As a visiting team, we believe that our task is not to evaluate the program of the past or the very limited current program, but instead to offer ideas to consider as the program moves forward. We have chosen to use the External Review Rubric as an organizing framework for those ideas. Overall, we believe that both of the Education Department's proposals—the STEM credentialing program and the Urban Education major—represent strong potential for further development and exploration during this period of transition.

PART I: PROPOSED SECONDARY STEM CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

Due to Occidental's long-standing reputation as an institution that produces educators of the highest caliber who are sought after in hiring across the region and beyond, the visiting team recommends a limited “restarting” of the single subject credentialing program with a focus confined to the STEM fields at the secondary level. This will allow the Department of Education to utilize their existing STEM education faculty members to test and further refine the Passport to Teaching initiative as a way to assure that the college is meeting all state standards regarding teacher certification and all reporting requirements requisite to maintaining the ability to certify teachers in California. The visiting team recommends a 2-year trial period of offering STEM-focused single subject certification during which time the Department will demonstrate that all structures and reporting are in place. If successful, the visiting team recommends consideration of the expansion to other single subject certification areas based on student interest and demand, with the eventual inclusion of multiple subject certifications for the elementary level in order to offer the full compliment of teaching certifications within a well-tested, robust Departmental structure. After the two-year trial period, the College may wish to consider the admission of post-baccalaureate candidates again, if there is the support and customization through advising in place that is necessary for the evaluation and admission processing of post-bac candidates.

Listed below are specific analyses and recommendations utilizing the structure of the External Review Rubric to address the teacher credentialing program.

Goal Achievement

Strengths on which to Build:

- The Education Department can build upon the Passport to Teaching as a way to assure that processes and outcomes are systematically addressed and that all state
standards for teacher credentialing are being met. Their successful preliminary meeting of the standards for the State form the foundation for this Passport to Teaching system.

- Advising of students is also aided by the Passport to Teaching, which clarifies all expectations for students with detailed timelines. This also supports their reporting to the State and is a basis on which to build in order to assure timely reporting to the College and the State.

- As reported from school-based members of the community, alumni, as well as other faculty who work in local public schools, the Occidental College Credential Program has a strong and very positive reputation in terms of the quality of their alumni. They are highly sought for hiring, and there is the opportunity for continued and increased support from both alumni as well as from partners in public education.

**Opportunities for Further Development:**

- With the Passport to Teaching, one faculty member must be designated as responsible for assuring that the outlined processes are followed, that reporting to the university as well as the State is provided in a timely and thorough manner, and for assuring that there is understanding and alignment among all advisers and faculty as to the processes and the documentation required for teacher credentialing.

- Multiple opportunities for students to understand the processes outlined in the Passport to Teaching should be scheduled and publicized campus-wide in order to assure that all students interested in pursuing single subject credentialing (in STEM initially) are aware of and have access to full information and links for the required steps.

- Research will need to be conducted to provide a full list of teacher credentialing options for students who were previously in the program and who are not in a STEM field as well as for other students interested in pursuing teaching in areas not available within the credentialing program at the time. These resources will need to be made publicly available to all students and should be included as part of the advising program for any student possibly interested in teaching.

**Recommendations:**

- Regular departmental meetings should be dedicated to the ongoing development, refinement and implementation of the Passport to Teaching and should serve as the body within the Education Department that provides final review for all reports provided to the university and the State of California regarding the credentialing program.
The creation of a campus-wide Teacher Education Advisory Board will facilitate the cross-campus recruitment of students into the teacher credentialing program and will offer insights and feedback on candidates being considered for inclusion in the program as to their content area preparation and possible disposition for teaching. Initially, this can start small with the inclusion of STEM-related faculty for the more limited credentialing program being offered, but can expand as other certification areas are eventually added.

Curriculum Review

Strengths on which to Build:

- The focus on secondary math and science capitalizes on the current strengths in the department as related to faculty expertise. It also has strong support from other campus faculty who specialize in these disciplines.

- The availability of the Noyce Scholarship program to support the credentialing of STEM-focused teachers is an excellent asset and recruitment tool for the program.

- There are programs now in operation in local schools like the nearby Franklin High, which is a Math/Science/Technology Magnet School where the Math Coach and Magnet Program Coordinator is a supportive Program Alumna and where Alan Knoerr has been working on some of his funded programs like the Algebra Project that could be excellent partnerships for a STEM credential program, especially for the student teaching component.

- The existing curricular structure where undergrads can complete almost all of their credential program as undergrads with just the few weeks post-graduation for student teaching is highly desirable to undergrads and a draw for many students, both logistically and economically. It is quite unique in the field.

- Since they have been in the business of credentialing for quite some time, the curricular structures are there, and the necessary courses have been constructed and most previously taught.

Opportunities for Further Development:

- There is a very strong interest on the part of current students at Occidental and ALOED to reinstate the Multiple Subject Credential Program, but the current faculty and resources are not present to support that curriculum.

- The department has not sufficiently capitalized on opportunities for curricular support and development from faculty across campus, alums, and school-based personnel. There do not seem to be any advisory boards operating with regularity.
● If a major is pursued in Urban Education or a related area, there are opportunities for coursework to lead to a teaching credential as well.

**Recommendations:**

● Develop a Teacher Education Advisory Board that includes faculty from across the disciplines, which could facilitate greater understanding of the education program across the college, serve as a conduit for shared coursework or requirements, and facilitate recruitment of students from the targeted majors to consider teaching as a career pathway.

● A specialized advisory committee could be created to develop and strengthen the STEM credential, including faculty in mathematics and science, STEM teachers of excellence from the community, administrators from schools and alumni of the university and ALOED. This could also facilitate recommendations regarding specific courses within academic majors at the College that best prepare students to become teachers within those fields.

● Consider working with ALOED and the Teacher Education Advisory Board regarding the sequencing of the addition of other areas of certification within the Single Subject Credential Program and the eventual reinstatement of the Multiple Subject Credential Program once success is demonstrated within the STEM certification program.

**Student Experience**

**Strengths on which to Build:**

● Students feel a strong connection to the faculty in the department. They have found the classes in the education department to be very rigorous and focused on the development of their critical thinking and problem-solving, which they appreciate. They feel a great deal of personal support from the faculty.

● ALOED is an impressive and unusually strong organization with a deep commitment to fostering the ongoing success of Occidental’s education program.

**Opportunities for Further Development:**

● Students have not always felt well-supported in terms of technical/administrative guidance.

● Some Caucasian students reported a level of discomfort within courses designed to broaden their understanding of educating Chicano or African American students and the institutional racism that can exist within schools. Students reported carrying away the belief that Caucasian teachers could never truly understand or
work effectively with students of color. Our interviews with department faculty indicated that this was clearly not intended. It will be important to resolve any misperceptions surrounding this concern.

Recommendations:

- We encourage Education faculty to build upon their interpersonal strengths in working with students to improve the ways in which they can clearly communicate administrative requirements, especially for teacher credentialing, in timely and effective ways. The new Passport to Teaching system they have developed should help with this.

- Multiple opportunities for students to understand the processes outlined in the Passport to Teaching should be scheduled and publicized campus-wide in order to assure that all students interested in pursuing single subject credentialing (in STEM initially) are aware of and have access to full information and links for the required steps.

- The Department should create and distribute a full list of teacher credentialing options for students who were previously in the program and who are not in a STEM field as well as for other students interested in pursuing teaching in areas not available within the credentialing program at this time. These resources will need to be made publicly available to all students and should be included as part of the advising program for any student possibly interested in teaching.

- The Chair of the Department should carefully monitor student evaluations of the courses in the department, in order to assure inclusiveness and an ability to engage both Caucasian students and students of color in productive and safe dialogue to promote the deepest understanding possible to address the social inequities that often pervade educational settings.

Resource Planning

Strengths on which to Build:

- Grant seeking has been very strong. Most particularly, the department has Noyce Scholarship funding targeted to math and science teacher candidates.

- The preparation of secondary math and science teachers is a high priority both locally and nationally. There is and will continue to be money available for STEM initiatives as related to a credentialing program, especially in urban areas.
Opportunities for Further Development:

- There are faculty members in other departments actively engaged in programs related to education in science and math with whom the education faculty have not yet connected.
- The technological resources necessary for a focus on STEM do not seem to be readily available.
- Currently there is no Accreditation Director or administrative support to assist the Department in meeting all of the state requirements for admission to teacher credentialing as well as the reporting required for the program.

Recommendations:

- We encourage Education faculty to explore how the existing Community Literacy Center might be expanded upon to incorporate more emphasis on tutoring in secondary math and science in order to provide alignment with the teacher credentialing program and to provide on-campus experiences for Occidental students with tutoring and teaching within those specific content areas.
- Explore how the STEM credential program might connect to and capitalize on existing programs in which other faculty members across campus are currently involved, e.g., Alan Knoerr’s Center for Community-Based Learning and his work with the Algebra Project; Chris Cravey’s Undergraduate Research Center and his TOPS program (Teachers and Occidental in Partnership for Science); Physics Department’s Curricular Tracks with one focused on teaching.
- Explore how the department might tap into technology that exists in other parts of the campus to support the preparation of teacher candidates in STEM (examples might include computer-based and calculator-based probeware that allows real-time data collection or other specialized equipment for advanced science offerings in Advanced Placement courses like electrophoresis lab materials).
- Explore ways in which the accreditation requirements might be better facilitated and documented, e.g., hiring a part-time person to help with state accreditation documentation; partner with other, larger institutions in the area with more resources to “outsource” the reporting and data collection; build this work into the job description of the Director of the Community Literacy Center or another part-time employee on campus.
- Explore ways in which to maintain a close, positive connection with ALOED. ALOED has a strong interest in continuing the credential programs at Occidental and has access to resources that might be used to support continuing program development.
PART II: PROPOSED URBAN EDUCATION MAJOR

Educational Studies is an interdisciplinary field of scholarly inquiry, innovation and advocacy. It is an integrative field through which theory and practice, philosophy and policy, intellect and ethics, collective vision and principled action engage and evolve together. Aligned with guidance provided by the American Educational Studies Association and the American Educational Research Association, the field draws from the social sciences (sociology, anthropology, economics, law, political science, policy studies), psychological studies (e.g. developmental psychology, educational psychology), and the humanities (philosophy, history). Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research methods, Educational Studies emphasizes “interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives in understanding, analyzing, and implementing educational theory and practice.” (Standards of the Council on Social Foundations)

Given the above, the visiting team proposes the continued refinement of the proposal for an Urban Education major for Occidental College that is based on a strong foundation of Educational Studies and maximizes its impact by drawing on resources within and beyond the Education Department to design a robust curriculum.

Using the structure of the External Review Rubric, analyses of strengths and recommendations for implementation for an Urban Education major are outlined below.

Curriculum Review

Strengths on which to Build:

The proposed major's focus on Urban Education is responsive to contemporary research and developments in the discipline; to changing conditions and opportunities in schools and society; to College and department missions; to Occidental’s urban location; and to the research/teaching/service interests of department and campus faculty.

Also impressive are curricula emphases on the following:

- Social foundations (sociology, economics, law, policy studies perspectives particularly well represented)
- “Interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives” (critical theory and pedagogy fully integrated across the curriculum)
- Specific needs, interests, and aspirations of important categories of urban learners
- Civic engagement, reflective practice in schools and community organizations serving children and youth
- Capstone experience (including seminars and research methods courses) that well reflects the inquiry, innovation and advocacy priorities of the field of Educational Studies
Opportunities for Further Development:

- Although departmental commitments to constructivist theory (psychological foundations) and critical theory/pedagogy (philosophical foundations) are well represented in the proposed curriculum, and a historical dimension is incorporated in several courses, the range and depth of psychological and philosophical/historical foundations are not fully represented. (e.g. EDUC 201: Sociocultural Foundations of Education covers philosophical and psychological perspectives in 3 weeks, before turning to an overview of contemporary issues affecting schooling, many of which are addressed in much greater depth in other courses across the curriculum).

- Given the breadth of Educational Studies foundational areas and critical issues to be covered, the focus of a number of the courses is quite narrow (e.g. full semester courses devoted to educating Chicano and African American youth, one to critical race theory and another to Friere and Fanon, possible separate courses in quantitative and qualitative methods—deeply consequential topics all—but seldom possible to address in semester level depth given other curricular imperatives).

- The developmental progression (how many credits must be completed at each level? which courses at each level are required or elective?), and thematic structure (can students choose among varied curricular pathways through the major?) are not yet clear.

- The relationship between the proposed major and past and proposed teacher credentialing pathways is also unclear. (Is there a pathway through the major directly responsive to the interests of students who would like to become teachers in areas other than the STEM single subject option?).

Recommendations:

*We recommend that careful attention be devoted to refining both the conceptual framework and curricular structure of the major, building on the strengths and addressing the concerns noted above.*

We recognize that Educational Studies majors/minors/concentrations are a relatively new development on undergraduate liberal arts campuses. Like undergraduate majors in all disciplines, these programs struggle to cover foundational dimensions (theory, methods) while devoting sufficient attention to contemporary issues and concerns—and to structure a developmental path through discipline that incorporates sufficient flexibility to respond to student interests—all with limited resources. Although institutional and curricular contexts vary, a common approach to the design of Educational Studies programs include:
● Required Foundational Courses (usually 200 level)—providing thoughtful overviews of the theories and methods of each major foundational area: social, psychological, and philosophical/historical.

● Intermediate and Advanced Elective Courses (200 and 300 level)—addressing critical social and educational concerns, often including relevant courses from across liberal arts disciplines, often including courses relevant to teacher credentialing, often grouped into thematic clusters marking alternative pathways through the major.

● Required Capstone Experience (400 level).

● Theory and research, linked to principled practice in schools and community organizations, are integrated throughout.

We recommend considering this model as a starting point, then carefully tailoring it to Occidental.

Goal Achievement

Strengths on which to Build:

● The Education Department mission and learner outcomes relevant to the credentialing program are in place. The mission and learner outcomes, along with credentialing criteria and requirements, are integrated across the curriculum and now clearly articulated for students in the Passport to Teaching.

Opportunities for Further Development:

● Learner outcomes for the major, beyond those most relevant to credentialing, are not yet clearly specified.

Recommendations:

We recommend that a generative set of Learner Outcomes be developed to support the design, implementation, and on-going assessment and refinement of the proposed Urban Education Major.

● Learner Outcomes for the major should draw from commitments now reflected in the department mission, credentialing criteria, and the rationale statements regarding the major. The Learner Outcomes should then be deepened and extended to reflect the refined conceptual framework and curricular structure developed for the major as described above.
• The Learner Outcomes can then be used to enhance curricular integration. Department faculty can identify a limited number of focal and supporting goals to be emphasized within each course and then ‘map’ selected outcomes by course across the curriculum to ensure appropriate coverage while eliminating gaps and minimizing redundancy (see attached sample Curricular Integration Matrix).

• The Learner Outcomes can also be used to assist students in documenting and reflecting upon their intellectual, ethical, and advocacy (theory into principled practice) paths through the major. This can be accomplished by developing a document (actually a process) parallel to the Passport to Teaching (see attached sample Reflective Portfolio). Insights gained through review of student passport/portfolios can then be used along with other indicators to continually refine and renew the major curriculum.

**Student Experience**

**Strengths on which to Build:**

• Students (and alumni) expressed strong interest in the proposed Urban Education major. Students indicated they were excited about the courses in which they are currently enrolled and looking forward to new courses scheduled for Spring 2013.

**Opportunities for Further Development:**

• Students (and alumni) also expressed significant disappointment at the loss of opportunity to earn a teaching credential as noted in Section I of this report.

**Recommendations:**

*We encourage the faculty to consider designing the major to feature two thematic emphases or curricular pathways*—both already well represented in the current and proposed course offerings—*one path designed specifically to support students hoping to earn teaching credentials in multiple subject and single subject areas other than STEM, the other to engage student interests in education policy and reform.*

For example, a pathway—e.g. “Theory into Practice: Educating Urban Learners”—would require foundations courses, mid-level and advanced courses relevant to all teachers, and a capstone focused on a curricular or pedagogical initiative in a local school. Students selecting this emphasis would also be advised about multiple pathways into teaching after graduation.

As second pathway—e.g. “Theory into Practice: Education Policy, Innovation and Reform”— would require foundations courses, relevant mid-level and advanced courses offered through Education and relevant disciplines across the campus, and a community-based capstone focused on a specific innovation or reform.
Resource Planning

Strengths on which to Build:

- In addition to students and alumni, faculty and administrators across campus expressed support for the development of an education major. Campus administrators, along with Education faculty and their colleagues across the campus, were united in their assessment of the necessity and potential benefits of deeper and more visible integration of Education faculty/courses in the intellectual life of the campus via the major. A former dean also noted the development of a new cross-listing policy that could be utilized to support new curricular collaborations.

Opportunities for Further Development:

- Although Education faculty expressed strong interest in more fully integrating the major with relevant disciplines/interested faculty across the campus over time, the proposed major is contained entirely within the Education Department.

Recommendations:

*We recommend that Education faculty engage interested colleagues across the campus in the design, implementation, and on-going assessment and refinement of the proposed Urban Education Major.*

- We encourage Education faculty to begin campus outreach sooner, rather than later. Efforts to engage broad-based campus collaboration prior to submission of the major proposal could be particularly fruitful. Existing courses and potential additions could be identified to contribute to major requirements or electives, especially in areas that Education faculty will struggle to cover. Campus collaboration is also helpful in promoting greater awareness and interest of faculty and students across the disciplines.

- These tasks could be addressed either by engaging colleagues beyond the department informally or by establishing an advisory body composed of interested faculty and administrators as appropriate to department governance structures/procedures on campus.

*We truly enjoyed our time at Occidental. Our best wishes to the Education Department as they move forward, in collaboration with colleagues on campus and in the community, toward a bright future.*