
Town Hall Meeting Report

Held: April 5th 2011
Report: April 19, 2011

Consultant: Rain Daniels

Method of Consultation:

- The consultant met with the with members of the Ad Hoc Committee, followed by a meeting with Andre Mazawi to plan the meeting, gain understanding of the intention and desired outcome of the meeting, and to discuss process.
- Andre emailed students about the Town Hall meeting, giving information of time, place, rationale and that dinner would be provided.
- The consultant emailed the students her own introduction and reiterated the intention and process of the Town Hall meeting. This was followed by a reminder email.
- After the Town Hall meeting, the student feedback was typed and sent to students. They were given 4 days to respond with additional comments or clarifications. 11 students did so, 5 that were at the Town Hall meeting and 6 additional students also provided comments.

The Town Hall Meeting:

- 21 students attended¹, no names were taken.
- Students were asked to write three top issues they see/experience in the EDST department for PhD students. These post-its were then placed into themes.
- The themes that emerged were:
 - 'Funding' and 'Supervision' were the two most frequent issues named
 - Professional and Career Development (TA, RA, skills-based workshops and publication related professional development)
 - Departmental Support and Community (social and intellectual space)
 - Information, Flow, Access and Communication
 - Indigenous Content
 - Worldview
- 3 groups were formed and students easily self selected which groups they preferred.

¹ Prior to the Town Hall Meeting, an interdisciplinary student noted that Interdisciplinary PhD students with EDST as their home department, and CCFI PhD students were not invited to Town Hall Meeting.

- Group 1 - Rain facilitated with Gloria assisting: Funding, Indigenous Content, and World View
 - Group 2 - Isabeau facilitated with Carrie assisting: Professional and Career Development (TA, RA, skills-based workshops and publication related professional development), and Funding
 - Group 3 - Maryam facilitated with Dilek assisting: Supervision, Departmental Support and Community (social and intellectual space), and Information, Flow, Access and Communication.
- Group theme selection/process:
 - 2 groups addressed funding
 - 2 groups addressed supervision, one of which was incorporated into the theme: 'Professional and Career Development'
 - Group 3 didn't have time to discuss 'Information Flow, Access and Communication'
 - The questions asked for each theme:
 - What are the specific issues about this theme?
 - What strengths exist in the department that can assist in dealing with this theme?
 - Recommendations with action steps

This report is a summary of the student feedback. The comments under each heading: issues, strengths and recommendations, are all from the students. The themes have been listed in order of most interest, (more post-it notes). There is a small amount of overlap between the themes understandably, as some content is relational. It should be noted that limited time prevented extensive discussion of the issues, strengths and recommendations. Therefore, some areas could use more context, or there may seem to be contradictions. It was noted at the meeting, that the students were not striving for consensus but rather a beginning step in the dialogue with the department. Lastly, a number of comments were added after the Town Hall meeting through conversation and/or email with the consultant.

Prior to the theme generation and dialogue, the Ad Hoc committee extended the intention from the PhD Management Committee, that the Town Hall meeting was one step in the dialogue process. They also expressed the committee's interest in hearing and working with the student feedback. Finally, the students were informed of the EDST department on April 21st 2011 and were told that the Ad Hoc Committee would be making a power point presentation based on the student feedback. Students were encouraged to attend this meeting.

Student Feedback:

Theme 1 – Funding-Issues:

This theme centered on a lack of funding information for students, confusion about how to get information, a lack of transparency, insufficient amounts of funding, and concern about the way funding is distributed. These issues were also seen to impact relationships to supervisors.

The main area of concern identified was a lack of transparency and information. Specifically this concerned the different types of funding the EDST department receives from the University, the various pools of funding and the amounts available, different types of funding for international students, and funding opportunities in international students' home countries. Also of concern was the distribution of funding (seen to be unevenly distributed), who gets funding, the criteria for distributing funding and a lack of consistency between levels of, or types of funding between cohorts.

Concerns regarding a lack of funding information also included funding processes for travel and participation in conferences being confusing, (with a felt lack of support to fulfill this requirement of the PhD program) as well as large gaps in communication in the major funding competitions. Also referenced was a lack of information regarding awards (e.g. Vanier), how to apply for, and win them. This was noted as being especially so for first year students. Also, there was limited or inconsistent feedback prior to submission of SSHRCs. Lastly, students noted that “supervisors/committees aren’t advocating, communicating about funding opportunities, including grants, and RA, TA, GAAships”.

Questions about values and process:

Students expressed questions about the values embedded in the funding process concerning merit and equity, with comments such as “merit based funding privileges certain students and areas, of study”, “what is a “top student?” and “can that really be judged with any type of fairness?”. The unease about distribution of funding was reflected in this comment, “those who have, get more”.

Other questions included why Indigenous students from the South are put into the international student category. Also a question concerned why all EDST PhD students don’t receive the same amount of basic funding such as 4-year funding available to all PhD students in other faculties? This spoke to a concern that most students need more than 4 years to graduate, making insufficient funding a major issue. This issue also included the recognition of less funding opportunities for international students.

While there is impact implied in the above concerns over transparency and process, some impacts were more explicit concerning the relationship of student to supervisor and impact on school life. Confusion was expressed over the supervisor’s “role and responsibility in providing funding opportunities”. Further, it was questioned, if the

supervisor does not provide information on funding opportunities or offer funding opportunities to students, “what does the student do?” A power imbalance was recognized between supervisor and students that may prevent students from asking for funding assistance. Also concern was expressed about “angering or imposing” on the supervisor with a related concern of possibly jeopardizing their [students] academic career.

Further impact included students finding they are “forced to work too much”, with paid work leading to “stress and difficulty completing program in a timely manner”. Relatedly there was concern over a perceived priority of the growth of the program, rather than the quality of the student experience. One student noted that “some students are dropping out before graduation”.

Impact was also highlighted in the felt sense of competition in the department, over funding. This was seen as creating a lack of trust. Given these impacts, students are left to find different funding opportunities.

Funding - Strengths:

There were some recognized strengths within the EDST department concerning funding concerns. These included a perceived surplus in some areas of the EDST budget. Also noted was a greater availability for travel funding beyond one time per degree.

For support, it was noted that the department has a committee for reviewing SSHRC applications prior to submission, and some supervisors were seen to be very good at providing feedback on applications.

For information purposes, strengths noted were the department/FOGs workshops on funding, a new blog that offers opportunities for information distribution and the FOE newsflash that provides information funding workshops.

Funding - Recommendations:

Information and Transparency:

The suggestion for clear information and transparency included a number of recommendations, centering around the need for a protocol for accountable process on funding availability. One student suggested to “consider equitable funding and not just top student funding” for example. Another student felt it would be helpful to have a “visual map of funding history and allocations”, within a timeline, to create transparency.

In addition to keeping the SSHRC feedback committee and workshops on funding applications, there was discussion on the need for the department to communicate better when there is available funding. This could include publishing timelines of when to expect to hear more about funding decisions and faculty broadly communicating when they get grants.

Also suggested was to have a simplified and centralized process on travel/conference funding needs, better use of the student council blog, use of the RSS feed of blog for updates on events (instead of relying on mass emails) and having information on funding opportunities be more widespread across campus.

Support:

Students expressed a desire for more support from the department, including supervisors, faculty and committees. Students felt that supervisors and committees should be more involved in finding and applying for grants, both internal and external, and work closely with students to apply and obtain funding. One student felt an expression of care and encouragement would be helpful by engaging students, “have you thought about applying for this award?” and offering support in this regard.

Another suggestion included having a “funding navigator to help all students”, someone that could give funding information, i.e. opportunities available and how to apply. This person would not be the student’s supervisor. Also suggested for support was for the department to be in dialogue with other departments concerning available funding, as well as the availability of RA, TA, GAA positions.

Work:

The distribution of work opportunity was also highlighted. Specifically, for PhD students to have RA/TA/GAA positions in addition to grants/scholarships so they can be full-time students. This was in recognition that many PhD students are working off campus in work unrelated to their scholarly work. Also suggested was to offer RA and TA positions to international students first, to balance out funding opportunities. Lastly, it was suggested that faculty promote more RA positions.

Indigenous:

It was suggested to have separate funding for Indigenous students from the United States, as well as observing the Jay Treaty and recognize Indigenous students from the U.S. as Indigenous, not International. Having a “Stolen Lands Fund” was also suggested. This fund would recognize those “impacted by colonial histories and displaced in their own homelands” and could be framed as part of the Truth and Reconciliation initiative. Through this fund, students could be funded for one year, as an example.

Timeline:

A number of comments related to the expressed reality of taking more than 4 years to complete a PhD and the need for funding to extend beyond four years. Also a theme was the need for a minimum of funding for all students in the PhD program. This basic funding line (or guaranteed minimum) for all PhD students for at least 4 years (some suggested beyond 4 years of funding extending to 5 years or more) addressed creating

more of a sense of community and less of a competition (“people would feel safer, secure, invested”), as well as addressing the reality of taking more than 4 years to complete their degree. One suggestion was to “adjust funding schemes to meet the needs of students according to how long it takes for the average dissertation (5-6 years, average, not 4, even fully funded students often take 5 or 6 years to finish)”. One suggestion included looking at other university funding models, for e.g. universities that only accept a percentage of PhD students, so they are all fully funded or where everyone has a guaranteed a minimum. Another student expressed the importance to “prioritize student well being over growth” by limiting intake and making sure “students finish in a timely manner”.

Theme 2: Supervision-Issues:

A runner up for most frequently named issue was Supervision. The issues named centered on accountable and transparent supervision, building relationships between supervisors and students, and the need for support and direction.

How to build a good relationship with the supervisor, and how to check in with the supervisor were stressed as important needs. Some issues impacted how or whether this would come about. Issues with availability of the supervisor included the need for regular meetings with the supervisor. Students also commented on being negatively implicated by supervisor's busy schedules, i.e. “not having emails returned or meeting in a timely fashion, and not receiving scholarly support”. Some students wondered if the number of students a supervisor has, affects their quality of supervision.

The role and responsibility of the supervisor were at question. Some felt that some supervisors take no “human” interest in [the] supervisee”, and that the “feedback is one way (from supervisor to supervisee)”. Also, some students felt there were politics in the department that impacted their relationships with supervisors. Specifically, this meant that dynamics exist between faculty (who gets along with whom) that students are affected by even if they are unaware of them. Students expressed a desire to be made aware of these tensions.

Students also expressed a number of statements that indicate a lack of relationship building and that indicated to them there was little self-reflection in how a supervisor can improve. Students felt a sense of indifference from supervisors, concern that supervisors’ “plans are prioritized over students concerns (e.g., students’ academic completion is delayed due to faculty members’ travel plans, and students have to pay additional tuition)”. Also mentioned was the “lack of attention to different students’ backgrounds and circumstances in setting expectation of students’ work (e.g., timeline, research design/size)” and a lack of attempt to connect supervisees with one another.

An acknowledged power imbalance was stressed in terms of understanding what the supervisor relationship actually involves and how to change supervisors. Students mentioned how often the supervisor is also your RAship boss, with this dynamic particularly affecting International students. For some, supervision may not be

satisfactory, “some students get super supervisors, some of them don’t” and there was a related question regarding the rights of the students to have their expectations met. Students may not necessarily know that they can change supervisors and worry that there may be repercussions to employment if they request a change. Concern was also expressed about the impact on the student if they take classes outside of the department.

In addition to information needs about supervision and where to go if there is any problem with supervision, more clarity about who a student’s main supervisor is as opposed to who is their pro-tem, “thus creating some ambiguity with supervision”, is needed. Again for International students, there was a need for additional support, as they “sometimes don’t know what questions to ask, or what a directed reading is, or how to take classes outside of the department”.

Supervision – Strengths:

Some of the strengths named in the department were the existence of supervisors as role-models, some policies do exist about supervision; the role of the graduate advisor; the potential role of the head of the department; advice from senior students; and ideas from current and other students.

Supervision – Recommendations:

To deal with some of the tensions between faculty one suggestion was to ask professors to identify other scholars in the department with whom they have overlapping research interests or to identify the committee members on the supervisory committees they are currently, or have in the past, served on. Further, to support supervisors who create meaningful experience for their supervisees, it was suggested to reward them through annual public acknowledgement ('outstanding supervisor' award for e.g.).

To aid relationship building and accountability a suggestion was made to have a contract signed by the supervisor and supervisee with clear expectations for the year, which is followed up at the end of the academic year. The process would be overseen by a third party (i.e. department head) who “would sign off on the contract”. This would help to alleviate the tensions that surface because of power dynamics and hold supervisors accountable to students.

Further suggestions for better relationships between supervisor and supervisee included: clarity in communication around supervision; biweekly meetings to talk about the supervisors’ role; co-supervision; a refresher about supervision at a bi-annual meeting; checking each student’s relationship with his/her supervisor; an orientation on supervision with faculty and students; skill-building for students; frequent supervisor-supervisee meetings; and setting guidelines for supervisors and students about negotiating timelines. Suggestions for supervisors also included to occasionally ask for feedback from the student i.e. “how can I improve as a supervisor?” or “do you have any suggestions for me as a supervisor”?

The human aspect of the relationship was stressed strongly and included the suggestions that the supervisor “make some effort to learn about supervisee as a ‘whole person’ – not just as an academic” and that there is “recognition of and care for students as a human being, (not as a brain or student headcount)”. Expectations of students work should also take into account “that students come from different backgrounds (e.g., class, language, culture) and have different life circumstances (e.g., with/out family) and resources (e.g., time, money)”.

Lastly, it was suggested that supervisors have “gatherings a few times a year for supervisees so they can get to know one another and each other’s work”.

Theme 3 - Departmental Support and Community (social and intellectual space)

The issues in this theme included publishing, various support needs, cohorts and relationship building.

There seemed to be a lack of institutional support for publishing, with the expressed need for a publishing course that would be seen as being “extremely helpful”. There was also a lack of supervisors acknowledging their students’ work in co-authorship. Needs also included writing support, proofreading support, and “academic writing support (support in writing thesis)”.

Also mentioned were “intimidating benchmarks”, with students entering the program “feeling they are expected to know the research intent, then prove this through the SSHRC competition”. Further the stress of a lack of support during comps was mentioned, with the student struggling to know what they are doing, but having to “emotionally stay strong and committed to survive through these hurdles”. Support needs were also expressed as most pronounced when the student enters the dept. from outside of education.

Cohorts and Relationship Building with other students and supervisors:

Relationship building was expressed as important and related to opportunities for cohorts to build intellectual exchanges. With the program being seen as operating in isolation, students felt, “if you do not have a strong cohort you end up working on your own or seeking another support group”. Complicating this issue was the difficulty of finding a group/cohort that understands if the student is a “mature adult with lots of other experience”. Some students may come in with years of labour market experience but may be treated as a junior student with the student feeling “we are underrated”. Also expressed as a challenge was if the student had direct interest in a certain field, that requires increased levels of expertise such as Indigenous content or conducting International research leaving the student to search out appropriate support.

Other student relationships concerned “senior students feeling [a] lack of cohesion [with] disharmonious cohorts”. Also a lack of connection was expressed “due to various responsibilities: work, school, family, different combinations of these for different people,

this creates a lack of responsibility to the department”. Some students are limited in their time to spend in the academic community because of the priority of their “involvement in [their] children’s play and school life”. This means a limitation in being able to be involved in the ‘community’ (“whether it is attending academic lectures or social events”), as “academia is not a family friendly place”.

One student mentioned the fact that students are not allowed to have phone numbers of other students, further disabling connection. Lastly, “people need to understand who is available for support” and expressed a need for “mutual sharing”. Another student acknowledged that it can “be very hard to discipline/motivate yourself to be productive” and was seeking assistance to “determine/measure whether you are truly productive”.

The physicality was also a variable for relationship building. Within, the department, there is a recognized need for “physical space to create an intellectual space” as well as more interaction, the “doors are closed”. Also mentioned was that lack of physical space for untenured faculty and that CCFI needs more support and space for academic advising.

Two last issues were the orientation for PhD students being noted as not being very useful and that a process was needed “to normalize and demystify things”. Lastly, another student felt there was a sense of urgency to achieve candidacy after a leave is taken.

Departmental Support and Community – Strengths:

Some of the strengths identified in the department were the energy of some faculty members for students, weekly workshops for students, and the space in Pond F. One student noted that there is opportunity to 'build' my own program, with choice of academic direction and logistics.

Other comments related to cohort support. The cohort was a positive and helpful experience for some (meeting every few months) to “discuss progress, share stories and encourage each other”. Another student commented that they “learned a great deal from my cohort (i.e. time management, getting through the doctoral workload and other areas of support)”.

Departmental Support and Community – Recommendations:

Recommendations under this theme, ranged from the practicality of space and money, to course selection, suggestions on developing a sense of belonging, childcare, and following through of the accountability process of this report.

For the practicalities of space and money, students suggested a number of things. Funds for travel were requested to be increased and also a special fund was suggested “for proofreading for international students”. The need for space had a number of recommendations including, the need for physical space for computers, the suggestion that students who know each other, can apply for the same office to create an

intellectual space in Pond H. Also in Pond H, was the suggestion to assign students a space when they enter the program (which they keep for the duration of the program) and grouping students by cohort or supervisor (interests) as well as turning Pond F into a “creative place for students”. Another space and support issue included childcare. One student suggested supporting graduate students who have young children with “the creation of a day-care on site as opposed to the UBC day-care site which is not close to the bus stop, nor easy to get on the list”.

Departmental support also included a “mandatory course for everything non-academic (e.g. writing conference proposals)”, as well as a mandatory “Methodology and Theory course” in the first year. Also to enhance theoretical understanding, it was suggested to have “a refresher course on theory and methodology which as a cohort we would take together”. It was also suggested that faculty “should provide language and writing support for students” and that writing retreats take place by cohort or research clusters. One student also suggested providing extensions after a student leave.

Mentorship was also suggested as a key to building community between more advanced and new students. It was suggested not to limit mentoring to cohorts, but expand to people who are 1 or 2 years ahead. Further support could come from a monthly student support meeting.

More understanding and information is needed concerning what is available within the department, who is who among faculty, staff, and other students, and what resources exist, (for e.g. the Western Dean’s Agreement). This information could be coordinated at information exchanges that could happen “at the beginning of the second semester after people have developed more questions”. Another student suggested to “clearly communicate all policies to incoming students (a welcome pack to the department)”. To further develop a sense of belonging, there were suggestions of weekly talks and workshops, as well as the need for an interdepartmental directory. A wine and cheese gathering that brought faculty and students together was also suggested.

Looking at other models of developing relationships and community was also suggested, such as the Lui Scholar Centre and the First Nations House of Learning. The SAGE model was also noted as useful to provide information on conferences and funding opportunities, speakers, recruiting, proposal writing etc., as well as looking at what has already been done (i.e. the Indigenous cluster feedback, with recommendations on website from students and faculty).

Lastly, a student meeting was suggested to be held once a term to discuss this report, and to keep accountability and transparency. If there is a student coordinating this process, they need to be Indigenous friendly.

Theme 4 - Professional and Career Development (TA, RA, skills-based workshops and publication related professional development):

Some of the issues in this theme include RA/TA opportunities, information and support

needs, and publication issues. Also, as stated in the introduction to this report, supervision was woven into this section.

In addition to an expressed concern over limited opportunities to teach/TA and to be an RA, there was concern about the need to have to achieve candidacy in order to teach/TA. Related to this was the concern that if the Social Justice course ceases to be a required course by the TEO, then opportunities will be further limited.

Information and support needs under this theme included a difficulty in finding out about TA/RA opportunities, other than through the list-serve. Also more information is needed about research clusters, as they are “still a mystery to most students”. Supervisor issues were related to information and support where some felt that supervisors don’t alert students of other TA/RA opportunities, and that supervisors never or “rarely advocates for students (i.e. whether helping the student find opportunities, or even supporting the student in other ways).

Concerns with publication workshops were that “there is no institutional support but lots of pressure to publish” and “no departmental writing support”. Also, it was shared that “students don’t necessarily know what the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd tier journals are in their particular sub-speciality”. As well, the timing of skill-based opportunities was an issue, for example writing a literature review or presenting at a conference, when they “don’t always coincide with what is relevant to the student and, therefore, the student may ‘miss out’ because he/she doesn’t see the fit at that particular time”.

Professional and Career Development – Strengths:

Students noted that the “UBC-ADED program has a strong reputation across Canada with graduates being “desirable in other institutions”. Also, RA’s are seen to have a good reputation in qualitative methodology and therefore “could be of assistance to other people not as familiar with qualitative methods”. The existence of research clusters was a strength mentioned a few times. Also, the EDST students were seen to often “have rich teaching experience and are prepared to teach before they reach candidacy”.

Information and support for professional and career development was noted as existing through skills based workshops and documents posted on the web, the assistance of Chris Adams in giving updates and information about skills based workshops from FOGS as well as there being “good library staff in the Faculty of Education”.

Professional and Career Development – Recommendations:

Concerning teaching opportunities, recommendations included a re-evaluation of the requirement to achieve candidacy prior to being able to teach, as it was noted that students may have previous teaching experience. As well, it was suggested that the department “provide paid and unpaid positions for graduate students to be apprentice teachers alongside a faculty member”. This recommendation was seen to give students

graduate level teaching experience with the “benefit of working with a faculty member who could teach us a lot”. This recommendation also includes “clear expectations to avoid exploitation for unpaid apprentice opportunities”. Also, students hoped that research opportunities could be an opportunity to connect student’s experience with RA-ships and that the department could advertise TA and RAships in other departments and institutions.

Other recommendations included improving communication about the skill-based workshops; podcasting the web-access of documents from workshops “to allow students to hear and read the material” and continuing the graduate secretary updates. Lastly the supervisors could “help alert students to the relevance of workshops to students’ academic lives”.

Concerning publications, students suggested running a (non-mandatory, pass/fail, 1 or 2 credit) publication course concurrent with 602. This class could meet “every two weeks with a workshop-like feel at helping students get papers published” and could be open to all EDST graduate students.

Theme 5: Indigenous Content – Issues:

Named as issues here were first a sense that the department (faculty, TA’s and staff) do “not know the history of this place”. This was also seen as an issue in the curriculum with an expressed need for more Indigenous content and processes in Core courses (e.g. 601a/b and 602), and not only be included in electives. Addressing tokenism was expressed as a need so that students would take Indigenous content seriously and not as a “surface experience”.

Support needs from the department were named as important for Indigenous students. In addition, hiring more Indigenous faculty in the department was suggested. It was also suggested to provide more support to Indigenous faculty, to “prevent burnout and ghettoization”. It was noted that CCFI / Inter-disciplinary students access Indigenous faculty but these Indigenous faculty do not get credit for supervising students outside of their department. Support of Indigenous faculty would also aid in students receiving appropriate supervision and advising.

Keeping the Aboriginal Strategic Plan accountable, within the department was raised as an issue as well.

Finally one student, who had applied because of an advertised Indigenous stream, questioned when the Indigenous stream in the EDST department will be offered.

Indigenous Content – Strengths:

The strategic plan was seen as being communicated. Also, Jean Barman’s History of Education in BC course was noted as a great introduction to Indigenous content.

Indigenous Content - Recommendations:

The recommendations in this theme primarily included course content and student issues, protocol, awareness, education and accountability of staff, faculty, and TA's.

First, it was suggested that the Aboriginal Strategic Plan needs to be made a priority with timelines for accountability. It was also suggested to look at the Equity plan as a model for communication, awareness and evaluation of goals. Another suggested tool and action was to implement Michelle Pidgeon's (now at SFU) inclusive Aboriginal student services model for all students.

Another suggestion was for all faculty, TA's and staff to take a series of courses on 'Indigenous Canada from an Indigenous perspective', with basic history and policy, local Indigenous education and practice, and how to teach Whiteness studies. It was suggested that "each teacher should be required to teach a whiteness and antiracism pedagogy course (after they have taken the pro D courses) on a rotating basis ideally, so students don't have to bear this load". It was suggested these should be taken within 5 years and could be added to the Aboriginal Strategic Plan. Further, these could be shown to be priorities for the university and the department by job descriptions including the pro-D certificate (from above courses).

For department courses, it was suggested that Elders and community members should be included in these courses as well as the Indigenous stream being offered on a regular basis, possibly every other year.

Other suggestions included the need for more buildings to have Indigenous protocol, a stress on the local 'being green', and for water / green spaces to be built into the landscape of the physical structures (such as the First Nations House of Learning) on campus.

Lastly, more events and opportunities for using the Longhouse were mentioned as important.

Theme 6 - World View - Issues:

The theme of world view centered mostly around expectation of the student having a specific world view, and the time expectation for change.

Some students expressed concern about how they are viewed if their world view is different from most of the department. "There's an assumption on students already knowing the department's world view / mainstream discourse" commented one student. In addition, concern extended to the expectation of having a world view upon beginning their PhD, but that there wasn't enough time to explore world views. Also, some felt that the critical perspective either didn't suite them or if they didn't have the critical perspective when they came into the department they were "a bit lost".

Lastly, there was a question over the “relationship of breadth and depth of worldview” and whether students should be shifting from their world view that they came into the department with to prove that they are learning. It was also questioned if the faculty needed support with shifting their world view; it was suggested that there is an “imbalance with the faculty on focusing [only] on their world view”.

World View – Strengths:

It was noted that there has been some shift in the department in this theme. Some recognized supports were workshops (from GAA positions of Teaching and Learning Enhancement coordinator and Peer Advisors) on reading academic articles, theoretical frameworks and the development of conference proposals. In addition, learning opportunities through “presenting speakers from different universities and disciplines about topics of interest/import to EDST”, as well as CHET being “active in providing opportunities to hear from scholars, policy-makers, etc.” were found as useful. The usefulness of “Theory Nights” that ran in 2004-2007, for PhD and some MA students was also noted.

World View – Recommendations:

There was an expressed need to provide more support to students in understanding different world views. This could be accomplished through training students in the depth and breadth of different world views, and assisting with clarification on jargon (e.g. Modernism / post-structuralism). This was noted to be helpful throughout the program, not just at the beginning of the PhD program. Also assisting this theme could be more courses on different worldviews beyond what EDUC 500 provides and / or a pre-education course.