FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK

Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning
2000-2004

(Revised February 2003)
Part 1. Faculty Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning 2000-2004
(Revised February 2003)

The Faculty of Education and Social Work* in the University of Sydney focuses on the professional education of teachers and social workers, the study of associated (or relevant) social sciences, the extension through research of knowledge in the fields of education and social work, and the provision of special services related to education and social work, to government and community agencies and policy makers. To achieve these ends, the Faculty commits to teaching its undergraduate and postgraduate students through courses which exemplify best teaching practices. It will maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of high quality undergraduate and postgraduate education both in Australia and internationally. In so doing, it supports the University’s teaching goals and strategic and operational objectives, in particular the University’s goal to maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, both in Australia and internationally. The Faculty has taken a leadership role in responding positively to the Ramsey Review of Teacher Education in NSW. The recommendations of Quality Matters have been considered as part of the Faculty’s establishment of its Professional Experiences, Partnership and Professional Development division in August 2002 and the appointment of an academic director. In 2002, the accreditation review conducted by the Australian Association of Social Workers highlighted the exceptional quality of the degree programs in Social Work.

The Faculty of Education and Social Work’s Teaching and Learning Plan relates to the University’s goals and to the related goals of the Faculty of Education’s Strategic Plan 2000-2004. In that Strategic Plan the Faculty has three major goals relevant to Teaching and Learning:

- to maintain and enhance its position as an outstanding provider of high quality undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, both in Australia and internationally (Major goal 1 in Faculty Strategic Plan: Teaching and Learning)
- to continue to make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the professional practice of education and social work (Major goal 5: Engagement with industry and the professions)
- to maintain a high level of exemplary service to the community (Major goal 7: Service to the community)

The Faculty of Education and Social Work’s Teaching Plan 2000-2004 is based on reflection upon its teaching strengths and weaknesses, together with consideration of the challenges it faces and opportunities available to it. One challenge it accepts is to regularly review and document its teaching aims and objectives, together with qualitative and quantitative evidence of the extent to which those aims have been achieved. The Faculty’s Teaching Plan commits to an iterative review process which primarily serves the purposes of achieving excellence in pedagogy which is recognised, experienced and validated by its students, its graduates and those associated with the Faculty. As part of this ongoing review process the Faculty was restructured in February 2001. Three schools became two: the School of Policy and Practice and the School of Development and Learning. Each school now has a series of collegial research clusters to support the teaching and research interests of both staff and students. As part of this restructuring the Faculty also re-established the position of Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning). In January 2003, a third School (Social Work and Policy Studies) was established.

* Social Work joined the Faculty in January 2003. After the new Faculty members have been physically located in the building, work will commence on a further revision of the Teaching and Learning Plan. A revised strategic plan will be submitted as soon as is practical.
It should also be noted that the Faculty has had a long term commitment to the practice of benchmarking with the Faculties of Education at the University of Melbourne and the Queensland University of Technology and more recently School of Education at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. The Faculty continues to maintain above average results on the Student Course Experience Questionnaire including Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standards, Appropriate Workload, and Overall Satisfaction. The Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee has looked more closely at the Appropriate Workload Scale in 2002 as this was the area where students indicated most concerns.

**Mission:** To provide world class teacher education undergraduate and postgraduate programs known to be valued by students, the profession and the general community

**Background**

The Faculty of Education and Social Work is located in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. It comprises the two schools from the former Faculty of Education and a new school, Social Work and Policy Studies. It is physically situated in a relatively new building and its annex on the central campus of the University which houses all the Faculty’s staff and provides most of the Faculty’s teaching spaces. It is one of the largest Faculties of its type in the country. In 1999 the student load in Education (excluding local and International fee-paying) was 1172.8 EFTSU. This Education component has grown to 1537.5 in 2002. Of this load, approximately 87% is undergraduate.

The Faculty regards innovative teaching and learning as central to all academic tasks including research, professional development and administration. Our students and the professional community of which we are part expect that the Faculty offers quality pedagogy, responsive to current needs and capable of graduating students well prepared for professional life as social workers and as educators in schools, tertiary institutions and educational organisations here and overseas. Teaching and learning within the Faculty, and elsewhere, has to be responsive to the increased expectation that our graduates will be prepared for careers in an ever changing workforce, and be responsive to dramatic social and technological changes.

Pedagogy within the Faculty is closely linked with research so that course objectives not only reflect those social and cultural changes which influence educational policies and practices but also so that courses are underpinned by principles of best practice in teaching and learning. The Teaching Plan for the Faculty 2000-2004 reflects the iterative and generative nature of constructing courses which allow students to develop their individual strengths and interests while also developing the abilities, attitudes and understandings most likely to prepare them for the challenging and dynamic realities of professional life in education.

As a large Faculty committed to meeting the complex, diverse and specialised needs of its undergraduate and postgraduate students, the Faculty of Education and Social Work offers a number of courses:

**Undergraduate Programs**
- Bachelor of Education (Primary)
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education) (Human Movement and Health Education)
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary: Humanities and Social Sciences)/Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Science)/Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Mathematics)/Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Psychology)/Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Psychology)/Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary Education: Design and Technology)
- Bachelor of Education (Primary and Secondary) School Counselling
- Bachelor of Social Work
- Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Social Work
Graduate Coursework Programs
Bachelor of Teaching
Master of Social Work
Master of Social Work (International)
Master of Teaching (Primary and Secondary)
Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies
Graduate Certificate in Social Work: Dying, Death & Palliative Care
Graduate Certificate in Social Work: Professional Practice & Supervision
Graduate Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Graduate Diploma in Educational Studies
Graduate Diploma in Social Work
Graduate Diploma in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Graduate Diploma in International Education
Master of Education (designated areas):
  Management and Human Resource Development
  Information Technology in Education
  Educational Psychology
  Health Education
  English Literacy and Drama in Education
  Research Methodology
  Special Education
  Teaching and Curriculum Studies
  TESOL/Languages
  Vocational Education and Training
  Research degrees
  Master of Philosophy in Education
  Master of Philosophy in Social Work
  Doctor of Education
  Doctor of Social Work
  PhD

With the introduction in 2000 of the Combined Bachelor Degree courses with the Faculties of Arts, Economics and Science the secondary students' teacher education experience in their discipline areas has been enhanced. This has allowed the Faculty to strengthen its links with the Faculties associated with the courses. It is proposed to seek a closer association with their Teaching Committees by sharing expertise through inter-Faculty membership of Teaching Committees.

The following provides a summary of the Faculty's specific strengths and weaknesses as well as potential threats and opportunities.

Strengths
- the positive result evidenced by the Faculty’s SCEQ and CEQ data.
- the calibre of the undergraduate and postgraduate students who choose to study in the Faculty as evidenced in UAI cut-off and in the varied and diverse backgrounds of M.Teach students.
- the comprehensive nature of the Faculty’s courses and their standing in the education and social work professions, nationally and internationally.
- the targeting of Faculty students for employment in educational institutions as revealed in NSW DET Targeted Recruitment Program.
- the comprehensive expertise of the Faculty’s staff across various fields of teaching and learning recognised in part through a number of University Teaching Excellence Awards, as well as published research.
• its leadership in educational innovation, for example, its responsiveness to the Teacher Education Review, chaired by Dr Gregor Ramsey.

• its response to changing demand and market forces, for example, the targeting of market demand in the Masters courses leading to maintenance of numbers, in contrast to other Faculties of Education, and similarly the introduction of double degree undergraduate courses to allow flexible career choices.

• its strong links with the profession through the Industry Advisory Committee, the Associated Schools program in the Practicum, the Centre for Practitioner Research and Sydney Principals' Institute.

• the innovative inquiry/case based approach to teacher education offered in the M.Teach.

• its leadership in literacy education evidenced in staff scholarship and research in the field, the active roles undertaken by staff in advising the NSW Board of Studies, Government bodies, international agencies, HSC examination committees, and the advisory and support role played by the Children's Centre.

• its offering of expertise in curriculum development to other Faculties such as the Faculty of Dentistry, and to Centres such as the National Voice Centre.

Weaknesses
• the need for up-to-date use of information technology in teaching and learning experiences.

• a need to continue streamlining some aspects of the Faculty’s degree and course structure to optimise staff resources deployed in teaching.

• the small number of graduates (compared with other comparable Faculties) who engage in full-time study after graduating.

Threats
• a possibility that the predicted shortage of teachers could lead to pressure to lower accreditation standards.

• the increasing workload and low morale of the teaching profession which could lead to fewer postgraduate coursework enrolments.

Opportunities
• to use the current Teacher Education Review in NSW to revise Professional Experiences offered in the Faculty and to further develop our partnerships with schools.

• to provide more ongoing short professional development opportunities for teachers, including

• to further develop summer and offshore international programs and flexible delivery of courses.

• to develop stronger associations with the wider professional community.

• to continue to build on the improving financial position of the Faculty to strengthen its staffing profile, including an expansion of the staffing profile in Social Work.

The overall objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Plan are constructed with direct reference to the University Strategic Plan but with specific strategies relevant to the Faculty. These are summarised below.

Part 2. Faculty Operational Plan for Teaching and Learning 2000-2004

The specific management procedures designated to implement strategies and assess progress towards the strategic objectives of the Faculty of Education will focus in 2000-2004 on six of the University’s Objectives, namely:
1. Attract an increasing proportion of high calibre students, both local and international.
2. Provide curricula that are informed by current research, scholarship, creative works and professional practice.
3. Provide a rich diversity of formal and informal learning opportunities and professional experiences for all students.
4. Graduate educators and social workers who are well equipped to contribute successfully to the education and social work profession and to the global society in which they live and work.
5. Attract, develop and reward well qualified staff with a strong commitment to teaching informed by research.
6. Improve facilities and teaching infrastructure.