

IHE Master's of School Administration Performance Report

Western Carolina University

2006 - 2007

Overview of Master's of School Administration Program

The Western Carolina University MSA Program requires 42 semester hours of coursework distributed among classes in educational foundations (4 courses), professional studies (8 courses in leadership, organizational management and school change), and field experiences (2 internships). The principal add-on license requires 18 to 24 hours, depending on acceptable, prior coursework in their graduate degree. These courses are in the same areas as the MSA requires. Originally aligned with the standards for School leaders, work has been ongoing in 2006-2007 to realign our program with the Standards for 21st Century School Executives adopted by the State Board of Education in the Fall of 2006. In addition, cumulative data collected from each of the MSA and add-on licensure completers and interviews with regional superintendents inform our work. The MSA and Principal add-on licensure programs are housed in the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations (ELF) which has 14 tenure lines, six of which are devoted primarily to the preparation of administrators. Thirteen faculty members teach courses MSA and Add-on licensure candidates take. All tenure-line faculty hold doctorates as do the field practitioners who teach courses as part-time faculty. The Department is committed to the inclusion of regional superintendents among its teaching faculty, sometimes as part-time faculty with responsibility for entire courses and sometimes as guest lecturers in other classes. The WCU service region presents unique geographic challenges. It comprises some 17 counties separated by distance and not easily crossed mountains. A senior faculty member from ELF meets regularly with the Superintendents in the region to assess their needs and to gain input for our programs. She attends all meetings of the superintendents in WRESA. To meet the growing demand for administrators across the state, we currently offer the only online MSA and add-on license in the state. Candidates may complete the program either on a full-time or part-time basis. WCU participants in the Principal Fellows Program are expected to complete additional non-course requirements as part of their MSA obligations. As a capstone experience all candidates must complete an acceptable exit portfolio documenting their proficiency in competencies identified by the state as essential for effective practice, their ability to conduct site-specific action research, their expertise in collecting and assessing quantitative data, and their mastery of specific technology skills. Candidates demonstrate their communication skills both in the development of the portfolio and in its defense before a faculty and peer committee.

Special Features of the Master's of School Administration Program

The WCU MSA and principal add-on licensure programs include programmatic, logistical, technological, and geographic special features. Programmatically, assessment functions are taken seriously. A review of courses for articulation purposes with the Ed.S., in particular, but including the Ed.D. is ongoing. The goal is to complete this alignment and the appropriate revisions by the end of Fall 2007. The internship requires demonstration of competencies rather than satisfaction of a specific number of hours practicing sometimes-narrow ranges of skills. Specific requirements for the portfolio include providing evidence for the acquisition of skills, knowledge and competencies. Faculty members link coursework to field experiences and are sensitive to the need to stress applicability and relevance of specific competencies. Classes are interactive and many incorporate the use of case studies and problem-based learning activities. MSA candidates are familiar with statistical packages that assess data and can use programs such as Excel and the portfolio completion requires them to have experience with NCWise. Candidates create web sites for schools and use publication software to design marketing tools for schools. WCU was an early adopter of technology requirements for all candidates and has consistently been recognized for its efforts in this area. It has a comprehensive support system on campus, sponsors regular training sessions keyed to specific skills, and facilitates faculty members in their quests to remain technology current. A strength of the increased enrollment in the MSA and principal add-on license (since summer 2006) bringing candidates from across the state, is a strong cross fertilization of rural, urban and suburban experiences to the classes. The library has shifted its emphasis to information literacy, provides on-line reserve services to faculty, and supports multiple on-line research resources that can be accessed by candidates at home. The MSA faculty members have continued leadership on pedagogical issues in on-line teaching across the college and university. Geographically, WCU's location in the Southern Appalachians provides MSA faculty with unique research opportunities and pedagogical challenges. Faculty have made sensitivity to school issues in rural settings an important component of some courses, while simultaneously ensuring that program graduates can work in any school setting. They conduct research about schools and schooling in the region, which yielded an average of 4 publications and conference papers in 2006-2007 per faculty member. Also, the program completers in our MSA and principal add-on licenses continue to have a 100% pass rate with our mean score at 181.86/200 (state pass cut score is 155). We are above the state and national average as indicated in the Institutional Summary Report from ETS. In the portfolio evaluations for program completers in 2006-2007 (n=21), candidates had an average of 5.33 standards rated as "exceeds expectations", 1.29 standards rated "meets expectations", and .38 as "does not meet expectations". There were two candidates in the "does not meet expectations" category and both candidates were required to do additional work to address the standards.

Direct and Ongoing Involvement with and Service to Public Schools

The MSA program provides service to public schools by preparing prospective school administrators who possess the knowledge, skills, experiences, and dispositions that will enable them to be effective educational leaders. Of the over 1600 documented separate activities provided by WCU, a number are provided by the faculty involved in the MSA. The current MSA program focuses on the role of the principal as a data-driven educational leader who must work in a rapidly changing educational environment that demands high academic performance from all

candidates and measurable accountability from all educators and produces school practitioners who possess statistical, technological, organizational, and personal tools conducive to success in the regional. For example, candidates in the teacher leader course, in conjunction with their principal, must define and address a “real problem” in a school where they work or intern through action research. MSA candidates in the School Community Relations class complete an environmental scan of a public school. This has become a popular document with principals and superintendents in the region who use the scan for planning purposes and SACS visits. Candidates in this class also create marketing tools for schools. Candidates in School-Based Curriculum and Instructional Leadership class work with a novice teacher to use end-of-grade or end-of-course test data to plan a unit of instructional aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The candidate then observes the novice teacher and conferences for areas of improvement. WCU MSA candidates complete a course on the role of school leaders in special education and conduct a needs assessment to determine and plan professional development for general education teachers relative to special education. All members of the department faculty have personal and professional ties to the region. Last year, the MSA faculty accounted for more than 750 hours of unpaid service to public schools. Beyond this professional service, faculty members also contribute to area schools as members of the community. They have served this past year as judges for regional science and foreign language fairs, served as proctors for EOC and EOG testing in regional schools, and conducted professional development for faculty and administrators. Two faculty members worked with regional educators through the Western Regional Educational Service alliance to develop a plan for teaching educators to use data in decision making. One faculty member attends all the WRESA Curriculum Council Meetings and another attends all the Superintendent’s Council meetings. Another faculty member worked with two different districts to evaluate their professional development. One also conducted workshops on teacher leadership and for potential leaders in systems in the regions. One faculty member is part of a team that was successful in receiving an NC Quest grant to work with a district to strengthen the skills of middle school science teachers and to work with their principals in helping them to implement new strategies.

LEAs/Schools with whom the Institution Has Formal Collaborative Plans	Priorities Identified in Collaboration with LEAs/Schools	Activities and/or Programs Implemented to Address the Priorities	Summary of the Outcome of the Activities and/or Programs
Asheville City Cherokee Central Cherokee County Franklin County Haywood County Jackson County Macon County Polk County Rutherford County Swain County Yancey County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority: <i>21st Century Professionals</i> • Strategic Priority: <i>Leadership for Innovation</i> • Strategic Priority: <i>Safe, Orderly, and Caring Schools</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-day workshop for principals, through WRESA, on leadership for special education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals developed strategic plans for supporting general and special education teachers relative to special education • Principals developed strategic plans for supporting parents and informing community relative to special education.
Asheville City McDowell County Hickory County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority: <i>21st Century professionals</i> • Strategic Priority: <i>Leadership for Innovation</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSA faculty participation in the IMPACT grant leading to a School Leadership Institute on Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer institute is planned and participants will address 21st century skills in technology.
Buncombe County McDowell County Rockingham County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority: <i>21st Century Systems</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model Clinical Teaching Program- Superintendents teach or team teach with University Faculty in the MSA and/or Ed.D. 	Comments from clinical faculty showing advantages of collaboration: “This opportunity helps me stay current in the field and provides me an opportunity to participate in the preparation of new district level leaders.” “It is very beneficial for me to be on the front lines of principal preparation.”

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Asheville City Cherokee Central Cherokee County Franklin County Haywood County Jackson County Macon County Swain County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority: <i>21st Century professionals</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting beginning Teachers A workshop and subsequent online and face- to-face meetings provided support for administrators working with beginning teachers. 	Principals and Assistant Principals reported that the strategies for supporting beginning teachers shared in the workshop and follow-up were beneficial in helping them to establish systems of support.

Support for Beginning Administrators

An alumni organization for graduates of the MSA is currently being developed. Its purposes are to ensure that the networks established during the program continue as candidates move into administrative positions throughout the region and to maintain contact between the university and those individuals. The meetings of the alumni group will include professional development, as well as, social gatherings on and off campus. The Department facilitates the growth of those connections by using MSA graduates as guest speakers, as resources for current candidates as potential future candidates in its Ed.S. and Ed.D. programs. A current MSA candidate, who has already been hired as an Assistant Principal was the recipient of the Don Chalker Award in the College of Education and Allied Professions. She will be tapped as a resource for guest class lectures. In an ongoing effort to help candidates review for the licensure exam, a video was prepared by a faculty member based on her experience taking the exam. MSA candidates and graduates are invited to professional development opportunities on campus, and participate occasionally in field-based research projects conducted by faculty. MSA faculty members routinely visit internship sites, invite field mentors to serve as seminar guest speakers, solicit and share information with candidates about prospective positions available in the region, and write formal letters of recommendation on behalf of graduates. Like other MSA institutions in the state, the Department supports career development of beginning administrators through the maintenance of user-friendly advanced degree options.

Support for Career Administrators

Several ways the WCU MSA program supports career administrators have already been mentioned. A senior faculty member attends the regional superintendent's association (WRESA) monthly meetings. There has been one regional meeting of MSA faculty with superintendents to discuss their needs for MSA level administrators, recommendations for the program, and ways that we can cooperatively provide professional development for new and career administrators. The Department supports Ed.S. and Ed.D. programs that serve career administrators. Department faculty conduct research with field practitioners on topics germane to their practice. In 2006-2007 examples include continuing work on evaluation of specific programs (e.g. Even Start), professional development training for administrators and teachers, and consultation. MSA candidates intern in regional public schools, learning from and assisting sitting administrators. Many of their course requirements include the generation of products (school newsletters, brochures, environmental scans, action research projects, improvement plans, and web pages) which meet the needs articulated by sitting administrators. The MSA faculty attends professional meetings in the region and state designed to serve the needs of sitting administrators. For example, in 2006-2007, two faculty attended the NCASA spring conference, three faculty attended and presented at the UNC Teaching and Learning through Technology Conference. Three faculty attended and presented at the American Educational Research Association Conference. Two faculty presented at an international conference on Gender and Education in Ireland and one faculty member presented at a conference in France.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

A. Headcount of students formally admitted to and enrolled in programs leading to licensure.

Full Time				
	Male		Female	
Graduate	American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	American Indian/Alaskan Native	0
	Asian/Pacific Islander	0	Asian/Pacific Islander	0
	Black, Not Hispanic Origin	0	Black, Not Hispanic Origin	0
	Hispanic	0	Hispanic	0
	White, Not Hispanic Origin	2	White, Not Hispanic Origin	6
	Other	0	Other	0
	Total	2	Total	6
Part Time				
	Male		Female	
Graduate	American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	American Indian/Alaskan Native	0
	Asian/Pacific Islander	0	Asian/Pacific Islander	0
	Black, Not Hispanic Origin	2	Black, Not Hispanic Origin	6
	Hispanic	0	Hispanic	0
	White, Not Hispanic Origin	53	White, Not Hispanic Origin	109
	Other	3	Other	3
	Total	58	Total	118

B. Quality of students admitted to programs during report year.

Masters	
MEAN GPA	N/A
MEAN NUMBER OF YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE	N/A
NUMBER EMPLOYED IN NC SCHOOLS	N/A

C. Program Completers (reported by IHE).

Program Area	Masters Degree		Graduate Licensure Only	
	PC	LC	PC	LC
PC Completed program but has not applied for or is not eligible to apply for a license	PC	LC	PC	LC
LC Completed program and applied for license				
School Administration	13		18	7
Comment or Explanation				

D. Time from admission into School Administration program until program completion.

Full Time						
	3 or fewer semesters	4 semesters	5 semesters	6 semesters	7 semesters	8 semesters
Masters-First Awarded		2	2			
G Licensure Only	1					
Part Time						
	3 or fewer semesters	4 semesters	5 semesters	6 semesters	7 semesters	8 semesters
Masters-First Awarded			1	10	11	4
G Licensure Only			2	3		1
Comment or Explanation						

E. Scores of school administrators on the SLLA.

2005 - 2006 School Administrator Licensure Pass Rate		
Specialty Area/Professional Knowledge	Number Taking Test	Percent Passing
School Leadership Exam	14	100
* To protect confidentiality of student records, pass rates based on fewer than four test takers were not printed.		

F. Satisfaction of program completers/employers with the program in general and with specific aspects of the program, as rated on a 1 (lowest) to 4 (highest) scale.

Satisfaction with...	Program Completers	Employer
quality of school administration program.	3.50	3.82
preparation to use technology.	3.29	3.73
preparation in instructional leadership.	3.57	3.73
preparation to assist teachers in meeting the needs of diverse learners.	3.21	3.64
Number of Surveys Received	14	11
Number of Surveys Mailed	22	22