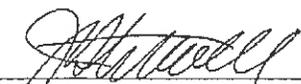


Program Planning Summary
Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction
to be offered by the
School of Education
of the
University of South Carolina Upstate



John C. Stockwell, Chancellor
University of South Carolina Upstate



Harris Pastides, President
University of South Carolina

July 16, 2009

Proposal for a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction
University of South Carolina Upstate

1. New Program Proposal: Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with areas of concentration in Technology, Reading, Early Childhood, Elementary, Special Education.

2. Proposed Date of Implementation: January 2010

The Master's program in Curriculum and Instruction is designed for certified teachers who want to become master teachers. The program will help teachers strengthen their instructional skills while developing their leadership abilities for such roles as department chair, staff development leader, or curriculum coordinator. The degree does not lead toward teacher certification. This innovative program will allow teachers to earn a master's degree entirely online within just two years. There will be five areas of concentration – Technology; Reading, Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education. Courses will match those required by South Carolina Department of Education for add-on certification in these areas.

There are four components of the Curriculum and Instruction degree: a Foundations / Research Core; a Curriculum/Instruction Core; a Concentration Sequence; and a Seminar. The *Foundations / Research Core* provides a background in the foundations of education and an understanding of the basics of research in education. The *Curriculum/Instruction Core* provides the background, perspectives, and resources necessary for advanced study as a classroom teacher. The *Concentration Sequence* emphasizes a particular area of study. The *Seminar* is the capstone course and requires the assembly of a Portfolio or a Teacher Work Sample to be presented to a Defense Panel.

3. Justification for Need for the Program:

The proposed program will allow for a reconfiguration of two current degree programs, Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education, to better serve the needs of Upstate and Sumter area school districts and classroom teachers.

An advanced degree is not a requirement in South Carolina for a Professional Teaching Certificate, as it is in nine states (Kaye, 2005). However, many teachers pursue their professional development by earning a masters degree. In South Carolina the median district has 51.4% classroom teachers with an advanced degree (South Carolina Department of Education, 2005). Each of the two geographical regions USC Upstate graduate programs are offered has a different teaching demographic.

Of the 12 Upstate school districts that the Graduate Programs Office services, 11 districts (91%) exceed the median. **With so many Upstate teachers already having earned their masters, it is necessary to reconfigure advanced degree programs to meet their professional needs.**

The Masters in Curriculum and Instruction is designed for experienced teachers seeking professional growth and development opportunities through continuing education courses to advance their careers and gain innovative and relevant knowledge about strategies of effective curriculum design and teaching. This program will increase candidates' expertise in curriculum and instruction and develop leadership skills. In addition to increasing student learning with

their enhanced curriculum and instruction skills, graduates will be prepared to pursue leadership positions in curriculum and instruction at the grade, department, school and district levels.

The current Early Childhood and Elementary degree programs are offered on the USC Sumter campus. The teacher demographics in that area vary from those in the Upstate. There is a larger pool of potential students in the Sumter area for the Master of Education Degree programs. Over 50% of the teachers in the Sumter 2 district do not have an advanced degree, and in Sumter 17, 48% do not have an advanced degree (South Carolina Department of Education, 2004).

4. Anticipated Program Demand and Productivity

This proposed Masters in Curriculum and Instruction offers teachers a variety of choices for pursuing their professional development and advancing their credentials. The Masters in Curriculum and Instruction degree program will not be limited to the pk-6 grade teachers, but rather be attractive to teachers through twelfth grade. We have exhausted the market with the grade specific early childhood and elementary degree programs. Each area of concentration will provide the course work requirement for the South Carolina Department of Education's add-on certificate in the selected area. Expanding one's teaching credentials to include more areas of certification will make a teacher more competitive.

The areas of concentration are, in part, in response to the interests expressed by Upstate school districts, particularly in the area of technology. Reading and Special Education are additional areas of interest, and critical needs areas. The Early Childhood and Elementary concentrations will allow for the continuation of our current degree programs.

Additionally because the program will be on-line, completers of an undergraduate School of Education program will easily be able to roll over into the graduate program regardless of their location in the state.

USC Upstate anticipates a cohort of 20 candidates seeking a M.Ed in Curriculum and Instruction to begin in August 2010 with a similar cohort in August 2011.

5. Assessment of the Extent to Which the Proposed Program Duplicates Existing Programs in the State

There are six Curriculum and Instruction advanced degree programs in the state of South Carolina (CHE, 2009). Two are EdD programs (Bob Jones University and U.S.C. - Columbia); one EDS program (Converse College) and one PhD program (Clemson University). There is only one M. Ed Curriculum and Instruction program in the state at Columbia International University. The proposed program will not duplicate existing Masters degree programs in the Upstate of South Carolina. None of these programs are strictly on-line.

6. Relationship of the Proposed Program to Existing Programs at the Proposing Institution:

The proposed Curriculum and Instruction program is a comprehensive program that will include concentrations in early childhood and elementary education. The Masters programs in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education will no longer be offered. The program courses will be folded into the new program. The Curriculum and Instruction program will utilize the core courses (philosophy, child development and research). The program will follow

the same format of the current programs with its assessment system and Professional Portfolio. Candidates in the Curriculum and Instruction program will complete and defend their Professional Portfolio, as is currently done in the M. Ed programs.

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

The inter-institutional cooperation of the proposed programs with programs at other institutions will be determined by the criteria currently specified in the *2009-2010 USC Upstate Academic Catalog*. "Transfer work from a regionally accredited institution applicable to a Master's Degree must be within six (6) years prior to USC Upstate degree completion. A maximum of twelve semester hours credit (nine if part of a master's degree at the other institution) may be considered . . ." subject to specific conditions (p. 218). This will apply to graduate level content courses and to graduate level education courses at other accredited institutions.

8. Total New Costs Associated with Implementing the Proposed Program

There will be no new administrative costs for this program; it will be administered under the current USC Upstate School of Education's Office of Graduate Programs. There will be no new faculty members for this program. This program will require eight new courses. The additions include an instruction strategies course and standards based assessment course for the Curriculum and Instruction Core. The Reading and Language Arts concentration will need one additional course; the Special Education concentration will need 3 additional courses and the elementary education concentration two more courses.

Selected References

South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (1/22/2009). Programs available at South Carolina Higher Education Institutions - EDUCATION Degree Inventory. Retrieved from <http://www.che400.state.sc.us/>

Kaye, Elizabeth A., ed. (2005). *Requirements for Certification of Teachers, Counselors, Librarians, Administrators for Elementary and Secondary Schools, 70th Edition 2005-2006*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

South Carolina Department of Education. Education Accountability Act Report Cards. Retrieved from <http://ed.sc.gov/topics/researchandstats/schoolreportcard/NCLBandEAASchoolReportCards.html>