

## Frequently asked Questions about the CREATE Program and Process

Prepared by the CREATE Committee  
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The following questions have been asked during the last 4.5 years of CREATE program planning. Answers are provided to assist faculty members in understanding the complex factors, principles and negotiations the CREATE Committee has pursued.

### Program Orientation

1. How does the CREATE program development respond to the university's focus on research?

*The charge of teacher education at a research-intensive university is to prepare teachers for their responsibilities as educators in both local and global contexts. Teacher educators at UBC consider inquiry to be a hallmark of teacher education and development. In making this statement, principles 8 and 11 are considered from the recently ratified Association of Canadian Deans of Education's Accord on Initial Teacher Education (2006). The Deans unanimously agreed that: "An effective initial teacher education programme supports a research disposition and climate that recognizes a range of knowledge and perspectives" and "provides opportunities for candidates to investigate their practices." The CREATE Teacher Education Program revision draws attention to our own research orientation and encourages teacher candidates to inquire systematically into their own practice.*

*A commitment to inquiry can be found in the inquiry seminars running through the program and, more importantly, infused throughout the program. Ideally thematic cohorts in both the elementary and secondary programs will orient the inquiry orientation for groups of students.*

2. What is meant by inquiry-oriented teacher education?

*In order to sustain and improve their practice, teachers should be in the habit of asking critical questions about curriculum choices, pedagogical decisions, and other aspects of their practice. Teacher education that is "inquiry-oriented" thus aims to develop in teacher-candidates, in addition to other pedagogical abilities and knowledge of the curriculum, this habit of inquiry. Inquiry-oriented teacher education is one of four paradigms of teacher education: a) behaviouristic (emphasizing specific and observable teaching skills); b) personalistic (focusing in the psychological maturity of teacher candidates); c) tradition-craft (based on the accumulated wisdom of practice derived from experience); and d) inquiry (concerned with which educational goals should be*

*given priority, and with the knowledge and skills needed to achieve those ends)*  
*(Zeichner, 1983).<sup>1</sup>*

3. What is the purpose of inquiry-oriented teacher education, as represented in the CREATE proposal?

*The purpose of inquiry-oriented teacher education is to cultivate discernment and wise judgment about what is desirable in the name of education. It is assumed that educational phenomena (e.g., teaching, curriculum, classroom events, school textbooks, educational standards, educational systems) are socially constructed, complex and uncertain enterprises, and that inquiry is necessary if educators are to understand whether current educational practices serve identified human needs and satisfy important human purposes.*

4. How does inquiry-oriented teacher education differ from the applied science model of teacher education?

*While an applied science model emphasizes mastery of an extant knowledge base as the route to excellence in teaching, the inquiry-oriented model promotes an exploration of the particulars of one's practice in its specific context in relation to general knowledge and beliefs about teaching as the route to decisions about how to act (Pajares, 1992). Allowing moderate uncertainty (as in the process of inquiry) offers the chance to reinterpret the meaning of a situation and holds out the possibility of innovative, alternative or more ethical action.*

5. How do the inquiry seminars support the inquiry orientation of the program?

*While the entire program as it is proposed is intended to support the development of an inquiring stance, the "inquiry seminars" focus specifically on this. In the first inquiry seminar, the emphasis is on the development of reflective inquiry, i.e., inquiry into the teacher-candidate's own practice; in the second seminar, the emphasis is on inquiry in the form of research on a specific topic (e.g., ecological education, challenges for recently immigrated students, curriculum or textbooks as cultural and historical objects); in the third seminar, the emphasis is on inquiry into the teacher candidate's own professional future and the future of the teaching profession more generally.*

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<sup>1</sup> Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, 62, 307-332.

Tom, A. R. (1989). Inquiring into inquiry-oriented teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 36 (6), 35-44.

Zeichner, K. (1983). Alternative paradigms of teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 34 (3), 3-9.

## Program Length and Total Credits

6. Why is the program 60 credits?

*UBC requires a post baccalaureate degree program to have 60 credits.*

7. Does the BCCT require an after-degree BEd program?

*No, although they do require a completed degree at the post secondary education level.*

8. If BCCT does not require a BEd degree, why are we creating a BEd rather than a diploma or certificate program?

*All across Canada, BEd programs are widely accepted as a requirement for teacher certification. Non-BEd Canadian programs are being phased out in favour of BEd programs. Where they do exist (e.g. PDP at SFU) graduates begin their careers at a lower salary level and must take additional coursework (e.g. diplomas) to reach a comparable salary level to our graduates.*

*Moreover, when UBC created the 45 credit Secondary Diploma in Education for adult educators seeking certification, the BCCT and UBC would only accept these restricted credit conditions for adult educators who had been employed full time by school districts for 5 or more years.*

9. Why not invest in a dual degree program rather than pursuing a 12-month program?

*We currently have two dual degrees (in mathematics and physics education). These degrees are teaching us a great deal about the possibilities and challenges of working with another Faculty on campus. At the current time, our program could not be a cohort-based program if we followed the restrictions embedded in the UBC undergraduate programs timetable and sequencing of courses. One principle we have held to in the CREATE process is to the importance of cohort based programs. Despite these difficulties, we continue to discuss possibilities with the Faculties of Arts, Land and Food Systems, and Science. We hope to propose more dual degrees once the 12-month program is implemented.*

10. Why not pursue a two-year (or 18-month) after degree program?

*Although originally intended for students with three years of university, in fact, our two-year program typically attracts students with four-year degrees now.*

*While the 12-month program is being advocated at this time, dual degree programs will follow in the next phase of program development. The dual*

*degrees will be 3 + 2 (i.e. 3 years of Arts of Science and 2 years of Education) or 3.5 year + 1.5 years. Thus the dual degree program will be similar to our current two-year program, and they will be offered to both our elementary and secondary programs options.*

*Moreover, with the national Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) described in question #17, teacher mobility issues have been eliminated making it easy for teachers to move from one province to another. As a result, teacher education programs across Canada are now competing with one another. Our 12-month program remains competitive in the province and the nation.*

*Lastly, as the CREATE committee studied how cohorts work in our current program it became apparent that it is more difficult to engage tenure-track faculty members in the two-year program as compared to our 12-month program. Tenure-track faculty members prefer to have teaching loads on a one-year rotation rather than a two-year rotation. Given the CREATE Committee's desire to involve more tenure track faculty in the program and to reduce the financial pressure on our students it was decided to pursue a 12-month program.*

*This decision was underscored at the September 2009 Formal Faculty Meeting.*

11. Why not pursue a 4-year BEd program?

*This possibility was posited to the Faculty. It would allow us 60 to 90 credits of Education courses, but it would only allow first or second year Arts and Science courses. Our Faculty did not like this idea for either the elementary or secondary programs. It should be noted that the University of Victoria has opted for a 4-year elementary BEd degree program with very few Arts and Science courses. They continue to offer their 5-year Secondary program (equivalent to our program).*

12. Why not pursue a combined 4-year BA and BEd (that is a BAEd)?

*While this option would not typically allow students to fulfill the requirements for both Arts and Education, it may be an option for select groups. For instance, the School of Music and our music education faculty members believe this option would be very attractive to both partners. Given this option would only work for select areas more discussions are needed.*

13. Why isn't the program length and total credit value being voted on at the June 15 Faculty Meeting?

*At our Formal Faculty Meeting in September 2009, the following motions were approved.*

*The motions were:*

*Motion (Irwin moved, Erickson seconded): To approve in principle, the teacher education program structure advanced by the CREATE committee (12 month after degree and dual degree). Approved.*

*Motion (Irwin moved, Erickson seconded): To approve the CREATE curriculum development committee proceeding with detailed course development based upon the current planning. Approved.*

*The CREATE committee believes the above motions support the planning that has occurred over the last academic year.*

14. Why are there approximately 20 credits per term when the undergraduate standard is 15 credits?

*At UBC, it is not uncommon for professional degree programs to expect higher credit loads. For instance, in Medicine and Midwifery students complete 38-40 credits in two winter terms followed by field placements in the third semester. In Dentistry, students complete 60 credits over 10 months.*

*By offering a 12-month, 60-credit, after degree program, teacher candidates receive an in-depth, thematic, inquiry-based professional experience within a cohort lead by expert faculty members. The merits of the program outweigh the shortcomings.*

## **Budgetary Challenges**

15. Why are we having a Formal Faculty Meeting in June to move forward with the program when we could do this in fall when more people are on campus?

*Although the CREATE Committee tried hard to have the full proposal to the Faculty earlier in the year, we were not able to meet our original timeline. We appreciate that some faculty members will be away in June including some CREATE Committee members. However, given the budgetary challenges facing the Faculty DAC is eager to show the Provost that our Faculty is making significant changes that will help us meet the forecasted budgetary shortfall. If the Faculty votes in favour of the revised program in June, course consultations can occur immediately afterwards and throughout the summer, thereby allowing CCASA to attend to the materials in early September. This means we could hold a final vote on the courses in late September. Should this happen, there is a chance that the materials will be through Senate in the fall, thereby allowing us to implement the program in 2011. If any part of the process is delayed, the program will be delayed by a year.*

16. How does the CREATE program address the new budgetary framework?

*In anticipation of the university moving to a new budget model the decision was made to move to a 1 hour = 1 credit system. This means that we can no longer offer 0 credit practica when we pay faculty associates for supervision, or 2 credit curriculum courses in which instructors are paid for 2.6 credits and students are in class for 3 hours. This principle can also be interpreted in the following way:*

- a) If the 1 hour = 1 credit formula was superimposed over the current 12-month elementary program, students would be taking 87 credits in 12 months.*
- b) If the 1 hour = 1 credit formula was superimposed over the current 12-month secondary program, students would be taking between 64-69 credits in 12 months.*

*Clearly our 12-month elementary program students are under tremendous pressure. They are not taking two years in one; they are taking three years in one. The 1 hour = 1 credit not only makes our program consistent with the new UBC budgetary model, it provides a more manageable program for our students.*

*At the current time, very few of our secondary students complain about coursework overload. However, our elementary students consistently complain. The 1 hour = 1 credit model is one way the CREATE program addresses the time intensity issue.*

17. What is the AIT and how does it affect our program planning?

*The 2009 Federal 'Agreement on Internal Trade' provides labour mobility across Canada for all trades and professions, including teaching. The BC government passed Bill 11 on October 29th, 2009 in support of the AIT. This legislation requires that the BCCT grant a teaching certificate to persons with valid Canadian certificates. The BCCT bylaws and policies implementing the AIT came into effect January 1st, 2010.*

*This means that UBC is now competing with all teacher education programs in Canada. Admittedly, graduates of some programs will be placed at a lower salary level upon securing a position in BC because the requirements of some programs are less demanding than those in British Columbia. However this also means that labour mobility is not a provincial affair any longer. While our program needs to consider our provincial obligation we must also ensure we are not narrowly defining ourselves as a teacher education institution for the province, indeed, we are educating prospective educators for the nation and the world.*

18. Has CREATE considered the supply and demand challenges facing BC school districts?

*CREATE committee members have not been charged with this responsibility. However, members of the Teacher Education Office attend biannual meetings with the BCPSEA (BC Public School Employees Association). Working with universities and school districts the BCPSEA is creating a database to provide a fine-grained analysis of the supply and demand needs within the province. We anticipate this level of detail within the next year or two. At the current time, data is mostly anecdotal or based on generalized data (population growth versus retirements).*

*TEO has increased recruitment efforts where demand is high (e.g. home economics and French). We also believe our thematically based elementary cohorts are making our graduates more marketable (e.g. SEL [social and emotional learning], TELL [teaching English language learners], KIPP [kindergarten in primary programs]).*

19. How does the CREATE program respond to the supply and demand of BC teachers through its UBC quota?

*The CREATE committee has not been charged with determining the size of the Teacher Education Program. The quota is negotiated at the Dean's level.*

*Having said this, each year, the Dean and Associate Dean, Teacher Education, meet with the Vice Provost's office to review the BEd quota. Over the last 5 years, we have negotiated an intake of approximately 150 fewer students. Compared to 1999, we currently take in nearly 300 fewer students per year. Moreover, we have not continued the practice of over admitting in order to reach the quota on November 1 (when student numbers are counted). We admit to quota for our September starting date. This typically means we have 10% fewer students admitted than 5 or more years ago and that we have not met our quota (on November 1) for the last couple of years.*

*While UBC has traditionally supplied about 55% of the province's teachers, it is also recognized that while some UBC graduates get teaching positions within the province other UBC graduates teach out-of-province or overseas, stay on TOC lists for a number of years, or do not pursue careers in teaching at all.*

### **Coursework and Allocated Credits**

20. Why does the CREATE program proposal offer 1, 2, and 3 credit courses rather than offering 3 credit courses?

*When the CREATE process began, many faculty members called for an innovative conception of timetabling that might include modules, workshops and short courses, as well as longer courses. Cohorts wanted flexibility and opportunities to experiment with how learning experiences were conceptualized and offered.*

*The CREATE committee also knew difficult decisions needed to be made on the essential knowledge needed in a teacher education program, and later, the relative amount of time necessary for each learning experience.*

*While we recognize 3 credit courses are preferred for faculty workload purposes, 1 and 2 credit experiences offer more flexibility and ensure identified content is offered in the program. 1 and 2 credit learning experiences may be timetabled in shorter lengths of time, and be offered contiguously or consecutively.*

- a) Scenario A: placing most, if not all, curriculum and pedagogy courses in one semester offers a rich opportunity for making stronger connections across the subject matter content courses in the elementary program.*
- b) Scenario B: clustering a 1-credit course with a 2 credit course means the same timetable slot can be used for both. For instance, September (3 hours a week) could be given to the 1 credit course while October and November could be given to the 2-credit course (3 hours a week). Thus students will not be taking 2 courses simultaneously.*
- c) Scenario C: some cohorts may wish to integrate the 1 credit and 2-credit course across a semester essentially making a 3-credit course. This may be possible for those cohorts.*
- d) Scenario D: some faculty may teach a 1-credit course in their department and simultaneously teach a 2-credit course for EDUC, thereby offering a way to create strong linkages between both experiences (e.g. ethics course in EDST and the inquiry seminar in EDUC) and both units.*

*The CREATE Committee believes the proposed credit values for courses offer the program more flexibility and more opportunities for making connections.*

## 21. How will faculty members create reasonable teaching loads?

*Typically, tenure-track faculty teach four 3-credit courses, or twelve credits, in one academic year. This will continue. Faculty may choose to teach three 1-credit courses simultaneously, perhaps even in an intensive fashion (e.g. like we currently do in a three week summer school experience). Faculty may also choose to cluster a 2-credit course with a 1-credit course to create 3 credits of teaching.*

*Our current program has 1 and 2-credit courses. EDUC 480 (e-portfolio) is a mandatory 1-credit course for all students. EDUC 420 (School Organization in its Social Context) and EPSE 306 (Education during the Adolescent Years) are mandatory 2-credit courses. EDUC 310 and EDUC 311 (Principles of Teaching), and LLED 301 (Language Across the Curriculum) are mandatory 4-credit courses. Tenure-track faculty have often been involved in these courses. Moreover, TEO finds that many adjunct teaching professors or sessional*

*instructors need one or two credits to create 100% loads. Having this flexibility is desirable.*

22. Why is the Faculty being given one program to vote on and not several to consider?

*Early on in the CREATE process several forums and retreats were held where broad ideas were discussed. From these events, models, diagrams, and course descriptions were designed and given to the CREATE Committee, who read all of the materials carefully and used this knowledge to create the program being presented.*

*While CREATE is not presenting more than one program to vote on, many suggestions were received and considered over the last 4.5 years. Recently conceived models for programs have also been received and reviewed, and while we appreciate the intense interest in Teacher Education, we are unable to respond in writing to letters written to the committee. Throughout the process, feedback has been received and discussed. Departmental CREATE members were given the responsibility to share the CREATE process and deliberations with their departments in ways that were appropriate for their communities.*

23. Why does the elementary program continue to offer all subject areas rather than an integrated curriculum experience?

*The first reason for offering all of the subject areas resides in the nature of our Faculty. We are a Faculty with disciplinary expertise. We are widely known for this expertise and our graduates are known for having taken discipline-based curriculum and instruction courses. Furthermore, by structuring the elementary program so that most, if not all, of the curriculum areas are taught in one semester, we hope to facilitate programmatic structures that lend themselves to more integration across courses. For instance, instructors could agree to consider a common theme across the curriculum courses such as: sustainability across the curriculum or inclusive pedagogy across the curriculum.*

*Secondly, by having an inquiry seminar in every semester cohorts may pose particular questions to be explored in depth. Thus, the content from a variety of courses, including curriculum courses, can be brought to bear upon these questions.*

*The third reason comes to us from teachers themselves. In our consultations with the BCCT, the BCTF, and school districts, some concern was expressed at the limited amount of time given to the subject areas (e.g. 'only 2 hours a week for social studies?') while appreciating the demands placed upon us as we provide an introduction to the profession. No one suggested that we reduce the subject areas, or integrate them. Teachers recognize the demands they face and*

want our teacher candidates to be well prepared for their practicum placements, and ultimately, for their first year of teaching. Everyone appreciates that graduates will need to continue with their learning throughout their career. We hope they continue to learn at UBC with our certificate, diploma and graduate programs when they can pursue depth in a chosen area of professional knowledge.

The fourth reason for offering all of the curriculum areas resides with the BCCT standard #6 that requires that educators have a broad knowledge in the subject areas they are teaching. The CREATE Committee interpreted this to mean access to disciplined based courses. By offering the curriculum courses within one semester we hope also to provide opportunities for integrative experiences. Since elementary teachers are responsible for all subject areas, we are committed to providing courses in all areas, including [core] French.

The final reason resides at the intersection of research and practice. All curriculum areas would argue that teacher education programs must include their areas because of the nature of the elementary program demanding a broad knowledge base. Moreover, intergovernmental organizations like UNESCO are strongly advocating for teacher education programs to include instruction in all subject areas. An example is the recent UNESCO World Congress on Arts Education that follows a decade of work advocating for arts education at all age levels and for arts education to be included in teacher education programs across all countries in the world. The past decade has seen unprecedented documentation with a keen sense of urgency for the inclusion of these subject areas in the curriculum.

24. While the program should be commended for its focus on social and ecological justice and diversity, a much deeper commitment to inclusion is needed. How will this be accomplished?

The intention of the CREATE Committee is to ensure that the entire program is committed to social and ecological justice, and diversity. Having said this, the CREATE Committee recognizes that much more work needs to be done. The CREATE program must be regarded as a living program, constantly changing to meet the demands of the profession, schooling, and society. To do this, our Faculty needs to embrace the strands embedded within the program and provide ongoing professional development opportunities for GTAs, sessional, and adjunct teaching professors in order to ensure a depth of understanding in this area.

Our Faculty is known for our disciplinary expertise. Curriculum and pedagogy courses will be reimagined to incorporate these orientations in the next phase of program development.

*Furthermore, faculty members are welcome to take a leadership role in developing a cohort (or cohorts) designed to focus on these themes.*

*Finally, one mechanism that may help is the creation of a Teacher Education Program Committee (or Program Oversight Committee) that will be responsible for approving and providing feedback on proposed cohort themes and structures as well as making recommendations to the Associate Dean of Teacher Education on the overall functioning of the Teacher Education Program. The CREATE Committee will be asking the Faculty to vote on this proposed committee when the courses go to the Faculty for approval.*

25. Why was the technology course eliminated from the proposed program structure?

*Just like our Faculty needs to be committed to infusing the program with social and ecological justice, and diversity, the program also needs to be committed to infusing the program with a variety of digital learning technologies and current modes of digital communication. After consultation with all of the Department Heads and a long debate on the CREATE committee, a standalone technology course was eliminated with the recommendation that digital learning and communication technologies should be infused in many of the courses in the program, where it is pedagogically appropriate to do so.*

26. Given the premise that the official subject areas identified by the Ministry of Education form the basis of inclusion in the Teacher Education Program, Applied Skills and Health & Career Education should also be included. Is this possible?

*We were not able to provide every subject area with a separate course. For instance, drama is included in one of the LLED courses but it does not have a separate course. Both Applied Skills and Health & Career Education should be infused across the program.*

27. On June 15, 2010, what motion will we be voting on?

*The Faculty meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the following motion. To approve the inquiry based orientation, course titles, course credit values and departmental/TEO distribution of course credits within the revised teacher education program. (Irwin moved; Erickson seconded)*

*The Dean's Office is organizing an e-ballot for all eligible members following the meeting as a substitute for an in-person vote at the meeting. The e-ballot will be conducted by e-mail, with votes to be sent to [dean.educ@ubc.ca](mailto:dean.educ@ubc.ca).*

*Voting will occur between Monday, June 21, 8 AM and Wednesday, June 23, 4 PM. (By June 21, relevant materials including meeting minutes and the meeting*

*video will be posted to the Faculty web site for your perusal).*

*Eligible voting members are listed in the following:*

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=1,11,41,0>

*50%+1 of votes cast in favour or against the motion presented will determine the motion as duly passed or rejected.*

28. Should the vote on June 15 approve the motion put forward, what are the next steps?

*Departments are preparing their full course outlines for consultation across the Faculty. Category 1 and 2 change forms and documents will be circulated and reviewed. Assuming the category 1 change forms are reviewed over the summer, they will then go to CCASA in September. Once they are reviewed, all of the courses will come to the Faculty for a final vote. If the changes go to Senate and are accepted in Senate by November 2010, there is a chance that the program could be implemented in 2011. If this timeline is not met, then implementation will be delayed.*

29. Should the vote on June 15 reject the motion put forward, what is the next step?

*The current BEd program must be revised.*