

**New Program Proposal
Bachelor of Science
Middle Level Education
Francis Marion University**

Summary

Francis Marion University requests approval to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Science degree in Middle Level Education to be implemented in Spring 2007.

The Board of Trustees approved the proposal on August 7, 2006. It was submitted to the Commission on June 19, 2006, and reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs without substantive comment and voted upon favorably on October 11, 2006.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the program is to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in Middle Level Education to students seeking initial teacher certification. The B. S. in Middle Level Education will prepare teachers for the middle grades in the Pee Dee region and for the state of South Carolina. The need for the program, according to the proposal, is based on the approval of middle grades certification for South Carolina Schools in July, 1999, by the General Assembly of South Carolina. In order to be certified to teach in the middle grades (5-8), the South Carolina State Department of Education requires that students graduating from a teacher preparation program and seeking initial certification after July 1, 2008 must hold a degree from an approved middle level teacher training program. The state mandate for Middle Level Education Certification signifies a real need for people certified to teach in the middle schools immediately and on a continuing basis. The Middle Level Education Program supports the mission of Francis Marion University.

Employment opportunities, in the FMU region, consist of 35 middle schools located within 19 school districts in the Pee Dee region. Staff communication with representatives from Francis Marion University indicates that there are approximately 68 vacancies per year in the middle level in the Pee Dee region.

The curriculum of the proposed program consists of a minimum of 129 credit hours of undergraduate coursework in general education, pre-professional education, supporting courses, professional education and two of the following content areas: social studies, English/Language Arts, mathematics, and science. There are five new

courses to be added to the catalog of the institution. Admission standards require that students interested in pursuing the B.S. Degree in Middle Level Education must meet the same criteria required for all initial teacher certification programs at Francis Marion University. Students will be admitted to the proposed program upon

- completing 60 hours of undergraduate study,
- obtaining a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 in all undergraduate course work and have a grade of C or better in Education 290 and Education 299,
- passing all three sections of the Praxis I exam, and
- receiving a positive recommendation from teacher education faculty, a positive recommendation from the field (public school personnel) and a recommendation from the Undergraduate Committee.

Similar programs in public institutions are found at six public institutions in South Carolina currently. Similar programs are also offered in three of South Carolina's independent institutions. In addition, a Masters of Arts in Teaching degree in Middle Level Education is offered at Clemson University. However, the need for this expertise will demand more supply than can be accommodated with current programs.

Enrollment in the proposed degree program is estimated to begin at 12 students (12 FTE) in Spring 2007 and increase to 24 students (24 FTE) in the second through the fifth year of the program. According to the proposal, it is anticipated that about 2/3 of the candidates will come from those who might have chosen elementary education as a major and the other 1/3 will be those who may have chosen secondary education. FMU does not anticipate a significant number of new candidates coming to FMU with the expressed purpose of majoring in middle level education. If the enrollment projections are met, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards.

Consistent with National Middle School Association Standards, institutions preparing middle level teachers employ faculty members who have middle level experience and expertise. The School of Education at Francis Marion currently has approximately five faculty with both expertise and teaching experience in the middle grades. There will be five headcount faculty (5 FTE) serving the new program. New faculty must have an earned doctorate from an NCATE-accredited institution. There will be one new faculty (1 FTE) required in the first year and two new part-time faculty (1 FTE) required in years three to five.

The proposed program will be subject to accreditation by professional organizations including the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and its five affiliated specialty associations. Additionally, the program will

have to demonstrate to State Department of Education officials discipline-specific objectives as articulated in the South Carolina Curriculum Standards and South Carolina's ADEPT program. All students completing the middle level program must be certified by the South Carolina State Department of Education, pass the Praxis II middle level examinations in two content areas, and undergo an FBI fingerprint review.

No additional physical plant or equipment requirements exist for the proposed program within the first five years of implementation. The James A. Rogers Library provides print and electronic resources, access to electronic library resources through Infotrak Search bank that contains over 1000 full-text journal titles, and other library resources that complement instruction. These include the statewide PASCAL databases, a variety of other digital indexes and full-text databases, Interlibrary Loan, Internet access, bibliographic instruction, and a variety of class-specific user education programs. Indexing and abstracting services in the library also support the Middle Level Education program.

Preliminary searches indicate that the monograph collection to support "middle school" needs strengthening for additional holdings. Total needs for new materials in the collection to support Middle Level Education, which will require approximately \$1,625 per year for each of the first five years of implementation.

New costs for the program are estimated to begin at \$70,725 in year one and include new faculty salaries (\$68,750), library resources (\$1,625) and travel to clinical experiences (\$350). Estimated new costs increase to \$70,775 in the second year, \$105,150 the third year, \$139,525 the fourth and fifth year. The total estimated new costs for the program for its first five years will total \$491,325. Revenues will be generated through estimated FTE revenue generated from the state and tuition funding. No "unique costs" or other special state appropriations will be required or requested. The School of Education currently has sufficient, qualified faculty on staff to meet the anticipated program needs for at least the next two years.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the State and new costs not funded through the MRR but which are associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are estimated revenues projected under the MRR and the Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Year	Estimated MRR Cost for Proposed Program	Extraordinary (Non-MRR) Costs for Proposed Program	Total Costs	State Appropriation	Tuition	Total Revenue
Year 1	\$140,088	\$0	\$140,088	N/A	\$79,409	\$79,409
Year 2	\$280,176	\$0	\$280,176	\$90,714	\$158,819	\$249,533
Year 3	\$280,176	\$0	\$280,176	\$181,428	\$158,819	\$340,247
Year 4	\$280,176	\$0	\$280,176	\$181,428	\$158,819	\$340,247
Year 5	\$280,176	\$0	\$280,176	\$181,428	\$158,819	\$340,247

These data demonstrate that if Francis Marion University can meet the projected student enrollments and contain costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will be able to cover new costs with revenues it generates by the third year of its implementation.

In summary, Francis Marion University will offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Science degree in Middle Level Education. This program is needed in South Carolina and will allow students to obtain the special skill set required of Middle Level teachers. The proposed program at Francis Marion University will contribute to the placement of “highly qualified” middle level teachers and contribute to increased effectiveness of South Carolina schools.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission approval of Francis Marion’s proposed program leading to a Bachelor’s degree in Middle Level Education to be implemented in Spring 2007 provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested and provided further that the program be approved by the State Board of Education prior to implementation.