimes in combination with organizational change!

The Program Review in 1994-95 under the leadership of Pat Davidson was very favorable. However, during a University budget crunch the following year it was decided to reduce the resources for the Program. The Program's home was moved from the College of Arts

¹ Cited in the 1994 self-study.

² Bob Swartz left the Program in the late 1980s. He and Delores Gallo retired from the University in 2002. Steve Schwartz retired in 2005.

³ Carol Smith retired in 2014.

and Sciences (CAS) to the Graduate College of Education (GCE; now College of Education and Human Development), with a concomitant increase in teaching load and decrease in the number of faculty members assigned full-time to the Program (from three to two). Other details of the move were not formalized, but it was expected that CCT would continue to offer courses that had been taken by many students in education programs. The 50% faculty teaching load contributions from the Philosophy and Psychology departments continued, as did Philosophy's contribution of Larry Blum's teaching of one section every third or fourth semester. Resources within the GCE turned out to be less stable. There was a delay in replacing a retiring full-time CCT faculty member during the 1990s; an extended medical leave of Delores Gallo then her early retirement in 2002 (with no replacement search authorized); prioritizing of GCE resources towards teacher preparation and national accreditation; and a GCE policy from January 2001 making Departmental Chairs the nominal Graduate Program Directors (GPDs), thus eliminating the course load reductions and stipends for the faculty who nevertheless continued to fulfill all the responsibilities of GPD. All these circumstances notwithstanding, CCT admissions returned to high levels before the last AQUAD review in 2002-3.

Ongoing adjustment to changing circumstances was reflected in the goals and objectives spelled out in the Program's June 2000 AQUAD planning document, which were assessed in great detail in the 2002-3 self-study. By reconfiguring CCT's operations and achieving greater efficiencies the Program sought to:

- maintain its strength as an interdisciplinary program with a strong focus on individualized learning, growth, and mid-career professional development;
- develop a clear and constructive role in GCE, coordinating with other GCE graduate programs and outreach initiatives; and
- address the 1994-95 review committee's recommendations, in particular, that of presenting a higher profile, within the university and in the wider community, for what is distinctive about CCT's work.

The 2002-3 self-study report and supporting material documented an impressive level of planning, innovation and accomplishment, especially given the reduced resources available to the Program. The Review Committee "found that the CCT Program is providing high quality and innovative education to non-traditional students who are unlikely to find substitute degree programs at UMB" and recommended "that a relatively small amount of resources be invested in this program to ensure that UMB [could] continue to provide the leadership in innovative multi- and inter-disciplinary pedagogy represented by this Program." The interim GCE Dean and the Graduate Dean formally recognized the strengths that the Committee had found. However, the GCE Dean saw the Program as outside the College mission and discontinued a 50% lecturer position that had been funded (first by the Provost, then by the College) for the previous three years to compensate for Delores Gallo's absence. Deciding that only one faculty member dedicated full-time to the Program was insufficient, the Graduate Dean halted admissions to the M.A. Program. The Program initiated a partnership with the Division of Corporate, Continuing, and Distance Education (CCDE, now University College) to promote the 15-credit CCT Graduate Certificate and develop sufficient online sections so that the Certificate could be earned fully online. Initially the electives offered through CCDE allowed students to pursue a focus on "Creative Thinking at Work," but a second focus on "Science in a Changing World" was planned.

Admissions to the M.A. Program were re-opened in 2004 after the new GCE Dean appointed Nina Greenwald as a sabbatical replacement for Peter Taylor in 2004-5, giving her special responsibilities for rebuilding student numbers and program promotion. Her position was renewed by subsequent GCE deans until 2010 (albeit at a less than full-time level from 2007). In 2004 Peter Taylor became director of the University's undergraduate Science, Technology and Values program. Nina Greenwald's teaching load in CCT created opportunities for him to teach across colleges and campuses in the area of science in its social context and, in 2009, with the encouragement of the current Provost, Winston Langley, to initiate a cross-college Science and Society graduate program. This initiative has ended up taking the form of a graduate Certificate and M.A. track within CCT on "Science in a Changing World." In the fall of 2010, University College agreed to fund a 50% assistant coordinator position for this track and to increase to 100% the CCT assistant coordinator position that CCDE had begun to fund in fall of 2009. This latest support was contingent on the Program scheduling sections of required courses and electives so that the M.A. in both the regular track and the new track can be completed by students over a 2.5 year period entirely by taking sections offered through the College.

The 2010-11 self-study documented ongoing adjustments to changing circumstances and resource limitations. The accomplishments and virtues of the Program were recognized in the review. After the review, the Program's formal home moved to University College (previously CCE and now College of Advancing and Professional Studies [CAPS]) in 2012. The hope was that with CCT in CAPS a second faculty position could be restored and substitute for retiring faculty member, as well as allowing for the program directorship to alternate between the two people. Subsequent developments are summarized in the Preamble to the Self-Study.