



DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

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December 5, 2003

To: Joan Cherry, School of Graduate Studies, c/o Luke Sneyd, fax: 416-971-3211

From: Professor Alister Cumming, Coordinator, Graduate Program in Second Language Education, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, OISE/UT

Re.: two changes to program regulations for the graduate program in Second Language Education (SLE) at OISE/UT

C.c. Anne Jordan, Graduate Coordinator, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning; Glen Jones, Associate Dean for Academic Programs, OISE/UT

I am forwarding, for formal consideration by the School of Graduate Studies, two proposed changes to the graduate program in Second Language Education (SLE), offered through the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning at OISE/UT. The changes were all unanimously approved by the Council of the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (CTL) at its meeting of April 16, 2003. I then forwarded them on to the School of Graduate Studies for approval, but you requested that they first be approved by OISE/UT's Faculty Council (because the proposed policy concerning M.Ed. requirements differs slightly from the overall policy for M.Ed. programs at OISE/UT). That approval has now been made, first by the Admissions, Awards, and Program Standing Committee of OISE/UT's Faculty Council at its meeting of November 5, then by OISE/UT's Faculty Council at its meeting of November 26.

1. *Course addition.* This change is minor. We would like to add to the list of courses previously approved as research methods courses for SLE the course AEC 1400S, Understanding Basic Quantitative Data. This course was approved by the SLE Program Committee on November 27, 2002, and we wish it to be inserted in the next edition of the OISE/UT Bulletin.

The other proposed change is the product of a relatively extensive review of the SLE program undertaken over the past two years (as part of our self-study for the upcoming review of the program by OCGS) by the SLE Program Committee (consisting of all faculty teaching in the program as well as 2 representatives for Masters and Doctoral students), involving 2 surveys of students, 2 focus group meetings of students, a day-long retreat, and several discussions at meetings of the Program Committee. As a result of these deliberations, we in the SLE program are convinced that this change will improve the graduate program, providing more flexible options (which students have requested) while maintaining the academic rigor and quality of the degree.

2. *Option for course-only M.Ed.* Students in the M.Ed. in SLE will have the option of completing the M.Ed. either (a) through the completion of 8 half-courses plus a Major Research Paper (MRP), as at present, or (b) through the completion of 10 half-courses (without the MRP and without a comprehensive examination).

Rationale: The extent of academic work required of students will be equivalent in either option. Current SLE students in surveys and focus group meetings have requested the second option so as to be able to extend the range of their studies and knowledge in this manner. Many Master's programs in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Toronto can be completed by courses only, and some departments (e.g., English) even encourage this. Consideration of the range of courses required to complete comparable programs at OISE/UT and at other major universities in Canada (e.g., Alberta, UBC, McGill) suggests that 8 to 10 half-courses is the norm.

I would be happy to attend a meeting of the relevant committee at the School of Graduate Studies to address any substantive questions that may arise about these proposed changes to the SLE program.

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