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P. George Benson, President

October 29, 2010

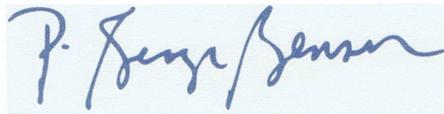
Dr. T. Michael Raley, Associate Director  
Academic Affairs and Licensing Division  
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
1333 Main Street, Suite 200  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Dr. Raley,

Please find enclosed for your review a program planning summary for the Master of Science in Child Life degree being housed within the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance, and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences here at the College of Charleston. And is jointly supported by the Child Life Department of the Medical University of South Carolina. This program will prepare individuals for careers as child life specialists in both hospital and community health care environments. The on-going relationship between the College of Charleston and the Medical University of South Carolina has been most positive for faculty, staff, and students. This degree program will strengthen our already well-established ties.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P. George Benson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light blue rectangular background.

PGB/ch

**Program Planning Summary**

**Master of Science in Child Life**

**School of Education, Health and Human Performance  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**College of Charleston  
and  
Child Life Department  
Medical University of South Carolina**



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P. George Benson, President

October 29, 2010

**Contact Information:**

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Charleston, SC 29424  
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**Proposed Date of Implementation:** Fall 2012

**Number of Credit Hours in Program:** 43 (31 coursework, 12 internship)

**Justification of Need:** The program will prepare individuals for careers as child life (CL) specialists in both hospital and community health care environments. Skills will be developed to promote family-centered care and to work with children and their families who live with the realities of chronic or terminal illness, surgery, trauma, injuries, and disabilities. These students will gain an understanding of medical issues and develop appropriate ways of working in hospitals and other health care settings. A combination of theory and practice will enhance the work with children and their families. Specifically, the students will learn to advocate for children and their families, prepare children for medical procedures, teach children about their illness, minimize stress and anxiety for children and their families, create opportunities that strengthen self-esteem and independence, provide non-pharmacological techniques to comfort children, and provide normal life experiences that promote optimal growth and development.

Upon completion of the program, graduates will have satisfied the course requirements, completed the mandated internship in CL facilities directed by certified CL professionals, and will be prepared to take the certification examination given by the CL Council (CLC). Internships will be at the Medical University of South Carolina's (MUSC) Children's Hospital and other hospitals in SC, as well as around the US. The College of Charleston (CofC) and MUSC have a long-standing history of cooperation in CL going back to the early 1990s via internships and volunteer experiences for CofC undergraduates at MUSC. This on-going relationship has been most positive for students, staff and faculty. This degree program will strengthen our already well-established ties.

There are currently 19 graduate degree programs in CL in the US, according to the CLC Directory. The programs in the Southeastern US are University of Alabama, University of Georgia, and Vanderbilt University. There are 35 child life programs in the US, but the other 16 are undergraduate only. Numerous therapy programs in health care settings have developed in the US and Europe in recent years, including play, music, art, and theater. Such professions have indeed enhanced communication and coping with patients. CL has its traditional foundations in hospitals, yet an increasing number of CL specialists are applying their unique expertise to help children in other environments, including outpatient healthcare facilities, doctors' offices, hospice care, specialized camps, schools, court systems, and funeral homes.

**Anticipated Program Demand and Productivity:** There are four children's hospitals in SC that employ CL specialists. An assessment survey in the spring of 2010 of undergraduate students at CofC in the Departments of Psychology, Health, Elementary/Early Childhood Education, and Sociology and Anthropology revealed that 103 out of 256 (40%) said they would "be interested in applying for the master's degree in child life at CofC." Of course, we would recruit from beyond CofC.

Requirements to enter the program will include a bachelor's degree in a related field (e.g., psychology, health, elementary/early childhood education, communication, sociology or

anthropology) with courses relative to the CL program and with volunteer work with children, preferably in a CL setting.

As noted by the CLC: “There is a growing awareness of the CL profession within the healthcare community as well as in the general public, and we expect to see a corresponding increase in demand for child life specialists” (CLC website, 2010). Many students at CofC, and students around the country, are looking for hands-on job opportunities where they can make a difference in the lives of others. Working with children is especially an interest of our students. This profession certainly responds to that calling. We are surveying the CL graduate programs in the US regarding number of applicants, acceptances, and their job placement of graduates. Four have responded, regarding numbers for the past three years:

Wheelock (MA)	175 applicants , 61 accepted, 90% job placement in CL
Mills (CA)	30 applicants, 21 accepted, 60% job placement in CL
Erikson Institute (IL)	60 applicants, 20 accepted, 50% job placement in CL
Colorado State U	38 applicants, 7 accepted, 100% job placement in CL

We will also contact the CL directors/managers around the US, including the three in SC, to ascertain their hiring experiences. The CL Council Placement Center currently has 27 postings but this is only one source of job opportunities. As many CL settings do not go through the Placement Center, such information is not totally accurate.

**Assessment of Extent to Which this Program Duplicates Existing Programs in the State:**

As noted above, there are no other CL graduate programs in South Carolina and only three graduate programs in the Southeastern US.

**Relationship of the Proposed Program to Existing Programs at the Proposed Institution:**

The MS in CL will complement various undergraduate programs at CofC such as Health, Psychology, Elementary/Early Childhood Education, Communication, Sociology and Anthropology, as students will be taking related courses in these programs to prepare for the MS program. This proposed degree should not overlap anything at CofC or MUSC. The interdisciplinary nature of the proposed degree reveals a cooperative effort between the various departments and the two institutions, thus distributing the work in order to not overburden any one program. We are working with CL staff at MUSC in program development.

**Program Relationship to the Other Institutions via Inter-Institutional Cooperation:**

This is a joint endeavor between CofC and MUSC. MUSC’s Children’s Hospital can accommodate some of our students with the required hours of clinical experience but clinical hours can also potentially be earned at any number of facilities in SC and throughout the US.

**Outline of Curriculum:** There are several graduate courses in the departments of education and communication that fit well with CL curricula and many undergraduate courses that could be taught with modifications for graduate level credit in the departments of psychology, health, elementary/early childhood education, communication, sociology, and anthropology. With existing courses and modifications to other courses, we fulfill the overwhelming majority of courses recommended (though not required) by the CLC. In order to offer a first-rate program,

we would like to have the following additional courses: Family Systems, Pediatric Psychology, and Play in Therapeutic Settings. The internship will be offered through MUSC, with additional placements at other hospitals in South Carolina and beyond.

**Total New Costs Associated with Implementing the Program:** As this program is interdisciplinary (Psychology, Health, Elementary/Early Childhood Education, Communication, Sociology, and Anthropology) and is in two colleges/universities (MUSC and CofC), we already have some graduate courses in place with current faculty and staff but may need additional faculty support over the next five years. Money will be needed for teaching assistants. Library holdings are largely in place, with minimal cost to expand holdings over five years. Administrative costs will include an annual stipend for the director of the program. We are seeking money from private sources and corporations and feel very confident about these external monies. We have met with the Wachovia Wells Fargo Foundation (regional) and will be contacting the Mark Elliot Motley Foundation (local), the Rite Aid Foundation (national), and the Duke Endowment (regional). We are having an “awareness” reception at Tristan in November, sponsored by the Zucker family. At the reception we plan to make the invited donors aware of the proposed CL program.



Office of the President

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September 27, 2010

Dr. Michael Raley  
Acting Director, Academic Affairs and Licensing  
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
1333 Main Street, Suite 200  
Columbia, SC 29201

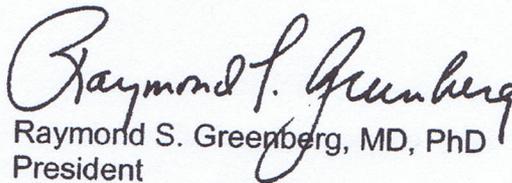
Dear Dr. Raley:

I am writing to offer my strong support for the proposed Master of Science Degree in Child Life. The Medical University of South Carolina and the College of Charleston are uniquely situated to work collaboratively on this program. The College has the expertise for most of the courses and we have the facility and staff to handle much of the internship requirement. Our institutions have worked together in child life for over 20 years as we have had volunteers and interns from the College in the Child Life Department. I am excited about this novel program.

Child life specialists are pivotal players in a children's hospital setting. There are only 19 master's degree programs in child life in the United States, with only 3 in the Southeast (GA, AL and TN). South Carolina undergraduate students must go out of state to obtain this degree. Child life is a growing profession and is most important in dealing with ill children and their families. We are certainly proud of the work done by our child life specialists at Children's Hospital and look forward to being able to partner with the College of Charleston to offer a first-rank graduate level program.

I hope that this proposal will be reviewed favorably. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

  
Raymond S. Greenberg, MD, PhD  
President