

White Paper

Organizational Change Processes within CPED-Influenced EdD Programs

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CPED was developed to provide an avenue for educators and others to share change efforts and practices in transforming the education doctorate to a degree that produces graduates who can be stewards in the education profession.

In its current state, the Carnegie Project for the Education Doctorate (CPED) Consortium is comprised of over 80 colleges and schools of education. These institutions have committed resources to work together to undertake a critical examination of the doctorate in education (EdD) through dialog, experimentation, critical feedback and evaluation. (<http://cpedinitiative.org/about>, para. 1).

In 2012, faculty and Fellows from Consortium member institutions engaged in a mixed-methods, multi-case study of the work at 21 of the 25 original CPED members in the redesign of the EdD. Of the 21 study institutions, 11 are designated as very high research activity, 5 as high research activity, and the remainder as some research activity. The focus of this white paper is on the experiences of these institutions as they engaged in the change process to redesign their education doctorates based on the CPED working principles (<http://cpedinitiative.org/working-principles-professional-practice-doctorate-education>) and design concepts (<http://cpedinitiative.org/design-concept-definitions>). The specific topics that will be discussed include why the study institutions became involved with CPED, institutional change agents, and the process of change within these institutions, along with specific successes and challenges encountered.

Impetus for CPED Involvement

There are similarities among the 21 study institutions as to why they became involved with CPED. All of the institutions were part of Colleges of Education in flux and who had already determined – for those that had existing EdDs – that changes were needed. For those that

did not offer an EdD at the time, they were receiving pressure at the state and local levels to offer a practice-based doctorate to serve local, regional, and state school leadership needs. The discussions occurring about the education doctorate at the study institutions focused around four main points: relevancy, rigor, quality, and currency. The underlying reasons that these discussions of the need to redesign the EdD were occurring were tied back to underlying issues with College of Education programs:

- They had a number of students who were ABD and who were not completing;
- Indistinguishable differences existed between the EdD and PhD within a program and/or college;
- Pressures from state leaders who saw other states developing EdD practitioner-based programs were occurring; and
- The demands from the community/region/state for qualified practice-oriented educational leaders were increasing.

In addition to these areas, other discussions of transformation needs focused around reputations of Research 1 (R1) institutions, low enrollments in existing EdDs, concerns with high faculty turnover in departments, inefficiencies of use of institutional resources or lack of resources (e.g., decreasing budgets; overlap in degrees), need to grow enrollments due to decreased state funding, serving the varying internal and external stakeholders' needs, and questions surrounding the relevancy of existing degree offerings to education practice challenges.

Change Agents

In 2005, a presentation about the CPED initiative was presented at the Council of Academic Deans from Research Education Institutions (CADREI) meeting by Lee Shulman. It

was at this meeting that many College of Education Deans were able to obtain information about the CPED initiative, which stirred in some a possible avenue to obtain answers to their concerns of what to do with the EdD at their Colleges. Prior to attendance at the CADREI meeting, some of the Deans at the study institutions were already engaged in dialog about the need to distinguish between their PhDs and EdDs – or that their existing EdD lacked rigor and relevancy. The timing of the CPED presentation coincided with these discussions, and was the impetus for many of these institutions to become members of the CPED Consortium. An additional point and need, and one that had state-level impact was that state leaders were also charging their R1 universities to offer an EdD to meet the needs of constituents by providing a practice-based degree to ensure educational entities had qualified leaders.

CPED was introduced to the study institutions in a variety of ways, but was mainly instigated through the College Dean. CPED had a proposal process for membership and institutions had to submit a proposal to become a part of the Consortium. For some institutions, this proposal was submitted without faculty awareness. For others, department chairs or faculty of specific programs developed the proposal.

The decision to join the CPED Consortium was mainly driven by Deans of Colleges of Educations. Many of the study institutions' Deans strategically shared the information about CPED with particular administrators within the College for them to disseminate, or they chose to share the information personally with coalitions of individuals or groups of faculty who were part of the information dissemination processes. At some institutions, the President or other executive level administrators were the determiners of their institution's involvement with CPED. Only at a few institutions were the faculty the driving force behind participation in CPED.

The strength of CPED lies in its foundation and connection to the Carnegie Foundation. Institutional leaders and faculty perceive that this connection provides credibility to the initiative and since its dialog is occurring at the national level, these institutions wanted to be a part of the discussion. In addition, faculty liked being affiliated with a national group and for some institutions, having opportunities to interact with faculty from R1 universities. Being a part of the CPED initiative was seen as an avenue to be able to influence the discussions surrounding the redesign of the education doctorate in the following ways:

- Address higher faculty turnover in departments/programs
- Address inefficiencies
- Improve program quality and rigor
- Improve completion rates
- Avenue to stimulate ideas, share experiences and failures, and to help with program development
- Promote quicker change
- Provide strategies to distinguish EdD from PhD
- Provide a strong framework in which to transform the EdD

Though the Deans of Colleges of Education were the main conveyors of the message about CPED at many of the study institutions, others took on the role as change agents, with their Dean's support. Each Consortium member institution was charged with identifying a Principal Investigator (PI) to lead their CPED-influenced program through transformation based on the CPED principles and design concepts. Many of these PI's and other institutional members also played a role in the development of the CPED principles and design concepts, as the original members of the CPED Consortium. For the most part, the primary change agent identified was

the project PI. These individuals had tremendous impact at many of the institutions and were seen as the main change agents in moving programs forward in the change process.

The study institutions that appeared to progress the most in their change efforts were those who identified a small number of dedicated change agents who were instrumental in leading and monitoring the progression of the transformation of the EdD. In addition, participants noted how imperative the support of the Dean was to the change efforts. The placement of an administrator as an oversight agent (e.g., associate dean and/or department chairs) as the “eyes of the Dean” also appeared to be a strategy used, but there was no sense that this caused resentment among some of the faculty, but was seen as administrative support. A small number of institutions noted that some had faculty who were dedicated to the project – either because they volunteered to be a part, it fit their philosophy of what they perceived the doctorate of education should be, or they simply held the passion to make the education doctorate a better product. These individuals were the primary change agents in a small number of the study institutions.

Several of the institutions experienced administrative and faculty leadership turnover, which at times affected their ability to progress in their change efforts. There was evidence at several of the institutions that a departing Dean had been supportive of CPED involvement and principles, and had promised or allocated resources, and the incoming Dean did not support this. As noted previously, the PI was an important position for the CPED change efforts. Many of the study institutions experienced turnover in this position – some multiple times. For those that have been able to have stability in their top leadership and PI positions, progress has been forward moving. For those that have had consistent change in leadership, the progress has been stalled. This supports the need to have stable and consistent leadership in the change agent role

for the infusion of the CPED principles and design concepts into the change efforts. Most of the study institutions utilized college committees for specific areas such as curriculum redesign and implementation, which appear to have been instrumental in the change process. This is also where most faculty involvement was noted.

Change Processes

The study institutions experienced varying levels of successes and challenges related to the change process within their college and programs. Some institutions were able to redesign their existing EdDs quickly due to the small size of the institution – identified as “nimble to change” -- and the willingness of those involved to participate in the change efforts, in addition to having strong leadership in the PI position.

The type of institution played an important role in the ability for institutions to make progress through the change efforts. Many of the large public R1 institutions appeared to face different concerns than those that are private or regional. R1’s participants had concerns of how being a part of the EdD is viewed in the tenure and promotion process – with many institutions focused on the prestige of the PhD and its role in the University’s reputation. These institutions appeared to have more challenges with faculty and their participation and support in the EdD change efforts. It does not appear that these concerns have been resolved at any of the institutions that participated in this study.

A number of the participants noted that the redesign of the EdD was occurring at the same time it was being implemented. In this process, key faculty listened to student input and the program made adjustments. All study institutions reflected on the need to continually revisit and revise their programs – with some institutions identifying the program as a “living thing” that needed constant revision and nurturing. Though it appears that most of the institutional

members involved in the change process wanted the CPED-influenced EdD to succeed, low enrollments, a lack of communication, and clarity of the change process appeared to have hampered progress in a time of budgetary and other challenges at some institutions. This was evidenced through constant revisions to requirements – the change process was in constant flux.

The main impetus for change came from those within the study institutions understanding that there was a need to have a practice-based doctorate that was relevant and rigorous, as well as was distinguishable from the PhD. Those that were successful were those that had stable leadership, good communication mechanisms, and program members who desired and supported the change efforts. Though there were pockets of resistance from faculty – mainly at large, public R1 institutions – the resistance was limited and was overcome by most. Most resisters who did not get on board with the change process were either allowed to engage in other programs such as at the master's level or with the PhD, or they left the institution. Faculty who remained engaged and involved in the change processes appeared to be generally supportive of the redesign initiatives.

Other strategies noted that supported the change efforts included providing training to develop faculty knowledge and skills, good communication, adding individuals with new perspectives – having the right people to lead and participate in the efforts, open and transparent dialog, and at times, help from other CPED consortium members and CPED representatives to share best practices and experiences in how to overcome challenges in the change process.

Successes in the Change Process

The participants in this study noted that they had experienced some successes in their change process as they worked as a College to transform their EdD. The change process was quick and barriers were easier to overcome for those institutions that were smaller in size, who

had clear directives, and who had an established vision of the outcomes they wanted for the redesigned EdD. The outcomes of the redesign process based on the CPED principles and design concepts led to increased awareness and respect for practitioners. Key strategies used to overcome resistance in the change process included transparency through documentation, involvement through advisory councils, and leadership support. In addition, when programs had monthly meetings with clear agendas that addressed specific components of program change and that provided updates on the progress made, change efforts were more successful.

Collaboration and relationships have been instrumental to success in the change process with institutions seeing increased interest in the redesigned EdD, and collaborations formed between the institution and school districts and other entities, and between faculty and students. Many of the study institutions have made progress in distinguishing their EdD and PhD programs – creating distinct differences between doctoral preparation for aspiring academicians and doctoral preparation for scholar practitioners. There is evidence in some redesigned programs that supports that students' success and overall satisfaction have improved due to redesign efforts. Students indicated that they felt their needs were being met and that, upon completion of the program, they would be well-prepared to have an impact on education needs.

Challenges to the Change Process

Anytime a culture has to be changed and traditions are challenged – barriers occur in the change process. The challenges in the change process experienced by the study institutions spread across a wide variety of areas. Leadership was an identified challenge at all of the study institutions. Many experienced administrative turnover, which created a lack of support and/or unclear and delayed communication about the change efforts. There were several institutions that identified that the change process was a top-down directive, which caused concern for some faculty. In addition, the vision for change was not always transparent or clear.

Many of the participants noted how slow the change process was. Higher education organizations are known to change incrementally, and the change processes described in this study support that this continues to be a challenge with the redesign the education doctorate. Another challenge noted was specific to communications and noted mainly that there was simply a lack of it. Failure to have clear communication processes and communications at all levels seemed to have the most impact on the buy-in to the change efforts. These communication issues led to environments of distrust at some institutions, and for others – this resulted in the change efforts stalling.

Existing organizational structures also appeared to be a barrier to the change efforts. These existing structures were not conducive to recognizing and supporting the increased workload caused by the redesign of the EdD. In addition, existing university policies on tenure and promotion were a concern to many of the tenured or tenure-seeking faculty at high activity research institutions as they were unsure of how their work with the EdD would be measured.

Resources appeared to be a challenge at all of the institutions. Many of the institutions are state-supported institutions, and decreased funding continues to be a national issue in higher education. In addition, some of the institutions had existing inefficiencies among faculty and low enrollment programs, that affected the funding they could allocate to change efforts.

A final and major challenge noted throughout the study were faculty. Some faculty perceived change efforts were mandatory and being directed from the top-down and were exclusionary. Some were unconvinced that change was needed and so they did not actively take part in the change processes or worked to stall change efforts. In addition, as noted previously, the increased workload for faculty involved in the EdD was a concern to many, as well as how work with the EdD would be viewed through traditional tenure and promotion policies.

Conclusion

The participants at the study institutions portrayed a picture of faculty and administration being excited about being affiliated with a national group such as CPED with its tie to the Carnegie Foundation, and that they would have the opportunity to interact with faculty from large, public R1 universities; opportunities to form new partnerships; and have opportunities to contribute to CPED and the debate surrounding the EdD. The membership in CPED was used as the impetus for change. In addition, being part of CPED brought recognition to the study institutions on the national stage.

CPED was also seen as a place to obtain guidance for colleges and faculty in their redesign efforts, as it provides a strong set of working principles and design concepts, which added credibility to the change process and helped to get the programs engaged in the redesign process. Faculty saw CPED's objectives as a means to help them make the program relevant to practice. Faculty and administration perceived that membership in CPED provided them avenues to seek advice, help them connect with like-minded individuals, allow them to see what other programs looked like, and offer support through the change process. Despite challenges, the faculty participants at the study institutions recognized the positives of being involved with the redesign of the EdD – as a group they wanted to make their program better and CPED provided the guidance and support needed to do this. In some cases, the study institutions had already developed a plan to transform their EdDs prior to joining CPED, but utilized the CPED working principles and design concepts as support and confirmation of the change efforts, as well as to refine their existing programs.

The power of the CPED consortium is attending bi-yearly convenings where institutions share their experiences of the redesign process. The CPED working principles, design concepts, and convenings were used to develop strategies to overcome challenges. Participation in CPED

has led many of the institutions to hold monthly meetings to discuss the changes they wish to make and those they wish to reject; and has enabled them to arrive at a place where faculty are able to function as a department as opposed to being fragmented.

While this may have been accomplished without CPED, CPED has been reinforcing to the study institutions. CPED provides the institutions a language that portrays the EdD as something of value. The biggest influence of CPED in the redesign of the EdD at the study institutions appears to be it was the impetus to redefine the education doctorate so that is distinguishable from the PhD – which was the vision of CPED when it was founded – and establish it as a degree with value.