

REVIEW TEAM MEMBER REPORT

CENTER FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, LEARNING, AND TEACHING
in the
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND ALLIED PROFESSIONS

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In reviewing the self-study submitted by Dr. Doris Bergen, I have focused on the areas suggested by Associate Dean Bruce Perry. These include viability, self-generation of resources, contribution to improving practice and advancing knowledge, and relation of the mission and activities of the Center for Human Development, Learning, and Teaching to the mission and vision of the School of Education and Allied Professions and the university.

Viability: The Center, created in 1990 with a small amount of seed money, has embraced a wide, changing group of faculty and students. This group has consistently obtained funding for a range of studies. Efforts of committee members have allowed members to meet their purpose: "to promote interdisciplinary research, information dissemination, and in-service training related to education and adjustment of at-risk populations, focusing especially on children, youth and their families."

Self-generation of resources: After obtaining seed money and small grants during the early years of operation, the Center began to increase resources rapidly through several grant awards in the \$200,000 range. The Center is self-supporting. Basic office needs have been funded through Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR). Some changes in ICR seem to have been made and should be re-examined, since the center is bringing in significant, consistent funds.

Improving practice and increasing knowledge: Although begun with grants addressing inclusion of children with special needs in various programs, the Center has broadened its focus to include work in a key current issue, Literacy in Prekindergarten. Providing evaluation services for several major education programs has also been a valuable component, particularly since much of the work involves programs for at-risk populations. Because of the breadth of backgrounds of the faculty involved, the sharing of information provides opportunities for faculty to introduce one another to new perspectives and enhances the research that each can accomplish. In turn, these results reach professionals and non-professionals in the community. Thus a multitude of individuals can increase knowledge and improve practice.

Professional approach: From the beginning the Center has been conducted in a professional manner. The purpose/ mission statement was stated with clarity and has stood the test of time. Policies and procedures seem to be stated in a non-burdensome manner and followed appropriately. The center has succeeded in attracting over 50 faculty, but has followed its own policies by eliminating those who were not actively participating. Maintaining a core group of 20 individuals seems to have been a key to the success of the group, while bringing in new participants has helped move the organization to new, yet closely related, undertakings. The director seems to have been expected to assume the leadership role with neither compensation nor released time. Attaching more significance to this role and rewarding it in some substantial way should allow this group to go well beyond being self-sustaining to being a major contributor as a research component of a major university.

The report of the Center for Human Development, Learning and Teaching documents that this organization is indeed viable. It has brought together an interdisciplinary team, has succeeded in obtaining funding, and has continued for more than 10 years to produce knowledge and to improve practice. The Center should be continued and provisions should be made to increase the visibility of the work of this group, recognizing its contribution to the university and to the broader community.