



# COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

*Office of the Provost*

October 31, 2008

Dr. Garrison Walters  
Executive Director  
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
1333 Main Street, Suite 200  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Dr. Walters:

Coastal Carolina University is submitting for your consideration the attached Program Planning Summary for a Master of Education in Learning and Teaching.

Thank you for your help in the reviewing process. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Robert Sheehan, Ph. D.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

## PROGRAM PLANNING SUMMARY

### PROGRAM DESIGNATION

<b>Institution:</b>	Coastal Carolina University
<b>Academic unit involved:</b>	Spadoni College of Education
<b>Name of the proposed program:</b>	Master of Education in Learning and Teaching
<b>CIP Code:</b>	13.0101
<b>Proposed Date of Implementation:</b>	Fall 2009
<b>New program or modification:</b>	New program
<b>Number of credit hours:</b>	30
<b>STEM designation</b>	

### JUSTIFICATION OF NEED

The Master of Education in Teaching and Learning will offer a unique curriculum to meet the needs of current and future teachers. Coastal Carolina University seeks to build strong relationships with area school districts in an effort to assist in the professional growth of PK-12 educators. The proposed program is consistent with this desired relationship as it offers the opportunity for educators to develop professional expertise in a new area or to extend their professional knowledge in an area where they have already developed a level of expertise.

The proposed program was developed to increase: a) the number of graduate degree options available to current and aspiring teachers; b) enrollment in graduate degree options; c) the value-added nature of content that develops or extends professional knowledge in identified high-need areas; d) the fluidity of graduate degree programming that better meets the dynamic needs of local school districts; and e) administrative and resource efficiency of a coordinated program that shares coursework, assessments, delivery, and experiences within and between this and other existing graduate programs at the University.

The proposed degree program consists of intensive coursework divided between 15 hours of essential core coursework and 15 hours of study in a high-demand area of specialization. Specializations offered in the program are (1) Literacy, (2) Instructional Technology, (3) Teaching and Learning in the Early and Elementary Grades and (4) Teaching and Learning in Middle and Secondary Grades.

Specializations in the program are based on local, state, and regional need. **(1) Literacy.** There is an urgent need to prepare teachers in South Carolina who are knowledgeable about literacy to address the problems of illiteracy in the state and our specific region. Recent data (Bierbauer, 2005) show that one-third of South Carolina students are reading below state standards in eighth grade; South Carolina has the third-highest adult illiteracy rate in the United States; several surrounding counties report illiteracy rates higher than 40 percent, including Williamsburg, Clarendon, and Lee counties. Horry County School District has identified literacy education as priority area of need for its current teachers. **(2) Instructional Technology.** South Carolina legislators have recognized that technological proficiency is essential for students and educators to be successful in the rapidly evolving information-based global economy. Most recently, the South Carolina Educational Accountability Act (1998), No Child Left Behind (2001), and the Teacher Technology Proficiency Proviso 1.25 (2003), have resulted in significant changes to how technology progress is measured and who should be accountable. The current State Technology Plan (2003-8), for example, identifies two primary targets – 1) to “[improve] student achievement in the core curriculum through technology proficiency,” and (2) “to [encourage] the effective integration of technology resources and systems through teacher training and curriculum development.” The need for technology training has been formally recognized by various national, international, and state organizations and initiatives that serve the education industry, including the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), and the South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) **(3) Teaching and**

**Learning in the Early and Elementary Grades.** This specialization will allow the College to continue to respond to needs of local and regional school districts to provide advanced study for individual teachers and/or cohorts of teachers to develop focused areas of study in the early and elementary grades. Current graduate enrollment data of existing M.Ed. programs support the sustained need for this program option, and indicate over 50 teachers engaging in study related to the proposed early and elementary grades specialization. **(4) Teaching and Learning in the Middle and Secondary Grades.** Secondary school teachers consistently indicate a need for more advanced study in their content areas. Research has also clearly shown middle level teachers need specific training to address the variability and transitioning times of these students (McEwin & Dickinson, 1997; Mertens, Flowers & Mulhall, 2002). The South Carolina State Department has emphasized the need to address the middle level and calls for higher education to yield increased numbers of certified middle level educators. Horry and Georgetown County schools have requested increased graduate offerings and/or degree options for new and existing educators. At this time, no university within a 100 mile radius of Conway offers graduate level courses that specialize in middle level education. This specialization will help meet current (secondary) and impending (middle level) needs of our local school districts.

After an extensive assessment of program needs and discussions with local school districts, the University has withdrawn earlier program planning summaries of separate degree programs for the M.Ed. in Instructional Technology and the M.Ed. in Literacy, Language and Culture. Additionally, upon approval and initiation of the proposed degree, the University plans to terminate its separate M.Ed. programs in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Secondary Education, in anticipation of concentrating its graduate study for teacher professional development in the proposed M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning.

#### **ANTICIPATED PROGRAM DEMAND AND PRODUCTIVITY**

Meetings with area school district personnel, current graduate students, and completing seniors in the College's undergraduate programs have reinforced the need for this program. Central office administrators from Horry County Schools have given strong endorsement for the program concept. The most recent survey of current teachers from the immediate three counties yielded 426 responses. 246 or 57% of responses indicated they would be interested in pursuing a Master's degree in Teaching and Learning if it were offered by Coastal Carolina University. Another 17% indicated they needed more information. When asked to indicate the specialization they would be most interested in pursuing, 118 indicated instructional technology, 109 indicated middle and secondary level, 95 indicated literacy, and 89 indicated early and elementary grades. In an earlier survey (2006) of 800 teachers from Horry and Georgetown counties to discern interest in a master's program in instructional technology, 512 responded they would start the program immediately or within one year. There currently are over 2,000 teachers in the immediate service area of the University without an advanced degree, or almost 50% of the teachers. In addition, current graduate enrollment data indicate over 50 teachers engaging in study related to the proposed primary and elementary grades specialization and over 20 enrolled in the secondary education specialization. Based on anticipated demand, it conservatively estimated that each specialization will average 25 enrolled students, or a total annual enrollment of 100 students by the second year of the program.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROPOSED PROGRAM DUPLICATES EXISTING PROGRAMS IN THE STATE**

At present, few degrees similar to the proposed degree are offered in the state. Winthrop University and Columbia International University offer the M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction and The University of South Carolina offers the M.Ed. in Teaching. The College of Charleston has recently proposed the M.Ed. in Teaching, Learning and Advocacy. Each of these degrees has similarity to the proposed degree in that each requires a basic core of studies and makes available specialization study to degree candidates. None

of the aforementioned programs reside within 100 miles of the immediate service area of the University. It is felt that there is not a duplication of program services created in the development of the proposed program as the other South Carolina universities identified are located in distinctly different geographic areas of the state.

**RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM TO EXISTING PROGRAMS AT THE PROPOSING INSTITUTION**

Coastal Carolina University offers masters level programs in the Spadoni College of Education, the College of Natural and Applied Sciences, and the College of Business Administration. Programs currently offered in the Spadoni College of Education include M.Ed. degree programs in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Secondary Education (with concentrations in English, mathematics, music, science and social studies). The College also offers the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) degree which is designed as a route to initial teacher licensure through graduate study. The M.A.T. degree has specializations in art, English, mathematics, music, science and social studies. Beyond the degrees currently in place, the College has an active program planning summary at the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for the M.Ed. in Educational Leadership.

The proposed program will share core coursework with the proposed new M.Ed. in Educational Leadership, should it be successfully approved. It will also share content-based coursework with the College's existing M.A.T. program. Other than shared coursework, the proposed program does not have a direct relationship with the College's M.A.T. program or the proposed M.Ed. in Educational Leadership. The proposed program does not have a direct relationship to graduate programs offered in the other colleges at the University.

**RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS VIA INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION**

The University is interested in developing relationships with other institutions in the state in offering coursework applicable to the degree. This applies to coursework delivered online, via video conferencing, or face-to-face.

**TOTAL NEW COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED PROGRAM**

The University views the implementation of the proposed M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning, while distinctly a new degree, in part as a reconfiguration of some existing graduate study at the institution. Consequently, beyond fulfilling identified faculty needs, only limited new costs are anticipated. It is estimated that the program will need to hire in the second year one new faculty member in the field of instructional technology with an estimated salary between \$50,000 to \$60,000. Additional, technology resources for the program are projected at \$5,000 and library needs at \$1,000 per year for the first five years of the program. Costs for this new program will be covered by tuition generated by the program. No additional funds for this program are being requested from the state.



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Dr. David A. DeCenzo, President  
Coastal Carolina University  
October 31, 2008