

**Program Planning Summary for the
Bachelor of Arts in Child Development and Family Studies**

**To be offered by the
University of South Carolina Upstate
School of Education**

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University of South Carolina Upstate**

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Name of Proposed Program: Child Development and Family Studies (Birth to Six), 120 hours.

Designation Of Undergraduate Programs as Four- or Five-Year Program: Four-year program.

Proposed Date of Implementation: Fall 2012

CIP Code: 190799

Designation, Type and Level of Degree: Bachelor of Arts

Identification of Program: New Program

Description of the New Program:

The University of South Carolina Upstate School Of Education proposes a program designed to award the Bachelor of Arts: *Child Development and Family Studies* with a concentration in ages birth to six years and to begin implementation in the Fall of 2012. The four-year curriculum of 120 credit hours is built on an ecological perspective with a progressive educational philosophy regarding the child's interactions between social and physical environments. The purpose of this interdisciplinary program is to prepare students for professional work with young children and families from diverse cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Upon graduation, students will have opportunities to work as teachers and parent educators in private schools, child development centers, family learning centers, Early Head Start and Head Start Programs.

Justification of the need for the proposed program:

The need for the *Child Development and Family Studies* program is supported by educational and child development research indicating the impact of early experiences in later school success. Four-year programs that prepare college students interested in such specialized work are scarce in South Carolina and non-existent in the Upstate. Quality measures of education for children ages birth to six, such as the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) and child outcome studies, consistently not only emphasize the significant effect on both child development and school readiness that is embedded in the program quality and the quality of teacher-child interactions but also the wide -ranging effects of teacher quality on early language, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children (Palermo, Hanish, Martin, Fabes & Reiser, 2007; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2002). According to child outcome research, the training of the teacher and the consistency of care appear to be particularly important to children's brain development in all spectrums and is attributed to the secure attachment and responsive teaching style that is established during the early years (Palermo et al. 2007; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Gerber, Whitebrook & Weinstein, 2007). The responsive style is also one of the indicators of a high quality program (Gonzales-Mena & Eyer, 2009). Both teacher training and educational level have a significant relation to the quality of teacher-child interaction and teacher practices in the classroom. Teacher practices are the particular strategies and natural ways of doing certain activities that teachers develop as the result of prior education and special training. In turn, society benefits from a significant return on

investment by having a more productive workforce, reducing the crime rate, increasing school achievement, saving in social services costs and increasing tax revenue. The South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council Professional Development and Higher Education Team Report (2009) also acknowledges the significance of quality education for early learners and identifies both educational training and a four-year degree as a need for South Carolina teachers. In the short-term, the Council recommends high quality education for these professionals as well as the possibility of birth to six teacher certification.

As our schools become more diverse, the value of family involvement in children's care and education becomes even more critical. In order for school personnel and teachers to establish partnerships with parents, it is vital for teacher candidates to know and understand family dynamics, which is very significant in cultivating parent involvement (Swick 2003, 2004; Hooks, 2008). Therefore, *Family Studies* is an important component to early education and later school success.

Anticipated program demand and productivity:

The Piedmont Community Action Early Head Start Program collaborated with the USC Upstate School of Education in endorsing the *Child Development and Family Studies* program. Early Head Start directors in Spartanburg and Greenville counties confirmed that teachers' completion of this program would meet Head Start and Early Head Start standards. Also, community college students with a two year associate degree will have the opportunity to transfer seamlessly to this program in order to earn a four year degree. Additionally, licensed child care and child development programs seeking NAEYC accreditation support *Child Development and Family Studies* program. Results from a preliminary survey conducted among the licensed child care in the Spartanburg and Greenville Metropolitan area supported the *Child Development and Family Studies* program. This small sample is representative provides a representation of a larger population of licensed child care programs in the Upstate.

Assessment of extent to which the proposed program duplicates existing programs in the state:

The universities in the Upstate region do not offer a four-year degree program in the area of *Child Development and Family Studies*. Only Columbia College and Benedict College, both located in Columbia, offer such an opportunity in South Carolina. Therefore, in our state, the *Child Development and Family Studies* will be the first four-year degree program offered by a public institution in this field.

Relationship of the proposed program to existing programs at the proposing institution:

The four-year program of *Child Development and Family Studies* will be housed at the USC Upstate School of Education. The program is comprised of courses in the *Early Childhood Education Program* in the School of Education, the *Child Advocacy Minor* in the Department of Psychology, and for students who would like to pursue an administrative track the Minor in *Business* in the *George Dean Johnson School of Business*. The students in this program will attend courses on the Spartanburg campus or via compressed video to the Greenville campus. There remains the possibility of delivering these courses to Sumter,

Lancaster and Union campuses in the future. The *Child Development and Family Studies* program will require students to complete the same general education courses outlined in the *Early Childhood Education Program*. Upon completion of sixty hours of general education requirements with a 2.5 grade point average, students will be admitted to the *Child Development and Family Studies* program. The program will continue with major courses including one semester of internship.

Relationship of the Proposed Program to Other Institutions via Inter-institutional Cooperation:

The *Child Development and Family Studies* program will work with community and technical colleges in the realm of articulation agreements for a seamless transfer of the general education courses. In order to accomplish this transition, four additional courses will be articulated from selected community colleges and accredited early care and education programs to the *Child Development and Family Studies* program.

Federal programs, such as Early Head Start, aim to employ a lead teacher with a four-year degree in every classroom by 2012. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) also supports this standard as one of its accreditation requirements. However, experts throughout the state question South Carolina's ability to meet this standard due to the lack of adequate four-year programs within this field. Even though community and technical colleges in the Upstate offer a two-year associate degree in Child Development, there are very limited opportunities for those students to transition into a four-year program in a public institution. The *Child Development and Family Studies* program would not only provide a strong option for students seeking a bachelor degree to move seamlessly between programs but also fulfill the Early Head Start and NAEYC accreditation requirements in South Carolina. Moreover, the *Child Development and Family Studies* program will offer an additional choice to USC Upstate School of Education students.

Total New Costs Associated with the Implementing the Proposed Program:

Piedmont Community Action collaborated with the USC Upstate School of Education to fund a full-time tenure track faculty position to teach professional courses and to monitor field experiences for the *Child Development and Family Studies* program. An additional cost may include hiring adjunct instructors to teach additional new courses and to help monitor the field experiences as needed.

The source of financing for this program is student generated. Students are recruited from the general USC Upstate population qualified to receive Hope and Life Scholarships, in addition to students who are qualified for supplemental scholarships, such as Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) and tuition assistance through Head Start Programs. T.E.A.C.H. scholarships are incentives for teachers employed at registered or licensed childcare programs to pursue courses toward a four year degree. Head Start Programs' tuition assistance is provided for teachers employed with Head Start and Early Head Start Programs in order to pursue a bachelor degree in this field.