

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

REQUEST FOR NEW PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA:
MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN
TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATORS

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to establish a new Master of Arts Program in Teacher Leadership for International Educators in the Department of Educational Leadership and Postsecondary Education in the College of Education.

Executive Summary: The proposed program will accommodate the schedule of K-12 practicing teachers in international settings. This proposal was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. No concerns were raised when it was presented to the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education. The proposed program addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priorities to “provide educational excellence and impact as well as economic development and vitality” and Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive.”

Background:

Description of proposed program. The proposed graduate program is designed specifically for teacher leaders in American International Schools and leads to a Master of Arts (MA). This two-year program is beginning its fourth cohort of students under the Principalship major of the Master of Arts in Education - with adjustments to coursework not relevant for international students. Because this program does not lead to principal licensure, the department wishes to proceed with a more descriptive and transparent major title, as well as designating the new major as a Master of Arts program. Tailored to accommodate the schedule of K-12 practicing teachers in international settings, this program is framed around the Teacher Leader Model Standards (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium). The program is framed around research-based teacher leader standards that lead to competencies necessary for assuming instructional and school leadership roles. Those competencies include the following domains:

1. Fostering a collaborative culture to support educator development and student learning;
2. Accessing and using research to improve practice and student learning;
3. Promoting professional learning for continuous improvement;
4. Facilitating improvement in instruction and student learning;
5. Promoting the use of assessments and data for school improvement;
6. Improving outreach and collaboration with families and community; and
7. Advocating for student learning and the profession.

◇ **Academic objectives.** The proposed program is framed around research-based teacher leader standards that lead to competencies necessary for assuming instructional and school leadership roles. Those competencies include the following domains:

- ⇒ Fostering a collaborative culture to support educator development and student learning.

- ⇒ Accessing and using research to improve practice and student learning.
- ⇒ Promoting professional learning for continuous improvement.
- ⇒ Facilitating improvement in instruction and student learning.
- ⇒ Promoting the use of assessments and data for school improvement.
- ⇒ Improving outreach and collaboration with families and community.
- ⇒ Advocating for student learning and the profession.

- ◇ Need for proposed program. The needs for the proposed program resulted many years of consultation with international administrators in their dealings with the university. The growth of teacher leadership and those positions has grown rapidly in international schools; as they have here in the U. S. University faculty have worked with these administrators in various settings throughout the years, and their desire for a master's degree with a teacher leadership focus was clearly identified.

Started as somewhat of a “trial” program under the Principalship major, the department is now beginning the 5th and 6th since Spring 2013. Three cohorts have graduated; more than 70 additional students are on an “expressed interest” list. A cohort beginning in Spring 2016 at the Singapore American School has indicated that they would like a new cohort to begin every January.

- ◇ Link to institutional strategic plan. The proposed program is connected to the College of Education's Strategic Plan, Goal 2: Objective 5, “Developing and expanding alternative delivery models that extend beyond the UNI campus,” and “developing a comprehensive plan for distance education and alternative program delivery at the [international] level.” In addition, Goal 3: Objective 1 stresses the importance of a “commitment to diversity, collegiality and mutual respect among all members of the college community.” This program blends the work of several departments and places faculty in positions of collaboration and collegiality; framed around working with a diverse audience of students and stakeholders teaching in countries all across the globe. This diverse audience of students is also directly connected with Objective 2 from this goal that discusses “increasing by 10% the diversity of the student body within the College of Education...”

Since this program began in Spring 2013, almost 20% of the students enrolled would be classified as diverse students. Goal 5 states, “Establish strong, mutually beneficial relationships with external constituencies”. This program has helped to put the University of Northern Iowa on the map in regions all over this world, and has further strengthened our relationship in locations where connections have previously been made. This proposed program is directly connected with the university's strategic goals in several facets. First, we are “promoting innovation in graduate education” (Goal 2: Objective 2). Second, students are immersed in “diverse global environments” (Goal 4: Objectives 1-3), and these immersion-based experiences provide a wealth of benefit and knowledge to faculty. Finally, this proposed program ties in well with Goal 6: Objective 2 which addresses “increasing the number of non-traditional and distance learners.”

- ◇ Relationship to existing programs at UNI. The proposed program has already been offered as a tailored form UNI's Principalship program with course substitutions made where applicable. Courses with the same title have been adjusted for the relevance of the international teachers. However, the proposed program is framed around the Teacher Leader Model Standards; whereas the Principalship program is framed around the Iowa Standards for School Leaders. Graduates of the first two cohorts have already enrolled in courses in the Principalship program for Iowa licensure as they see the relevance of obtaining an Iowa administrator's license beyond the Master's degree in teacher leadership.

The Department of Teaching, Office of Student Field Experience indicates that there is a direct correlation between the schools where UNI places international student teachers and the schools where the students from this program are currently teaching. Having an already established relationship with partnership schools for International Student Teaching, these same schools have developed a deeper appreciation for the value of the education at UNI and encouraged their teachers to join UNI's Master's program as well. With the on-going presence of both Master's students and student teachers on their campus, both programs benefit.

The schools who have hosted UNI's Master's program have also reached out now for ways to host UNI alumni in their first year teaching as interns. This is now an established practice in one international school in India, and in Spring 2015, two more schools in Brazil will be piloting this initiative. These UNI alumni are registered for six graduate credits of internship, which is being paid by the international school. UNI Career Services Overseas Recruiting Fair for Educators is able to promote one more way that the UNI campus can support the needs of the International Schools that attend this fair by advertising the UNI Master's program. At least one school in Brazil has now decided to attend the fair that previously did not; based on the numerous opportunities that UNI provides for international schools, including this master's program. The proposed program will not duplicate any other existing program at the university.

- ◇ Relationship to existing programs at other colleges and universities. There are no other programs similar to the proposed program at other Iowa colleges and university. There are out-of-state program that recruit the same audience of graduate students, but they do not have the teacher-leader focus and are based elsewhere across the country.
- ◇ Unique features. UNI is recognized internationally for its commitment to international education, as evidenced through its long-standing UNI Career Services Overseas Recruiting Fair and international student teaching placements. Some of the world's top educational leaders in schools where UNI has had collaboration for many years have sought out UNI to provide this program more suited to the creation of future leaders. In addition, UNI has already established a track record of offering a Master's program to teachers in American Schools worldwide.
- ◇ Resources. UNI has the personnel, facilities, and equipment to establish and maintain this high quality program. The department works closely with the Division of Continuing Education and Special Program, as well as departments within the College of Education (Departments of Teaching and Educational Psychology and Foundations) and across campus (Department of Languages and Literatures).

- ◇ Student demand. Some of the world's top educational leaders came to UNI asking for the development of a program tailored to their teachers in international settings. They wanted the program to be geared towards the development of teacher leaders. Since the creation of the current program, over 60 students have been enrolled representing over 20 schools in more than 10 countries and across five continents. There are currently 87 students that have expressed interest, or enrolled, from the database kept in conjunction with the Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs. As students move from school to school (very typical of international teachers), they take with them the successes and growth they have gained from UNI's program and thus, become the best source of marketing. As they become tomorrow's educational leaders, they have already begun to promote the program to their own teaching staff.
- ◇ Duplication. The proposed program is not expected to duplicate any existing program in the state.
- ◇ Workforce need/demand. The pipeline of well-prepared international administrators is very limited; partially due to limited opportunities for international teachers to be involved in quality leadership accreditation programs. Often, administrators who retire are asked to return as interim leaders while schools recruit quality leaders.¹
- ◇ Consultation with representatives of other programs. There was none reported.
- ◇ Cost. The following costs are anticipated for the proposed program. Anticipated tuition revenues of \$216,000 will cover the costs.

	TOTAL NEW COSTS	TOTAL COSTS
Year 1	\$35,000	\$35,000
Year 2	\$70,000	\$70,000
Year 3	\$70,000	\$70,000
Year 4	\$70,000	\$70,000
Year 5	\$70,000	\$70,000
Year 6	\$70,000	\$70,000
Year 7	\$70,000	\$70,000

- ◇ Projected enrollment. The enrollment is expected to be 20 students in year one, increasing to 40 by year seven.
- ◇ Anticipated sources of students. The primary source of students will students from international schools throughout the world, most of whom hold a bachelor's degree only. They are pursuing a master's degree in leadership due to the increased need and availability of these types of positions in their educational structures.
- ◇ Accreditation. The program maintains a distance format; additional accreditation is not necessary because of the percentage of coursework taught off campus.

¹ Conversation with administrator.

- ◇ Articulation agreement. Articulation agreements will be not be pursued.
- ◇ Off-campus delivery. The program is delivered from the UNI campus via synchronous and asynchronous teaching. Some adjunct instructors who are international administrators serving abroad are used. In those instances, UNI still maintains support via eLearning but actual delivery comes from the location of the adjunct. UNI recently had a site-based cohort at the American School of Bombay in Mumbai, India. In that situation, three courses were delivered face to face by certified administrators working within that setting.

Future site-based cohorts will likely have some face to face instruction incorporated as well, both from certified administrators in that setting, as well as from UNI faculty traveling abroad to teach on site. The next site-based cohort, due to demand and increased collaborative efforts with administrators, will originate from the United Arab Emirates. Additional cohorts are likely to come from the American School of Bombay. The co-coordinator is relocating next fall to the Singapore American School; the opportunity to grow the program to this region is highly likely.
- ◇ Opportunities for internships. Students work with assigned mentors at their respective schools, gaining valuable experiences and complete internship experiences, but are not involved in what is typically portrayed as “student internships.”
- ◇ Marketing plan. This program uses services provided through the Office of Distance and Continuing Education to market and promote. In addition, the program co-coordinator, who fulfills her UNI responsibilities from her overseas location, is highly embedded in international school settings and provides a strong marketing value for this program. She is continually contacted by aspiring students and practicing administrators regarding upcoming cohorts. Similar to the Iowa-based educational leadership programs, considerable marketing is done indirectly as students graduate and embed the program in their own school’s professional development training.
- ◇ Evaluation plan. Program evaluation has taken place in two specific formats. First, students are provided a mid-program survey to help coordinators determine various aspects of the program and the degree to which the program is meeting the needs of the students. Second, each student, in their portfolio defense, is asked a series of questions regarding their perception of all aspects of the program. That feedback has already contributed to significant changes that have been made during the delivery of the initial “trial” cohorts. With that feedback, changes have been made to the MA program detailed in this proposal.

As coordinators work with international administrators, attend international leadership conferences, and work directly with all stakeholders involved, perspectives on the success and/or areas for growth are consistently exchanged. This network provides coordinators with valuable information and guidance. There is a potential need to more formally gain this information through an International Teacher Leadership Advisory Board.

The Office of Distance and Continuing Education continues to work closely with this program providing guidance on necessary enrollment numbers, high quality technical support on the synchronous Adobe Connect sessions and asynchronous use of BlackBoard, as well as strong promotion of the program through promotional materials and financial support to attend conferences and stay abreast of international trends.

- ◇ Additional information. This program developed as a result of some of the top international school administrators in the world coming to UNI and explaining their need. UNI has a strong reputation overseas and these top administrators wanted to use that strength and requested a graduate program designed around teacher leadership. This type of program strengthens their own professional development at their schools and helps them to increase the likelihood that their best teachers will remain longer in their schools. Teacher Leadership is about building capacity in others and when this happens, students are ultimately the “winners!”

- ◇ Date of implementation. Creation of the proposed program will become effective upon approval by the Board of Regents and will be included in the University’s General Catalog. The anticipated implementation date is Fall 2016.