ANTHONY H. NORMORE AND LYNNE H. COOK

8. THE NEW “PROPOSED” DOCTORAL DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (ED. D.) AT A COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree - a major vehicle for developing school leaders - recently reached a crossroads. Some think the Ed.D. should concentrate more on the work of practitioner leaders in education (Golde & Walker 2006; Murphy 2006); others think it should be discontinued altogether (Deering 1998; Levine 2005). Educators struggle with the wide-spread perception that education doctorates lack rigor and substance. Unlike other fields education uses doctorates to prepare both scholars and the highest level of leading practitioners (McClintock 2005) - often doing neither very well (Murphy and Vriesenga 2004, 2005; Schulman, Golde, Conklin-Bueschel, and Garabedian 2006). Although there is strong evidence that many doctoral recipients trained in the United States are excellent researchers and scholars whose subsequent work contributes significantly to the advancement of educational study and practice (Walker, Golde, Jones, Conklin-Bueschel, and Hutchings 2008) it is critical to continue developing doctoral education programs for the next generation of disciplinary leaders. These future leaders will creatively generate new knowledge, critically conserve valuable and useful ideas, and responsibly transform those understandings through writing, teaching, and application (McCarthy, Kuh, Newell and Iacona 1988; Riehl, Larson, Short, and Reitzug 2000; Schulman 2004; Golde 2006).

Current research claims that changing conditions may mean that current doctoral program designs no longer effectively meet their purposes, as some practices are rendered obsolete (Davis 2007; Golde 2006). In response, Carnegie’s Initiative (See Golde and Walker 2006; Schulman et al. 2006) asks that schools of education foster thoughtful deliberations aimed at achieving an adequate and comprehensive account of the doctoral program’s intellectual and performative qualities. It created four rubrics to measure all doctorates of purpose (the direction and understanding of a program’s expected outcome), assessment (the strategies for determining how well a program does in achieving its expectations), reflection (a program’s on-going habits of reflection about its aims and strategies), and transparency (the extent to which the relationship between purpose, assessment, and reflection in a doctoral program are readily discernable to all elements of the program). Clearly universities need to rethink doctoral programs and create programs that strengthen and assess student learning for academic excellence and social responsibility - that universities need to create world-class centers for socially responsible intellectual and
academic pursuits. In rethinking the doctoral program, universities and schools of education must focus on ways to best facilitate learning communities that promote the intellectual achievement and successful practice of faculty and doctoral students.

The general purpose of this chapter is to present the development process for the newly proposed Ed.D. program at California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH), one of 23 campuses within the California State University system (CSU). Subject to approval by the CSU Chancellor’s Office and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the anticipated implementation of the proposed program is scheduled for January 2010. We situate the doctoral program development within the context of recent research done by the Carnegie Initiative and a needs assessment of the southern region of Los Angeles County. Highlighted are key components of the proposed program including program rationale, targeted student population, collaborative efforts of key players, program design, curricular areas of focus, as well as a brief overview of the program assessment plan. We conclude the chapter with final reflections.

CONTOURS OF DOCTORAL EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA

Since its adoption in 1960, California’s Master Plan for Higher Education has served the state exceedingly well, allowing California to create the largest and most distinguished higher education system in the nation. A key component of the Master Plan is the differentiation of mission and function, whereby doctoral and identified professional programs are limited to the University of California, with the provision that the California State University can provide doctoral education in joint doctoral degree programs with the University of California and independent California colleges and universities. This differentiation of function has allowed California to provide universal access to postsecondary education while preserving quality (California State University, Office of the Chancellor, Chapter 2 of Part 40 of the EDUCATION CODE, SECTION 66040–66040.7, 2007).

Because of the urgent need for school leaders to effect reform in school and community colleges, California made an exception to the differentiation of function in graduate education that assigns sole authority among the California public higher education segments to the University of California for awarding doctoral degrees independently. This exception to the Master Plan for Higher Education recognized the urgency of meeting critical public school and community college leadership needs and the distinctive strengths and respective missions of the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC). Consequently, the CSU was authorized to offer the Doctor of Education degree (Ed.D.) as a result of Senate Bill 724 (Executive Order No. 991, CSU, Chancellor’s Office, 2006). This authorization was legislated and became law in 2005. The legislation intended to pair doctoral preparation of California’s educational leaders with strategies leading to advances for PreK-12 schools and community colleges and the students they serve. It laid a foundation for a cutting-edge approach to doctoral preparation in the nation - in which future leaders study and contribute to significant reforms that can result in measurable improvements in student achievement (California State University, Office of the Chancellor’s