Task Force on Graduate Education: Selective Excellence

Program Ratings and Rationale

Rating: High Quality

Higher education appears to be the strongest of the three subtracks in EPLS. Higher Ed enjoys a strong national reputation which allows the program to compete for top applicants nationwide. The PhD program's selectivity of its applicants, and the completion rate (65%) and TTD (4.0 yrs) of its graduates are good. Placement of PhD recipients is stated to be strong, primarily in academic settings, although not much information was provided. Doctoral students are inadequately funded. Many students continue to work full-time in their professions while working on their degree which makes 4 yrs seem rather short for a research doctoral degree. Additional external funding is needed through grants. An acknowledged strength is the faculty-student and student-student collaboration on research projects, resulting in student presentations at national conferences and a high student publication rate.

The Higher Ed MA degree recruits and trains a small number of experienced professionals from area colleges/universities and related public and private agencies who wish to further develop as advanced scholar practitioners. Selectivity therefore is modest at best; diversity is acceptable considering the area's population. For an MA program there appears to be strong interest in the degree and outcomes are acceptable and appropriate overall.

There appears to be a promising merger plan in place with Student Affairs Administration and Research that will provide potential growth and new direction to both the MA and PhD programs in Higher Ed.