

Equally, many of those who fail to do so will only "waste" one year since they will either discontinue their enrolment or will be excluded at the end of the first-year course. The overall degree performance seems much in line with other Australian universities.

The entry score does seem to provide a reasonable guide to first-year performance. This is in line with the conclusions reached by Anderson.<sup>6</sup> As might be expected, however, a better guide to overall success at completing a degree is the performance at the first-year level. This appears to be the major point of differentiation in the careers of the students between those who will subsequently perform well at a university and those who performed well at high school. This is supported by the figures in Table B2.

A grading system to control entry to a university is invariably implemented when the demand for places exceeds the supply or the quota available. In the situation where the two factors are equal or where the number of places available exceeds the number of students seeking entry, and this does appear to be the case in some Australian universities, then a more liberal policy of admission should apply. The selection process could then be delayed until the end of the first year. We would envisage that a university implementing an "open entry" policy would not require formal prerequisites for admission to a school or faculty. Instead, one would expect the university to state the recommended standards of achievement considered desirable to commence particular subjects. We feel that there are several desirable social and academic consequences of such a move:

- (i) The pressure to obtain a high entry score at the H.S.C. examination with the consequent rigidity in teaching and learning, all of which is designed "to beat the system", would be reduced.
- (ii) The necessity to repeat the 6th Form in order to obtain a better entry score, as is practised by many students, particularly at independent schools, would be removed.
- (iii) An open entry into first year would allow the "late bloomer", who might otherwise not gain admission, a place in a university.

We are grateful to members of the Registrar's staff, in particular Mr. R. M. Gallagher, for help in the compilation of this report.

<sup>6</sup> Report on evaluation of university selection formulas, D. S. Anderson, 18th September, 1969.

## A COMPARISON OF MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN EDUCATION AT AN AUSTRALIAN AND A CANADIAN UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

*This article examines the regulations governing the award of Master's degrees in Education at two comparable universities in Canada and Australia, in the light of problems concerning equivalences of admission and programme requirements and areas of postgraduate specialisation. It suggests that the increasing interchange of staff and students justifies further serious consideration being given to the problems involved.*

### INTRODUCTION

WITH the advent of McLuhan's global village, and the increasing interchange of professional and academic staff, both administrators and prospective graduate students may well be confused by the problem of the equivalence of qualifications and of courses of study pursued abroad. The problem may be compounded when universities change programme requirements and/or academic designations. In an effort to shed some light on the problem, this article examines and contrasts the requirements for Master's degrees in Education at two comparable universities in the British Commonwealth.

The University of Calgary received its present status under the Universities Act of the Province of Alberta, 1966. It has its origin in 1945 when the former Calgary Normal School became a branch of the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta, in Edmonton. In 1947 the first two years of a four-year Bachelor of Education programme were offered to education students, and in 1963 the Faculty of Education was established. In 1964 the university gained autonomy in academic matters with the appointment of its first president and the formation of its own General Faculties Council. The university became fully autonomous in 1966 and is one of three provincial universities currently operating in Alberta—those of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge—with a fourth due to open in 1974. The University of Calgary is divided into Faculties of Arts and Science, Business, Education, Engineering, Environmental Design, Fine Arts, Graduate Studies, and Medicine, together

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with Schools of Nursing, Physical Education, and Social Welfare. Its current enrolment is in excess of 10,000 students, of whom approximately one-fifth are in the Faculty of Education. This faculty has a teaching staff of 101, divided between Departments of Educational Administration, Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Foundations, and Educational Psychology.

Macquarie University was established by the Macquarie University Act, 1964, and is the third university to be established in the metropolitan area of Sydney. The teaching of postgraduate students began there in 1966, and that of undergraduates in 1967. At present there are more than 7000 students, including full-time, part-time and external, of whom approximately 2000 are enrolled in courses offered by the School of Education. The university is currently organised as a College of Arts and Science, with the following constituent schools: Behavioural Sciences, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Economics and Financial Studies, Education, English Studies, Historical, Philosophical and Political Studies, Mathematics and Physics, and Modern Languages. The School of Education at Macquarie University has a current teaching staff of 85, who teach in either the academic or the professional programmes. Students study for a Bachelor of Arts degree concurrently with a Diploma in Education in a four-year programme.

Both universities are of comparatively recent foundation and, in both, Education is a major area of emphasis, at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

In writing this paper, the authors became aware of the variety of interpretations which might be placed on such terms as "academic year", "full course", "half course" and "seminar course", "full-time" and "part-time" graduate students, and "residence".

At the University of Calgary, the academic year begins on 1st July and ends on the following 30th June. It comprises the winter session of two thirteen-week semesters and the intensive six-week summer session. A student's annual enrolment covers both sessions.

At Macquarie University, the academic year runs from early March to the end of November, and is composed of two thirteen-week semesters.

A full course at the University of Calgary is one which continues throughout either a complete winter session or a complete summer session. A half course is one which can be completed in one semester of the winter session or three weeks of the intensive summer session. Two half courses are, for credit purposes, considered to be the equivalent of one full course.

All graduate courses at Macquarie University are full courses, in that they cover both semesters of the academic year.

A seminar course at both universities is one consisting of group discussions, generally in response to papers given by either the teaching staff or the students.

At the University of Calgary, a full-time graduate student is not permitted to undertake any employment outside the university, although he may be employed for a maximum of twelve hours a week by the university. A part-time student is one who has outside employment and undertakes a maximum of two courses concurrently. Residence, at the University of Calgary, means being enrolled as a full-time student for an academic year.

The Postgraduate Studies Committee at Macquarie University determines the status, i.e. full-time or part-time, of the candidate after "an assessment of the extent of the candidate's commitments other than those related to his programme of studies" (Macquarie University Calendar, 1973:91).

#### MASTER'S PROGRAMMES

##### 1. *Requirements for Admission*

At the University of Calgary, all graduate students are registered in the Faculty of Graduate Studies rather than in the faculty or school in which they are studying. The minimum requirements for admission to Graduate Studies are as follows:

1. A baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from a recognised institution with a minimum grade point average of at least 3.00 (based on a 4-point grading system) in the work of the last two undergraduate years (or graduate years, where applicable). Individual departments may require a higher average. The faculty regulations do not define what is meant by a baccalaureate degree: although bachelors' degrees at the University of Calgary cannot be completed in less than four years, nevertheless the Faculty of Graduate Studies may accept students who completed a bachelor's degree from, for example, the United Kingdom, where the honours bachelor's degree is customarily completed in three years.
2. A statement from the head of the department concerned to the effect that the applicant is, in all respects, acceptable to the department. Students who do not meet requirements for admission, for example, those whose minimum grade point average in the last two undergraduate years may be less than 3.00 but who, in the opinion of the faculty, merit the opportunity to prove their ability to undertake graduate studies, may be classed as probationary graduate students, while students who lack the

necessary course content background in their chosen area of specialisation may be admitted as qualifying graduate students.

Within the Faculty of Education, the departments have additional requirements for admission:

1. The Department of Educational Administration requires:
  - (a) an Alberta Permanent Professional Teaching Certificate or its equivalent,
  - (b) normally two years' teaching experience, and may require
  - (c) an acceptable score on the Miller Analogies Test.
2. The Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction requires:
  - (a) a teaching certificate equivalent to an Alberta Permanent Professional Teaching Certificate, and
  - (b) professional teaching experience.
3. The Department of Educational Foundations requires:
  - (a) background in Education or one of the related disciplines, and may require
  - (b) an acceptable score on the Miller Analogies Test.
4. The Department of Educational Psychology requires:
  - (a) normally five full course equivalents in Psychology, Educational Psychology or related disciplines, and also recommends
  - (b) the possession of a teaching certificate.

At Macquarie University graduate students are enrolled in the school in which they are studying. Candidates for admission to the ordinary, i.e. non-honours, degree of Master, must:

- (a) possess a degree of B.A. or of B.A. (Honours) of Macquarie University and have achieved a level of attainment in an appropriate discipline or disciplines considered by the Postgraduate Studies Committee to be acceptable for the purpose of proceeding to a degree of Master, or
- (b) hold, from another university, qualifications approved by the Postgraduate Studies Committee on the recommendation of the head of the school in which the candidate seeks to be registered, as equivalent to the degrees mentioned above.

Candidates for the honours degree of Master require:

- (a) a B.A. degree of Macquarie University with Class I or Class II honours, with a level of attainment in an appropriate discipline or disciplines considered acceptable by the Postgraduate Studies Committee, or

- (b) qualifications from another university approved by the Postgraduate Studies Committee on the recommendation of the appropriate head of school.

The School of Education has no additional requirements for admission to higher degree candidature, e.g. the school does not require candidates to have had teaching experience.

## II. Programme Requirements

Until the academic year of 1972-73, the University of Calgary imposed a thesis and one academic year residence requirement on candidates for all Master's degrees except those of Master of Social Welfare and Master of Engineering. The Faculty of Education offered only the M.Ed. degree in each of the four departments of the faculty. The minimum residence requirement for this degree was normally one academic year of full-time graduate study and research at the University of Calgary. Although courses were offered at summer sessions, candidates could not meet the residence requirement by attending courses at two consecutive summer sessions. They had to be enrolled for one winter and one summer session consecutively. The minimum requirement was normally satisfied by students entering the faculty from a four-year specialised programme and continuing to work in the same field; e.g., probationary and qualifying graduate students were normally required to complete two years of residence.

All students were required to include both course work and research in their programme of studies and to submit the results of their research in the form of a thesis. This thesis was examined by a committee of at least three faculty members, including not only the student's supervisor but also one member of a department other than that in which the student was registered. The examining committee reviewed the thesis and conducted an oral examination designed to test the candidate's knowledge of the subject matter of the thesis and of related fields. This examining committee might be augmented by up to seven extra members, with the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies or the chairman of the committee.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies required that, in any course taken for credit, the minimum passing grade was that of "B", on a 4-point scale (A = 4). No supplementary examinations were permitted in these courses and, if any student failed a total of two or more full or half courses within the total programme, the student might be required to withdraw. Students might also be asked to withdraw if the Faculty of Graduate Studies decided that insufficient progress, in either course work or research, was being made.

Candidates were obliged to complete all requirements within six academic years of the date of first registration.

Within the Faculty of Education, the departments had various additional requirements. They demanded the equivalent of six full courses (Educational Foundations demanded five and a half) including basic courses in Statistics or Research Methods (Educational Foundations allowed the substitution of a foreign language qualification for one in Statistical Methods). Each department specified certain courses of study for its candidates but permitted them to complete their programmes with courses drawn from related areas of study in other departments or faculties.

All departments, except that of Educational Foundations, required their candidates to present their thesis proposals for discussion and evaluation in a non-credit seminar attended by other graduate students and members of faculty. Following this compulsory presentation of the thesis proposal at the seminar, the candidate's committee could accept the proposal and recommend changes in research procedure.

From the beginning of the 1973-74 academic year the Faculty of Graduate Studies has offered the degrees of Master of Arts and Master of Science in Education, in accordance with the regulations outlined above which previously governed the award of the M.Ed. degree: in other words, there has been a change in nomenclature rather than substance. A student registered for either of these degrees, however, must now complete all requirements within four academic years from the time of first registration. At the same time, the faculty introduced new regulations governing the award of the revised M.Ed. degree. The major changes are:

1. The elimination of both the residence and the thesis requirements.
2. The introduction of part-time studies leading to the degree: four academic years will be considered the appropriate period of time over which the programme will extend.
3. The introduction of a final, comprehensive examination consisting of both written and oral components and administered by a committee of at least three persons, including the supervisor and a member of a department other than that in which the student is registered. The written component of this examination will consist of a series of three examinations covering the general areas of fundamentals and research methods and including an essay-type examination in the candidate's special area. Both components of the examinations are to be completed within a two-week period and will be the final step in the student's programme.

Faculty of Graduate Studies requirements are that candidates for the degree of M.Ed. under the new regulations must still com-

plete a minimum of six courses. The additional requirements of the various departments in the Faculty of Education are as follows:

1. The Department of Educational Administration requires eight full courses, of which six must be in the area of educational administration.
2. The Department of Educational Foundations requires seven and a half full courses, of which six and a half must be in the area of educational foundations, and competence in a foreign language and/or Statistical Methods, the decision as to what constitutes competence being left to the discretion of the department.
3. The Department of Educational Psychology requires eight full courses plus Statistics.

At Macquarie University, the minimum period of candidature depends on the candidate's entry qualifications, on the grade of Master's degree for which studies are being undertaken and on whether or not study will be full-time or part-time. A candidate for the degree of Master who has a B.A. degree or its equivalent must be enrolled for a minimum of two academic years full-time or three academic years part-time, while for a candidate with the B.A. (Honours), or its equivalent, the minimum period of candidacy in each case is reduced by one academic year. For candidates for the honours degree of Master, whose entry qualification must be a B.A. (Honours) Class I or II, or the equivalent (including candidates transferring from a programme for the M.A. degree), the minimum periods are one academic year full-time and two academic years part-time. The maximum period over which students may extend their studies is twice the minimum period. Students who lack the necessary qualifications for entry may be accepted for qualifying courses.

Candidates for the degree of Master or the honours degree of Master follow a programme of studies approved by the Postgraduate Studies Committee on the recommendation of the head of the school in which they are registered. The Postgraduate Studies Committee also determines, on the recommendation of the head of the school, the extent to which each component, such as course work and research, of the candidate's programme counts towards the final result. If, in the head of school's opinion, a student makes insufficient progress, the Postgraduate Studies Committee may, on his advice, terminate the candidature.

At the discretion of the head of school, students wishing to enrol as candidates for a Master's degree in the School of Education may be required to take qualifying courses at undergraduate level if their course content background is considered to be deficient.

Those wishing to proceed to the ordinary degree of M.A. in Education must take four M.A. seminar courses and submit a bibliographical exercise. They must also undertake research which is presented in the form of an extended essay. In rare cases the research may be more extensive, in which cases it is presented in the form of a thesis. Candidates submitting a thesis are required to take only three seminar courses. Students wishing to proceed to the degree of M.A. (Honours) in Education must take three M.A. seminar courses and submit the results of their research in a thesis.

Examination for both types of Master's degree is by such written papers as may be prescribed in the student's programme of studies, and the presentation of the results, in acceptable form, of any research undertaken by the student. Where such research has been a major part of the programme of studies the report may be in the form of a thesis. The Postgraduate Studies Committee then appoints the examiners: the candidate's supervisor cannot be appointed as an examiner.

Candidates may be asked to attend an oral examination. Candidates are marked on a pass/fail basis.

### III. *Areas of Postgraduate Specialisation*

At the University of Calgary the Department of Educational Administration offers 26 postgraduate courses for credit, and two non-credit seminars, in four areas of specialisation: Administration of Human Resources, Programme Development and Evaluation, Administration of Economic Resources, and Governance of Education.

The Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction offers 40 courses for credit, and one non-credit seminar, in the curriculum and instruction areas of Art, Drama, Early Childhood Education, English, French, Instructional Media and Technology, Language Arts, Mathematics, Music, Reading, School Libraries, Science and Social Studies.

The Department of Educational Foundations offers 38 credit courses in four major areas: Comparative Education, History of Education, Philosophy of Education, and Sociology of Education.

The Department of Educational Psychology offers 42 credit courses, and one non-credit course, in such specialisations as Counselling, Special Education, Educational Measurement, Child Development, Clinical School and Community Psychology, Computer Applications and Human Learning.

Graduate research areas in the School of Education at Macquarie University include Science Education, Technical Education, Curriculum, Teacher Education, Comparative Education, Educational

Planning and Financing, Theories of Teaching, Child Growth and Development in Relation to Education, and Educational Sociology. The School of Education offers some thirteen Master's seminars.

From the 1974 academic year the School of Education will be offering a three-year part-time M.A. programme in Vocational and Technical Education, comprising several seminars not open to candidates in other M.A. courses in the school.

### CONCLUSION

It must be borne in mind that a summary of the formal regulations governing admission as a graduate student and candidature for a Master's degree in Education, and of the requirements, as far as course work and research are concerned, for the award of the degree, does not provide all the information which may be desired by those who need to make decisions concerning the equivalence of courses of study followed in two such universities as those whose programmes are outlined above. The missing pieces of the jigsaw concern the qualifications, experience and expertise of the teaching staff, academic rigour of courses and the areas of study. Those who are familiar only with the North American scene, where accreditation by outside agencies of departments wishing to offer graduate programmes is standard practice, and where the task of making decisions concerning equivalence is thus made easier, may not realise the problems involved in the exchange of members of either the faculty or student bodies between universities in different continents.

The two universities whose Master's level programmes in Education have been examined are attracting increasing numbers of overseas students and teachers, and may be considered to be representative of a growing trend of interchange. It is suggested that serious thought might well be given to the questions about academic and professional qualifications which arise from such exchanges at university level.

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