

# **EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT**

**July 2015**

***CONFIDENTIAL***

***Submitted to the Dean, Faculty of Education***

## **External Review Team**

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## **Executive Summary**

Upon the invitation of the Dean, Faculty of Education, the Unit Review Team members examined the structure and operations of the Masters of Education (MET) program through studying written materials and a two-day site visit in July 2015. The cost recovery MET program currently has high enrolment, satisfactory completion rates and overall good course evaluations. While recognizing these successful components, the Unit Review Team has made recommendations to further improve the program. The recommendations are intended to be read contextually, and in relation to the self-study document and the supporting analysis provided in this report.

The following recommendations are highlighted as part of this summary and are elaborated on in the report, alongside other suggestions. Additionally, questions to be addressed by the review committee in the self-study (page 8) have been answered and elaborated upon.

## **Key Recommendations**

### **A. Programmatic**

1. Redevelopment and redesign of the current program model is recommended, which appears to be relatively unchanged in aims and scope from the prior DET certificate. Leveraging the results of both the self-study and the external review, a 5-year plan should be developed for MET that relates its goals to the Faculty Strategic Plan and overall UGC plans and initiatives for Online Learning.
2. While there certainly could be interest in a more research-intensive stream in the MET program, given the limited resources (tenured/tenure stream faculty), this programmatic shift is not recommended until those resources are in place. This should be incorporated into the 5-year plan (recommendation #1).
3. The admission process should be conducted by tenured/tenure track stream faculty (TS), with consideration for applicant background and prior educational experience (e.g., possible requirements for extra-to-program courses for applicants who do not have an education background and/or experience).
3. The tenured/tenure stream (TS) faculty should provide oversight on the adjunct/sessional faculty appointment, ensuring that relevant hiring qualifications and experience are explicit, and in line with other adjunct/sessional practices at the Departmental level.
4. A policy for Intellectual Property (IPP) should be created to clarify ownership of course material, and all instructional staff made aware of the IPP (e.g., read and understood with a signed document).

5. Assertive marketing would serve the MET program well, especially with respect to recruiting international students. Additionally, further certificate programs could be developed, drawing additional student to the MES program (e.g., teaching, learning and technology for indigenous people). Resources should be allocated to expanding and marketing of the MET program.

## **B. Teaching, Pedagogy & Courses**

1. The MET program should integrate diverse communication technologies, both synchronous and asynchronous, into the MET program.
2. Teaching, especially in a research intensive institution, should be informed and innovated by research. Research/evidence-based teaching with technology excellence in the MET program should be documented, recognized and rewarded (e.g., online teaching awards). Additionally, teaching evaluations for all instructors ought to be reviewed on an annual basis to identify instructors who require additional support teaching online and who may not be well-suited to teach in the MET program.
3. To date, there has been no systematic, whole program, course mapping. It is recommended that the full MET program's course offerings be examined and revised, and new courses created to bring the program in line with current and cutting edge theories and practices related to technology, media and education.

## **C. Students**

1. An exit survey for students who complete the program should be conducted, as well as one for students who do not complete the program. This could provide a clearer picture of student complement, and of who is leaving the program, when and for what reasons. The data collected from the exit surveys can be used to develop metrics for the MET program.
2. Alumni are an important aspect to the ongoing vibrancy of educational institutions. It is recommended that creating and maintaining ongoing connections to the MES alumni would be of long-term benefit to the MET program.

## **D. Governance**

1. Acknowledging that the relationship with MET and CTLT is historical, it is recommended that the Faculty of Education draw support from ETS, rather than CTLT. The funds that are currently allocated to CTLT should be re-allocated to ETS for additional staff to support the MET program.
2. Acknowledging also that the governance of the MET program is complex, it is recommended that a new position (external hire) for an academic director (tenured/tenure track) be created. The Academic Director position should be of 3-5 year term. Any department that chooses to opt in to running the MET program as a "Collaborative" or "Interdisciplinary" program can be the 'department home'

of the academic director.

3. With respect to placement of the MET program in an academic unit, since it is fundamentally an interdisciplinary program (and supported by TS faculty in all departments), the governance model should appropriately represent the dispersed representation of faculty working in this field across multiple departments.

## **Preamble**

The major goal of this external review is to provide the Faculty of Education and units associated with the MET program an opportunity to reflect on its program and performance, and obtain external advice from experts in the area who are at 'arm's length', to guide continuing improvement of both academic and operational quality.

Drawing from the material provided in the self-study, we had the opportunity for further discussions revolving around the issues identified. The ensuing documentation and recommendations are aimed to facilitate: (1) an engaging process with the Faculty of Education, and associated units, about the governance of scholarly, pedagogical, and other professional activities; (2) to provide guidance for the MET program, and associated staff and administrators, and to communicate the quality of the program's operations to all interested parties. These recommendations are based on the program's current performance and activities relative to its peers across Canada, providing all parties associated with the MET program suggestions for effective future planning and resource allocation.

Our review adheres to the guidelines from the External Review Principles, Procedures and Guidelines for External Academic Unit Reviewers at the University of British Columbia. It also provides administrators and associated staff of the MET program with an in-depth analysis of the program goals, and its achievement of objectives and priorities identified in the Faculty of Education and University of British Columbia's Strategic Plans. The function of this process is to ensure internal and external expectations of rigorous quality assurance and commitment to improvement in a manner that achieves effective practice locally, nationally, and internationally.

While an academic review occurs every five years, as noted in the Review Guidelines, and especially given the content of the program, we would encourage a view of self-assessment as a continuous process and as a means of conducting ongoing critical self-assessment, reviewing relevant activities, content, staffing and processes annually, in line with other graduate programs.

The External Review of the Master of Educational Technology Program site visit was held July 2-3, 2015. The visit included discussions with the following people, units, associated committees, support staff, instructors and students:

Dean, Faculty of Education

Department Heads

Associate Deans

MET Management and Budget Committee

MET Advisory Committee

MET Instructors

MET Students

MET Program Administrative/Support staff

## **I. Objectives, Priorities and Activities**

### **A: The unit's goals, objectives, and priorities.**

#### ***Review Committee Findings:***

Begun in 2002 as a joint program with Tec de Monterrey in Monterrey, Mexico (the relationship dissolved in 2009), the MET program operates outside the four academic departments in the Faculty of Education, under the purview of what is now the Professional Development and Community Engagement (PDCE) Assistant Dean. As a stand alone, online graduate program, it has been especially successful at growing and maintaining over the past 3 years its enrollment and running for at least the last 6 years at a surplus. The objectives for the program are stated on page 6 of the self-study document, and seem to be the same objectives that initiated the DET program. As the self study document acknowledges, “there are many more online and hybrid programs that are available that focus on educational technology and the expectations of students for high quality, innovative learning experiences are continually rising” (p. 7), implying that there might well need to be a evolution in the program goals and objectives 14 years after its initiation. And, while there seems to have been a general relationship between the MET program and the strategic goals of the Faculty of Education and the university, there is no articulation of that relationship in the self-study document. Indeed, the FoE's strategic plan (2011-2016) nowhere references the MET program, nor sets a direction for general online learning. The review committee found that there was an overall lack of agreement on what the current goals and objectives of the MET program are (beyond the day to day management and delivery of courses) and very little clarity on how the program should be positioned as a graduate program within the FoE. In addition, there is currently no 5-year strategic plan for the MET program that outline its priorities, goals and activities.

#### ***Review Committee Recommendations:***

1. Using results of the self-study and the external review, it is recommended that a 5-year plan for MET be developed that states the program aims and objectives, strategic goals and priorities for research, teaching, and student recruitment and retention.
2. Within this 5-year plan, it is recommended that the MET program's aims and objectives describe how the activities are aligned with the FoE's strategic plan and priority areas in teaching and research, as well as the University's strategic plan for teaching and research.
3. Construct a governance model that supports academic and intellectual leadership, both top down and bottom up. Given that the governance of the MET program is so complex, it is recommended that a position for an academic director (tenured/tenure track) be created. The Academic Director position should be a 3-5 year term. Any department that chooses to opt in to running the MET program as a “Collaborative” or “Interdisciplinary” program can be the ‘department home’ of the academic director.

## **B. The unit's current strengths and barriers to moving forward**

### ***Review Committee Findings:***

One obvious strength of the MET program is its ongoing success at attracting and retaining students, and their relative satisfaction with it. However, the reviewers were struck by the lack of available information on students in the program, those who have graduated and those who have dropped out. There seemed to be no rationale for the number of students in the program, nor any clear vision for sustaining current numbers of students or programmatic growth. Pertinently, the review committee heard that to date there has been little to no advertising of the MET program beyond “Google search” and “word of mouth”. In a sector that, as the self-study acknowledges, is increasingly competitive, one potential future barrier to the continued success of the program is that it will simply not be able to sustain its current numbers. A possible early indicator of this is that enrollment has “plateaued” over the past 3 years.

Another strength is the commitment by some core FoE tenure stream faculty members to design courses and teach in the program, as well as the large cadre of sessional instructors who carry out the bulk of the teaching. That said, the review committee was struck by the lack of a cohesive vision for the overall programmatic structure, particularly related to student pathways through the degree, course design and re-design. While it seemed like most often tenure stream faculty with expertise in a particular area were responsible for creating and revising MET courses that was not always the case. We also noted that tenure stream faculty, instructors and MET leadership and staff, were unclear about how often courses were required to undergo a full revision, nor could we obtain any definite sense of who was responsible for course renewal (instructors, TS faculty, CTLT staff and/or a combination).

The MET program generates surplus revenue (according to the self-study), and while that is an obvious strength, it lacks the financial and academic oversight that are common in other graduate programs. As the self-study made apparent, and the review committee heard repeatedly, the MET program is very much in need of both a new financial and a new governance model. CTLT, for example, takes a sizeable portion of the MET budget, but there is a lack of transparency about which services they provide beyond uploading courses into the UBC Connect shell, and minimal instructor and student support in Connect.

### ***Review Committee Recommendations:***

1. The review committee concurs with the self-study findings that there needs to be metrics in place for tracking the impact of the program and for also identifying its potential weaknesses. It is recommended that every student is given an exit survey when they complete the program, as well as a survey for students who do not complete the program. Student feedback provided for this review (written feedback and in our single conversation with a student) revealed that possibilities exist for students who enroll in the certificate program to ladder into the degree. However, after initial experiences with the certificate, students often decide they would likely complete just

the certificate, not the whole program. This is a lost opportunity for FoE, and for MET. Exploring options that could more closely meet students' needs, with ensuing course and program adjustments, is recommended. In particular, balancing theory and practice, as well as accommodating students whose areas fall outside K-12 (e.g., postsecondary and corporate educational realms) is recommended.

2. It is recommended that the MET program connect with the UBC alumni affairs office and adopt existing methods (where possible) for staying connected with students. The UBC alumni centre also produces a magazine for alumni, and their tactic of highlighting past students in the MET program could be of interest and value. Additionally, the MET program could stay in touch with their alumni through a listserv that provides continuing education in the field of educational technology (something similar to 'Tomorrow's Professor'), and occasional 'updates from the field' that include new courses, certificates, or information on visiting professors.

3. Conduct a review of current MET course offerings, including required courses, with a view to updating and re-aligning course offerings with current literature, research and problematics related to online teaching and learning. Review and redevelopment of course offerings would entail creating a definition and working framework for Educational Technology in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning contexts. AECT, for example, has developed an updated definition for Educational Technology (2015). Administrators of this program should become associated with this organization and guide the MET program with AECT and their work in the field of educational technology. Based on an elaborated Educational Technology framework, the creation of program goals (including the certificates) and objectives should also connect with the Faculty of Education strategic e-learning plan (including blended learning) and the University's strategic plan. Using the program goals and objectives developed in the 5-year program plan (Recommendation #1), it is recommended that new courses be created which fit within the program goals and objectives. This process will also reduce existing course overlap, identify courses, which are outdated (resulting in the elimination of some existing courses), and provide a justifiable rationale for the core courses.

4. Bring the MET program in line with common FoE practices regarding course design and renewal, including ending the automatic \$7500 service charge by faculty and instructors. Additionally, there appears to be no clear guidelines when courses ought to be redesigned (some believe it is 4 years, other believe 5 years, while still others indicate it can be in 3 years if major revisions are required). Additionally, there are no clear guidelines on what are considered minor revisions versus major revisions. If major revisions are required, it is suggested that the course lead seek external funding (as noted, for example, MET is also allotted the greatest share of TLEF funding for 'innovative' educational projects).



## **II. Scholarly and professional activities**

### ***Review Committee Findings:***

The MET program relies heavily on teaching carried out by contract and sessional faculty. This means that while there is an active subset of sessional instructors that continue to apply to attend conferences, while others continue to publish, the majority of instruction carried out in this graduate program (by section) is by instructors who have not published in the last 5-8 years (if ever), and who do not necessarily have direct expertise or research experience in the areas they are teaching. That said, the TS faculty who teach in the program and those who have developed courses are actively publishing and researching, hold external research grants, are attending conferences and workshops related to MET courses and programming, and are nationally and internationally recognized scholars in related areas (media, technology, learning, youth, technology and education, K-12 teaching and learning). MET stretches across all 4 departments with varied representation by TS faculty. Relative to its size and ambitions as a graduate program, MET is not necessarily performing as well as it might, according to the usual metrics. For example, of the CVs the review committee received, only 2 hold Tri-Council funding (CIHR) as Principal Investigators, and 2 as Co-Principal Investigators (SSHRC). We suspect that this is a fraction of the Tri-Council funding held by departments, and, as a measure of a research intensive Faculty in a 'research intensive university', falls well short of the FoE's overall research funding and scope. It should be noted that many MET members have been successful at securing internal funding, especially as it relates to teaching and learning through the TLEF program. It seems that to date, the MET program has been successfully benefiting from the UBC 'brand', and that under the closer scrutiny of the its first review, it would benefit from greater TS involvement and more direct academic oversight.

### ***Review Committee Recommendations:***

1. While acknowledging the current fiscal limitations, it is recommended that the 5-year plan (noted in the first section) should include an action item that will see the gradual increase of TS faculty teaching in the MET program, drawing on existing expertise and interest, and inviting TS faculty with new and varied research agendas to participate in the program.
2. While it is clear there are a few core TS faculty whose research, teaching and interests align solidly with the MET program. However, given its size, this barely represents (at best) 10% of the teaching carried out in the program in any given semester. We recommend that MET actively seek out new TS faculty to develop and teach courses (based on a curriculum mapping a review exercise) to inject a greater TS complement into MET teaching.
3. Establish expectations for research and scholarship for the continuing sessional and contract faculty, including financial support to attend workshops, present papers at conferences, and develop applications for internal and external funding. At present it appears that course appointments are based on traditional/historical appointments –

some dating back to DET, 15+ years ago. In an Educational Technology program, especially at a research-intensive university, it is important that the course instructors are offering the students a vibrant online environment with a current and relevant research agenda.

4. Related to point no. 3, create a transparent process for hiring contract and sessional instructors, overseen by an academically oriented MET hiring committee that sets standards for expertise, previous teaching, scholarship expectations, and other criteria they deem fit.

5. Inequities in salaries are a contentious issue for instructors in the MET program. It is recommended that this issue be addressed directly and made transparent to adjunct/sessional staff, with respect to the union policy, market demand and differential tuition that exist in other faculties. The caveat should be that in Canada in general this is a perennial, deeply entrenched issue that will likely not be easily solved.

6. Hire a TS faculty member to act as a Graduate Program Director (or equivalent) for MET, providing academic and intellectual leadership for the program and to oversee much needed curriculum renewal and innovation. This person could also mobilize faculty in the 4 education departments to contribute knowledge and expertise to the MET course complement.

### **III. Academic Programs, Teaching and Learning**

#### **A. Graduate and postdoctoral education and training**

##### ***Review Committee Findings:***

As a course-only degree, the MET program has very good student retention rates and time to completion. It does not, the review committee heard, actively recruit students to the program, but instead relies on “Google” and “word of mouth”. Alumni and current students in the program were surveyed as part of the self-study. More alumni (78, 24%) responded to the call than active students in the program who provided written feedback (10-14 total of approximately 320 enrolled (as of 2013) representing a response rate of +/- 4%), and the review committee met with just one student out of 320 active enrollments (as of 2013 and via Connect) as part of the review. Students in the program pay tuition on a per-course, cost recovery basis and do not receive any external funding. The program has not to date systematically followed its graduates, and therefore cannot adequately measure the impact of the program, other than anecdotally.

Curriculum is at the heart of teaching and learning, and it is clear from the self-study that curriculum development has proceeded on an ad-hoc basis at best, with new courses developed mostly on instructor self-motivated interest, without a view to a larger programmatic agenda (e.g., program goals and objectives, FoE and UBC’s strategic plan). The review committee found it difficult to navigate the program – does a student take core courses first, or do they proceed via their own interests? This open

structure was corroborated by a few students – there are 4 core courses, but what makes them core and what, significantly, connects them to the heart of the program is unclear. These are questions that need to be addressed with a supporting rationale.

The MET self-study revealed a number of gaps related to how the program measures the effectiveness of teaching and learning. As an example, the committee heard from one of its founding instructors that they had never received feedback on their teaching and course evaluations, neither individually nor in relation to the graduate program as a whole. While the program recently reviewed its teaching evaluation forms, the review committee did not receive (and had to ask for) teaching evaluations. Student evaluations, in general, rate teaching in the program relatively highly, and value the courses and their interactions with course instructors. The course evaluations we reviewed that use a new model for course evaluation were very interesting, as most of the students who responded rated the course, the assignments, and even the work load favourably. That said -- and taking only Summer 2014 and January 2015, as the September 2014 course evaluations we received are presented differently, and with different data than the other two – there are no courses in the program that are rated by students as excellent, and only 3 that are rated as excellent to very good. We also reviewed the course evaluations that occurred during the Learning Management System transition, and note, as does the self-review that it needed to be managed better. There also seems to be a generalized concern in some courses with the very long wait times to receive feedback on assignments, and in a lack of feedback on assignments in general, given the work put into them.

According to the alumni survey conducted as part of the self-study, students are generally satisfied with the quality of the program, and write ardently about its importance in their career trajectories. Students who responded to the call for feedback in Connect were more reserved in their praise for the program, and more critical. For example, some students commented that they feel that they did not see enough instructor presence in their courses, as one put it: “I wondered... if I was in the no communication, no feedback, no interactivity group”. Others commented that they learned very little about existing technologies for teaching and learning beyond the LMS and creating websites, and most commented on a general overlap between courses, too much time generating “discussion posts” for every course, and a concern that much of the content is dated, i.e. more than 10 years old.

### ***Review Committee Recommendations:***

1. Related to the first section on program planning, it is recommended that MET map current course offerings to program goals and objectives, and eliminate courses or content (in particular assignments and readings) that overlap. Additionally, an overhaul of existing course structures and required courses should be undertaken to realign them with current and emerging literature. It is further recommended that oversight on these

program changes be conducted by a TS instructor with current and related research in the field of educational technology.

2. MET administrators should re-consider the use of enforced discussion posts, especially given that it is a repetitive element in the program, and literature for the past 20 years has shown that they are ineffective for students and instructors. Student feedback indicates this is a redundant feature of many of the courses, with students failing to understand the educational value.

3. Review grading policies and discuss these with all instructors in the program (e.g. what constitutes an “A”). It is recommended that University / Faculty policy and guidelines be used.

4. In addition to stressing that instructors be appointed to the MET courses based on being active researchers in the field of educational technology, it is also recommended that a review of end-of-course evaluations be conducted with changes to both courses and instructors that are *consistently* performing below the ‘excellent’ category (e.g., falling in, or below, the “good to adequate” category).

5. Given that student criticism suggests a lack of timely instructional feedback, it is recommended that expectations/guidelines be developed for MET instructors with respect to timelines to respond to students, as well as meaningful and consistent evaluation feedback. Specifically, instructor information on how to provide meaningful feedback in the online classroom should be provided to instructors, in addition to strategies for providing timely and consistent feedback between students.

6. Finally, it is revealing that no one rated the MET courses/program as excellent. It is recommended that funding generated from the MET program be re-invested to ‘level up’ courses, raising them to the standard of ‘excellent’. Reinvestment should be focused on the integration of a diversity of communication technology (synchronous, asynchronous, as well as social media and other net-based technologies), and instructor support for curriculum (re)design that incorporates meaningful integration of these diverse communication technologies.

#### **IV. Faculty, Staff and other personnel matters**

##### ***Review Committee Findings:***

##### **A. Faculty**

As a graduate program in a research intensive university, tenure stream faculty with current and related research interests are under-represented in MET’s teaching complement. The review team heard that there is little or no discussion with Department Heads regarding teaching load (whether on load or overload). In particular, department Heads often do not know if their TS faculty are teaching in MET until after the appointments are made. This makes planning for course assignment with the

department programs difficult. There also seems to be some tension around the construction of courses by TS faculty who have been represented as the “subject matter experts” and the contract and sessional faculty who carry out the work of instructing, especially when it comes to making changes to those courses.

The review committee also heard from the sessional and contract faculty who do the majority of teaching in the program. UBC, like most universities in North America, relies on contract and sessional faculty to do a large part of its teaching, resulting in precarious and undervalued labour for many. While we sympathize that this is also the case inside the MET program, it is not within the purview of this review for us to make recommendations on an issue that is so systemic and pervasive across Canada. That said, it is important to point out that sessional and contract faculty in MET are isolated, and while a core group might meet, most other instructors do not meet and are not necessarily oriented to the programmatic goals, objectives and even to other instructors teaching a same section. Of additional concern is that some of the teaching in the program is being carried out by individuals who have other full-time employment, either at UBC or elsewhere. It is unclear whether this is sustainable, or the best model for producing high quality instruction. For example, when reviewing the instructor CVs, we noted that some instructors have done no research for some time and are not attending conferences or workshops that are related to technology and education. Referring back to an earlier point, attention needs to be paid to instructor selection, ensuring each will provide a vibrant online course through current and relevant scholarship in educational technology.

## **B. Staff**

At present, the MET program appears to be primarily run by part-time and full-time staff whom we heard fall under PDCE’s purview. While we understand the MET operates under PDCE, their exact relationship is unclear to us, and, more importantly, which responsibilities fall to PDCE. Indeed, a common theme throughout the discussions with various committees, units and staff is a lack of definitive understanding as to where responsibilities lie for the MET program. While specific details were not provided with respect to roles and responsibilities of PDCE and MET, we concluded that the MET should no longer be under purview of PDCE and should instead be a graduate program that is shared by the 4 departments, under intellectual and scholarly leadership that is directly focused on technology and education.

## **C. Equity**

Feminist technology studies long ago pointed out a presumed, default association between some technologies, men and masculinities. As a graduate program focused on technology and learning, MET seems to have reproduced that association – there are many more men on the advisory board than women, although faculties of education typically have more women than men, and there are only men in positions of power in relation to the program (though this is also the case in the Faculty more generally). While this disparity was not openly discussed during the review, it certainly is worth

noting that the hegemonic structures which shape technology use, and sometimes curtail innovation, are being reproduced by the MET leadership and administrative organization.

**Review Committee Recommendations:**

1. Create a mechanism for diverse and minority TS faculty to be invited to develop and teach courses in MET from all 4 departments.
2. As mentioned above, create a TS hire whose area of research and teaching is directly related to technology and education, and thereby the MET program. This person should not only represent diversity and be responsible for not only directing the program but also provide much needed academic leadership to ensure that diversity is fairly represented in the MET program.
3. Create a transparent structure for hiring contract and sessional faculty that takes into account both research and teaching experience, as well as diversity.
4. Stabilize the sessional teaching base in the MET program by creating at least 2 continuing 12-month lecturer appointments, or equivalent.
5. As the self-study suggests, create a structure for “on boarding” new instructors and require attendance at instructor meetings. This will not only create a discourse between instructors, but could also serve to drive teaching innovation, as instructors share what works and is not working in the courses they are teaching.
6. At present a non-TS faculty in PDCE oversees the MET program. It is recommended, as noted above, that an Academic be hired to oversee the MET program, while the program rotates between the FoE departments.
7. Break up the “old boys network” that has been making programmatic, financial and leadership decisions for far too long.

**D. Interactions within the MET Program**

During the review, it was noted that core staff tend to communicate well with one another and generally get the everyday business of the degree done, including communicating with students and instructors. Acknowledging this communication between and among staff, communication with CTLT seems to be mostly one directional. Specifically, MET staff has CTLT conduct communication between instructors, which we found as we conducted our meeting to be minimal at best. Communication amongst core TS faculty appears to be virtually non-existent. It also appears that a vocal (male) minority (Instructors and TS faculty) tend to hijack and dominate discussion around inequities in teaching pay that cannot be solved at a programmatic level.

It also became clear during our meetings with the leadership team, that MET falls outside their direct area of expertise, and as such, seems to carry out its programmatic, everyday business outside of their purview. We also noted (and the self-study indicated this) that most faculty do not communicate with one another (instructors and TS faculty), and other than rare meetings of the advisory board, tenure stream faculty and instructors do little other than teach courses (e.g. they do not participate in an admissions committee, they do not sit on hiring committees, they have not been involved in holistic curriculum reform). Finally, and acknowledging that this is likely a sensitive issue, the review committee noted that while there were a few core staff and instructors who seemed enthusiastic about the MET program, there were also many other individuals we heard from, including TS faculty who indicated that they were marginalized and that their voices had been habitually silenced. That most certainly affects morale within and outside the program.

***Review Committee Recommendations:***

1. Without repeating the changes recommended to the governance structure for the MET program, it is recommended that the program drafts circulates for public feedback and implements a “terms of reference” document for the program. Such a policy document could outline governance, committee membership and “flow” of information, budget transparency, and so on.

**E. Interactions outside the MET program**

MET appears to have little or no communication with Heads of Departments, and alumni are not meaningfully engaged.

***Review Committee Recommendations:***

1. A “terms of service” document (see section above).

2. MET has an impressive Indigenous course, which the review committee observed to be a very sophisticated and educationally sound course. There is great potential to build upon this course, with perhaps an online certificate on indigenous education.

3. It was noted that most international MET students are Canadian who live abroad. It was surprising to discover that an online program at UBC has so few international students. Much more could be done to build on the reputation of UBC to recruit these students. Reinvestment of funds to a part-time person knowledgeable about international student recruitment is recommended.

**V. Governance, organization and administration**

***Review Committee Findings:***

**A. Quality and effectiveness of governance**

The MET program is currently overseen by the Senior Associate Dean International and the PDCE Assistant Dean. There is no academic department involved in this overview.

Neither Dean has particular expertise in online learning or educational technology. The day-to-day running of the program is carried out primarily by staff who make programmatic and academic decisions, including admissions, instructor hiring and workload, and course renewal. In other words, most of the day-to-day activities of the MET graduate program, its governance and its finances exist outside the usual governance structure for a graduate program, which would normally have a departmental “home” and also be overseen by a department chair and a TS faculty involved in hiring and admissions committees. Both the self-study and the review committee found that the current governance and financial models are in need of change.

### **B. Infrastructure and resources:**

All of the MET teaching is online, and while staff might be centrally located in PDCE, the review committee heard that there is no designated space for course instructors. This is probably not uncommon given that the course delivery is fully online. However, it means there is no designated place from which instructors might casually or otherwise meet, and from which they might also carry out their common teaching responsibilities and work.

The MET program, at least the way it is currently calculating its costs, shows that it is operating in a budget surplus. The review committee was concerned about the large allocation of the MET budget to CTLT for 3 reasons: 1) while historically CTLT staff might have been highly involved in course design and re-design, that seems to be increasingly uncommon; 2) the Faculty of Education has its own, in house instructional design team in ETS that we heard is supporting not only course redesign and implementation but also instructor issues with Connect such as broken links; 3) we heard from CTLT staff that they primarily now upload course content into the Connect shell, while we also heard from instructors that their technological and instructional expertise means that they are more than capable of mounting courses themselves.

### **Review Committee Recommendations:**

1. Change the MET governance model to one that is run by an inter-departmental program committee, led by a director who is appointed on a 3-5 year rotating basis with committed TS and adjunct/sessional faculty members who will serve as a part of the MET Program Committee.

2. Create a governance model that includes academic leadership (instructors as well as TS faculty), and ensures that leadership is present on hiring and admissions committees. At York University and many other places including UofA and UofT, graduate programs are run by input from multiple departments with collaborate TS commitment to running the graduate program. In the MET iteration of a Collaborative Program governance model, an inter-departmental MET Program committee made up of TS faculty could run the program, with infrastructure provided by ETS and PDCE, with all Admissions and all other academic labour on the MET program provided by the



MET Program Committee. Departments in the Faculty of Education should be provided with a period of time to opt in to providing this graduate program and ask for interested faculty.

3. End MET's relationship with CTLT, moving what support is needed to ETS. If necessary, hire another full time instructional designer to work with MET instructors and faculty.

4. The Faculty of Education has been benefiting from MET surpluses, but it has not to date reinvested in MET – it has made no tenure stream hires, let alone appointed any full-time, Continuing Lecturer positions – it needs to reinvest in its own graduate program, not just hiring staff, but hiring full time teachers and researchers to not only get the program up-to-date, but to put it back on the leading edge.

#### **A. Recommendations from previous review**

##### ***Review Committee Findings:***

The MET program has had no previous review, nor does the self-study point at strategic plans for the future. As a review committee, we speculate that the absence of previous reviews and of a strategic plan is due to its position as a kind of “stand alone” graduate program, and due to the historical lack of academic leadership within its ranks. One symptom of this leadership deficit was present in the review discussions that could not clearly characterize programmatic goals, beyond the simple delivery of courses.

##### ***Review Committee Recommendations:***

1. In consultation with all four departments, and the FoE strategic plan, create a 5-year strategic plan for MET that includes drafting “terms of reference” for its governance, and secures policy for hiring, admissions and other committee membership that draws on expertise from all four departments and sessional instructors.