

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
EUGENE T. MOORE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
TEACHER EDUCATION

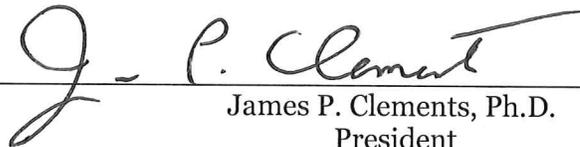
REQUESTING TO OFFER A NEW DEGREE PROGRAM

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Special Education

Submitted to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
May 15, 2014



James P. Clements, Ph.D.
President

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Classification

- Program Title: Special Education
- Academic Unit: Eugene T. Moore School of Education
- Designation, Type, and Level of Degree: Doctor of Philosophy
- Implementation Date: Fall 2015
- CIP code: 13.1017
- Site: Clemson University
- Palmetto/Life scholarships: NO
- Delivery Mode: Traditional

Institutional Approval

- Initial Departmental Faculty Approval: November 2013
- Board of Trustees: February 7, 2014
- Teacher Education Curriculum Committee: February 26, 2014
- Teacher Education Faculty Final Approval: March 7, 2014
- College Curriculum Committee: March 10, 2014
- University Graduate Curriculum Committee: May 9, 2014
- Provost: May 15, 2014
- President: May 15, 2014

Purpose

The Eugene T. Moore School of Education is proposing a doctorate in special education. The major objective of the new program is to provide an in-depth advanced research degree in special education that emphasizes instructional and behavioral interventions as well as advanced quantitative research methodologies.

Program Objectives

1. Demonstrate advanced level academic expertise and practical experience necessary to function as researchers, teacher educators, and leaders in the field of special education in order to address the needs of individuals with mild/moderate disabilities from high poverty and culturally diverse backgrounds. (**Advanced Knowledge and Life-long Learning**)
2. Display competence by being selected for employment by academic, government/state, or local school districts. (**Career Opportunities**)
3. Understand the broad, social, legal, ethical and professional issues in special education practice. (**Awareness and Responsibility**).

Program Justification

A critical shortage of special education faculty has existed for several years and is projected to continue with significant numbers of faculty expected to retire in the near future (Montrosse & Young, 2012). In addition, school populations have changed dramatically and the need for highly-qualified teachers who are able to address the unique needs of students with disabilities is extensive. However, teachers' ability to provide high quality instruction is inextricably linked to the quality of their teacher preparation programs (Robb et al., 2012). The shortage of highly qualified special education teachers is impacted by the shortage of highly qualified special education faculty (Robb et al., 2012). Over a decade ago Smith et al. (2001) reported that over a 20-year time frame the number of earned special education doctorates will decrease annually by 30%, resulting in a nationwide shortage of special education faculty.

Furthermore, over 20% of teacher preparation faculty members in special education are projected to retire each year across the next five years (Robb et al., 2012). In real numbers, they estimate that between 388 and 582 special education faculty members will retire by 2017. Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) in SC, like much of the nation, have experienced vacancies in special education faculty positions. While 17 colleges and universities in South Carolina offer teacher preparation programs in special education (SE), South Carolina continues to experience a shortage of highly qualified SE teachers. According to the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement Annual Report (CERRA, 2012), SE teachers accounted for the greatest number of hires across all school levels in 2012. In addition, vacancies in SE across all grades constituted the largest portion (18%) of unfilled full-time equivalents (FTEs) in the state. Universities in South Carolina, like much of the nation, have experienced vacancies in SE faculty; however, only Clemson University (CU) and University of South Carolina (USC) offer doctoral preparation programs in SE. Over the last two years, Clemson University and University of South Carolina have hired 5 new faculty members in special education. Across the state last year, at least 4 special education teacher preparation programs (Anderson University, Coastal Carolina University, College of Charleston, and Southern Wesleyan University) had open positions (two of Clemson's doctoral candidates have been hired at these institutions).

Centrality of the Program to the Mission of the Institution

Program's objectives are consistent with the mission of Clemson University. In addition to the University Mission Statement, the university has a vision statement "Clemson will be one of the nation's top-20 public universities", which influences faculty hiring decisions and resource allocation (<http://www.clemson.edu/about/mission-vision.html>). Clemson University has identified family and community living as an emphasis area in which the university promotes excellence in education and scholarship. As a land grant university, Clemson is committed to offering doctoral and research programs that contribute to the economic future of the state, nation, and the world. The Clemson 2020 Road Map strategic plan for the university states that one of Clemson's responsibilities to students and the state of South Carolina is to serve the public good. Providing excellence in educational opportunities for P-12 students, including those with disabilities is critical to the state's success.

Relationship of the Proposed Program to Existing Programs at the Proposing Institution

The Department of Teacher Education at Clemson currently offers a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction and doctoral students may choose **an emphasis in special education**. We have had 10 doctoral students who have completed their degrees in C & I with special education emphasis over the last 4 years, with 100% of graduates employed in the field of special education. Although the C & I degree has served our students well, future students who wish to complete a doctoral program in special education would benefit from a program tailored specifically for the needs of higher education special education faculty. Three primary benefits of the proposed Ph.D. in special education are that the degree would: (a) attract applicants from a broader geographic area beyond upstate South Carolina, (b) better position the program area with U.S. Department of Education and other sources for grant funding, and (c) allow the special education faculty to better individualize programs of study to meet doctoral students' needs and enhance graduates' marketability for positions in higher education and leadership positions. If approved, the proposed stand-alone doctorate in special education will replace the C&I doctorate-Special Education emphasis.

Similar Programs Existing in the State:

Currently, only University of South Carolina offers the Ph.D. in special education in our state. The Ph.D. program in special education at USC focuses upon the preparation of teacher educators and special education administrators through an intensive course of advanced study. The needs across the state, region, and nation suggest that Clemson University also has a role to play in addressing faculty shortages and in preparing special education faculty. Clemson University special education faculty have had, and continue to have, strong and positive relationships with special education faculty from USC. Faculty have collaborated on state-level grants (e.g., Project CREATE), state-level initiatives (e.g. State Improvement Grant, annual Research to Practice Conference), doctoral committees (e.g., Yell from USC with Sutherland and Collins) state and national presentations (e.g., Katsiyannis & Yell; Marshall, Stecker, & Hodge), refereed publications (e.g., Katsiyannis & Yell), and co editorships (e.g., Katsiyannis and Yell, *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*). The move to a Ph.D. in special education should not negatively impact the candidates matriculating through the program at USC as Clemson has had individuals completing the Ph.D. in C & I with emphasis in special education for many years.

To address the demand for special education faculty who have the expertise to prepare teachers and to conduct rigorous research to address their unique needs, Clemson University proposes a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Special Education.

Similar Programs in the Region and Nation

The program we are proposing is similar to other special education doctoral programs and outside the state of South Carolina at institutions within the land grant university tradition, such as the Ph.D. program in at Texas A & M University, University of Nebraska , and the University of Kansas. Additional programs reviewed included Vanderbilt University, University of North Carolina-Charlotte, and Georgia State University. Our curriculum emphasizes advanced quantitative research methodology in line with prominent programs in special education, and instructional and behavioral interventions, and an emphasis in high needs schools. The faculty members in the area of special education hold graduate degrees from nationally recognized institutions such as Vanderbilt University. Over the course of their careers, ranging from 2 to 25 years, each faculty member has developed expertise across various areas of special education and each has significantly advanced and expanded their expertise. Specifically, faculty in special education enjoy national reputations in areas such as progress monitoring (curriculum-based measurement), legal and policy issues, seclusion and restraints, and scientifically-based literacy practices. Area faculty also have served in leadership roles for professional organizations (Council for Exceptional Children, Teacher Education Division, Council for Children for Behavioral Disorders, and the Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders). Finally, faculty members are currently serving as editors of journals such as the *Journal of Disability Policy Studies and Beyond Behavior*; also, associate editors for *Remedial and Special Education*.

Admission Criteria

For admission, individuals must have completed a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution and have K-12 teaching experience. An application package for admission will include (1) online application, (2) undergraduate and graduate transcripts (cumulative *minimum* grade-point average of 3.25 on graduate work), (3) two recommendations, with one from an immediate prior supervisor, (4) current résumé, (5) copy of teaching and/or administration certifications, (6) competitive GRE scores on verbal, quantitative and writing assessments (GRE verbal scores of at least 153 and quantitative reasoning scores of 155), and (7) an essay that addresses knowledge, accomplishments, and future career goals. An interview, in person or virtually, that reflects strong communication skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm for

teaching and learning is also required. Applicants whose first language is not English must also submit TOEFL or IELTS scores. Prospective students are encouraged to apply four months prior to the beginning of the term in which they wish to enroll.

Enrollment

Enrollment estimates are based on the department’s estimate of faculty capacity to accommodate the courses, mentors, and assistantships needed to conduct the program. It is estimated that three new students will be admitted to the program during the first two academic years. In year three, the enrollment will increase to four students each academic year. The enrollment in the program is limited as a result of the size of the faculty, the large undergraduate teaching obligation, available stipends for graduate students, placement opportunities, and time to degree. After four years, twelve to sixteen students will be enrolled in the program at various stages of completion—coursework to dissertation. The Department will continuously evaluate enrollment and interest in the program. As additional resources become available, the number of students would be increased as appropriate.

Table A: PROJECTED TOTAL ENROLLMENT						
YEAR	FALL		SPRING		SUMMER	
	Headcount	Credit Hours	Headcount	Credit Hours	Headcount	Cr Hours
2015– 16	3	30	3	30		
2016– 17	6	60	6	60	2	6
2017– 18	10*	90	10	90	3	6
2018– 19	14	126	14	126	3	6
2019– 20	16**	144	16	144	4	8

*Enrollment increases to 4 new students;

**Anticipates students graduating.

Brief Description of Curriculum:

This program is built upon instruction that emphasizes the application of theory and research to the needs of students with mild/moderate disabilities. The Ph.D. in special education has a minimum requirement of 64 credit hours. Students are required to complete research, core course requirements, and dissertation credit hour requirements. In addition, students will be required to pass a comprehensive exam, dissertation proposal defense, and final oral dissertation defense.

Curriculum:

Research and Methodology (16 hours)

- EDF 9270 Quantitative Research Designs and Statistics for Educational Contexts
- EDF 9770 Multiple Regression/General Linear Model in Educational Research

EDF 9780 Multivariate Statistics for Educational Research
EDF 9790 Qualitative Research Methods
EDSP 9360 Single Subject Research Design

Specialty (18 hours)

EDSP 9390 Professional Writing in Special Education
EDSP 9304 Evidence-Based Research in Instructional Design and Delivery
EDSP 9350 Preparing Highly Qualified Special Educators: Research in Teacher Education
EDSP 9370 Research in High Incidence Disabilities
ED 9380 Grant Writing in Education and Related Fields
EDSP 9400 Accountability and Assessment for Diverse Populations in High Needs Schools

Choose at least two courses from the following (a minimum of 6 hours)

EDSP 9310 Advanced Research in Learning Disabilities
EDSP 9320 Advanced Research in Emotional/ Behavioral Disorders
EDSP 9330 Advanced Research in Intellectual Disabilities
EDSP 9530 Legal Trends in Special Education
EDF 9200 Philosophy of Educational Research
EDF 9710 Case Study and Ethnographic Research Methods and Design
EDF 9720 Phenomenology and Grounded Theory Research Methods and Design
EDF 9730 Narrative and Historical Research Methods and Design
EDF 9750 Mixed Methods Research
SOC 8030 Survey Designs for Applied Social Research
PSYCH 8730 Structural Equation Modeling in Applied Psychology
MTHSC 8070 Applied Multivariate Analysis

Teaching and Supervision Internship (6 hours)

EDSP 9800 Internship in Special Education

EDSP 9910 Dissertation (18 hours)

New Courses	Description
EDSP 9400: Accountability and Assessment for Diverse Populations in High Needs Schools	Examines the use of assessment for gauging student progress over time, strengthening instructional programs, and making high-stakes decisions. This course explores theory and practice as well as current issues and trends related to assessment in special education, particularly connected to recent legislation and use of assessment data for educational accountability.
EDSP 9390: Professional Writing in Special Education	This seminar course provides orientation and training to doctoral students in professional writing in the field of special education. Emphasis is placed on critical thinking, practice writing, and peer assessment. The course culminates in a portfolio of writings in different formats.

Assessment Plan

The University engages in program evaluation and assessment that focuses on program outcomes as well as student learning outcomes. While assessment of students is essential, program assessment is an important component as well. The faculty examines a number of factors related to program quality and effectiveness including, but not limited to, enrollment and graduate rates, publications and presentations of faculty and students, student assessment

of instructors, and exit interviews. These data assist faculty in evaluating and improving program implementation.

Students Learning Outcomes include the following:

- Develop, revise, and implement an effective personnel preparation program by focusing on identification and implementation of evidence-based practices and culturally-responsive teaching practices.
- Develop, implement, analyze, and disseminate high-quality research related to the unique needs of students with disabilities and teachers in high-needs schools.
- Design and implement research studies that meet high quality, research standards.
- Provide high-quality, targeted professional development in academic and behavioral interventions for students with disabilities to teachers and leaders in high-needs schools.
- Apply leadership skills in a variety of contexts (e.g., teaching in higher education, collaborating with school partners, involvement in professional organizations).

Accomplishment of learning objectives will be assessed through

1. Course artifacts
2. A comprehensive examination upon completion of at least 80% of core coursework
3. A preliminary oral defense of a detailed dissertation proposal that addresses both the topic and proposed methodology
4. A final oral defense of the dissertation
5. Student state and national presentations
6. Student publications in referred journals
7. Post graduate employment (e.g., type of university research vs teaching)

All enrolled students will be evaluated annually by area faculty (through the use of a standardized instrument and artifacts submitted by the students-such as updated vitae); at a spring meeting, these evaluations will be discussed by the faculty to address curricular changes, nature and type of supports needed to meet learner objectives, and opportunities for involvement in research projects. These data will be used to make program and curriculum changes.

The student self-evaluation includes: Awards Received, Teaching/Supervision/Professional Development (courses taken; courses taught/co-taught/shadowed; supervision activities; course development; special seminars taken/online training), Research (grant and project involvement; research assistant activities or participation in research conducted/directed by faculty member; participation in design of study; conducting "own" study with guidance; literature review; grant application; presentations at local, regional, and/or national conferences; manuscript development activities; co-author of manuscript; submission and/or acceptance of manuscript), Service (running for office and/or elected at the university, state, or national level committee or professional organization; student representative on university committee or council; participation/leadership in community agency; volunteer/ mentor/facilitator for individuals with disabilities and/or their parents; service learning activities; conduct professional development/ inservice for teachers or other school personnel; Please do not include any duties that are a part of your job or assistantship).

Faculty

As noted above, the program is built upon a strong core of existing faculty. The faculty members of the Department are qualified to direct graduate students in this field. All faculty members attend professional conferences and publish peer-reviewed manuscripts in their areas of

expertise. All faculty members are actively engaged in research. The institutional definition of the full-time equivalents (FTE) is 12 credit hours

Table B: FACULTY LIST			
List Staff by Rank	Highest Degree Earned	Field of Study	Teaching in Field (Yes/No)
Professor #1	EdD.	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Legal and Policy Issues; Delinquency	yes
Professor #2	Ph.D.	Learning Disabilities Instructional interventions; program monitoring	yes
Associate Professor#1	Ph.D.	Learning Disabilities Instructional interventions	yes
Associate Professor#2	Ph.D.	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Behavioral interventions Seclusion/restraints	yes
Assistant Professor#1	Ph.D.	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Behavioral interventions PBIS; Writing Interventions	yes
Assistant Professor #2	Ph.D.	Learning Disabilities Research methodology Postsecondary transition	yes
Assistant Professor #3	Ph.D.	Early Childhood Instructional interventions	yes

Table C: UNIT ADMINISTRATION/FACULTY/STAFF SUPPORT						
YEAR	NEW		EXISTING		TOTAL	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
Administration						
2015 – 16	0	0	2	.20	2	.20
2016 – 17	0	0	2	.20	2	.20
2017 – 18	0	0	2	.20	2	.20
2018 – 19	0	0	2	.20	2	.20
2019– 20	0	0	2	.20	2	.20
Faculty						
2015 – 16	0	0	7	.50	7	.50
2016 – 17	0	0	7	1	7	1
2017 – 18	0	0	7	1.5	7	1.5
2018 – 19	0	0	7	2	7	2
2019– 20	0	0	7	2.25	7	2.25
Staff						
2015 – 16	0	0	1	.10	1	.10
2016 – 17	0	0	1	.10	1	.10
2017 – 18	0	0	1	.10	1	.10
2018 – 19	0	0	1	.10	1	.10
2019– 20	0	0	1	.10	1	.10

Physical Plant

The Ph.D. in special education will be housed in Holtzendorff and Tillman Halls. The facility encompasses recently renovated space that includes housing department offices, graduate student offices, a technology center, digital media center, technology labs, and classrooms as well as space for research and general use. The existing facilities will be adequate for the proposed Special Education Ph.D. program for the next 5 years.

Equipment

There are no additional major equipment items needed to support the proposed program

Library Resources

The Clemson University Library holdings and electronic access are adequate to support the program. All major journals in our files are available online or through open access. No additional library resources are anticipated; however, a small amount of funding will be budgeted to add journals or books if the need arises. The Clemson University Libraries hold more than 1.8 million items including books, periodicals, electronic resources, digital media collections, government publications and patents, musical recordings, maps and microforms. Resources include 3,593 print journal subscriptions, approximately 48,000 e-journals, more than 22,800 e-books, and more than 400 online databases. During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the budget for electronic databases and journals was \$3.8 million; \$1 million for print periodicals; and \$1.4 million for e-books, printed books, standing orders, and media.

Accreditation, Approval, Licensure, or Certification

The proposed Ph.D. program is not subject to specialized or professional accreditation or approval by any state agency other than the Commission on Higher Education.

Articulation

This proposed program leads to a terminal degree. This program does not include collaborations or articulations with other state institutions and no agreements are required. Students who have been enrolled in graduate studies at other institutions do have an opportunity to apply for admission and appropriate course work completed will be evaluated for application to the degree program. When appropriate, articulation agreements may be developed for students to conduct their doctoral research at other institutions. These are unique situations and are not anticipated at this time.

Total new costs associated with implementing the proposed program:

There is no cost associated with this proposed program as it has been an emphasis under the Curriculum and Instruction Doctoral program in the Teacher education, School of Education. A stand-alone doctorate in special education will enable the program to attract students at the regional and national level and be competitive in securing leadership training grants from the U.S. Department of Education. The proposed program builds on the existing specialty course work and utilizes foundational coursework from teacher education, psychology and statistics.

Table D: ESTIMATED COSTS BY YEAR						
CATEGORY	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	TOTALS
Program Administration	\$20,500	\$20,500	\$20,500	\$20,500	\$20,500	\$82,000
Faculty Salaries	\$41,500	\$83,000	\$124,500	\$166,000	\$186,750	\$601,750
Graduate Assistants	\$40,652	\$41,184	\$41,740	\$42,328	\$28,330	\$208,848
Clerical/Support Personnel	\$3054	\$3054	\$3054	\$3054	\$3054	\$15,270
Supplies and Materials	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$5000
Library Resources						
Equipment	\$1400	\$1400	\$1400	\$1400	\$1400	\$7000
Facilities						
Other: travel	\$1000	\$2000	\$3000	\$4000	\$4500	\$14,500
Other: recruitment/seminars	\$2000	\$2000	\$2000	\$2000	\$2000	\$2000
TOTALS	\$111,106	\$154,138	\$197,194	\$240,282	\$247,534	\$950,254
SOURCES OF FINANCING BY YEAR						
Tuition Funding	\$4,440	\$17,760	\$35,520	\$53,280	\$62,360	\$173,360
Program-Specific Fees	0	0	0	0	0	
State Funding	0	0	0	0	0	
Reallocation of Existing Funds	\$62,000	\$83,000	\$124,500	\$186,500	\$186,750	\$642,750
Federal Funding						
Other Funding (Specify)						
TOTALS	\$66,440	\$100,760	\$160,020	\$239,780	\$249,110	\$816,110

These figures are based on part-time enrollment (2, 3 hour class/semester). The costs for the graduate assistants are also conservative. The department will allocate two current assistantships to this program. However, it is common within Special Education Ph.D. programs to receive federal funding for graduate study through OSEP. If the funding comes through, the department will not need to provide any resources toward graduate assistantships. Should the program not receive the funds, the Special Education program will not receive additional funding for graduate students. The faculty salaries are being reallocated from the Curriculum and Instruction degree program concentration to the stand alone Ph.D. program in special education.

References

Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement. (2012). South Carolina Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, & Advancement Annual Report 2011-2012. Retrieved from www.cerra.org/annualreport.aspx

- Montrosse, B. E., & Young, C. J. (2012). Market demand for special education faculty. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 35*(2), 140-153.
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- Smith, D. D., Pion, G., Tyler, N. C., Sindelar, P., & Rosenberg, M. (2001). *The shortage of special education faculty. Why it is happening, why it matters, and what we can do about it.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

Letters of support

External Reviewer-Timothy Landrum, Ph.D University of Louisville

Timothy J. Landrum, Ph.D., is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Special Education at the University of Louisville. His research interests include emotional and behavioral disorders, classroom and behavior management, the identification of evidence-based practices, and the translation of research into practice. He has contributed as author or editor to more than 70 publications, and has delivered more than 100 presentations or workshops at professional conferences. He is a past President of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division for Research (CEC-DR), and served as an original member of the Council for Exceptional Children's Evidence-based Practices Work Group. He recently completed a three-year term as co-editor of the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders' (CCBD) practitioner journal, *Beyond Behavior*, and he currently co-edits the annual volume, *Advances in Learning and Behavioral Disabilities*, published by Emerald in the UK. He is an editorial board member for several prominent journals in special education, including *Exceptional Children*, *Behavioral Disorders*, the *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, and *Remedial and Special Education*.

In –state Letter of Support –Mitchell Yell, Ph.D, University of South Carolina

Mitchell Yell, Ph.D. is the Fred and Francis Lester Palmetto Chaired Professor in Teacher Education and a Professor in Special Education in the College of Education at the University of South Carolina (USC) in Columbia, South Carolina. Prior to coming to the University of South Carolina, Dr. Yell was a special education teacher in Minnesota for 16 years. During this time he taught in elementary, middle, and secondary classrooms for students with mild mental retardation, learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, and autism. He received his Ph.D from the University of Minnesota in 1992. His professional interests include special education law, evidence based interventions for children and youth with emotional disorders and learning disabilities, classroom management, and progress monitoring.

Dr. Yell has published 108 journal articles, 4 textbooks (published by Pearson/Merrill Education), 24 book chapters, and has conducted numerous workshops on many aspects of special education law, progress monitoring, and the education of students with mild disabilities. Dr. Yell has been awarded almost \$6 million in grants through the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Dr. Yell also wrote the following two grants for the South Carolina Office of Exceptional Children: the SC State Improvement Grant, which was funded by OSEP for \$6.5 million, and the SC General Services Enhancement Grant, which was funded for almost \$3 million. Dr. Yell recently received a \$256,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences.



Special Education Department

March 30, 2014

Dr. Antonis Katsiyannis
Alumni Distinguished Professor
407C Tillman Hall
Clemson University

Dear Dr. Katsiyannis:

I have read your unit's proposal to establish a doctoral program in special education, and am happy to provide my thoughts on the application materials you shared with me. As you may know, I recently completed a two-year term as coordinator of our PhD Program in Curriculum and Instruction here at Louisville, prior to assuming my current role as Department Chair. It is from this perspective, and that gained from 23 years now in higher education, that I offer the following observations.

First, I'd just comment that your estimation of the need for special education faculty in higher education is right on target. I have represented the University of Louisville at the Higher Education Consortium for Special Education (HECSE) meetings in Washington, DC the past two years, most recently in January 2014. Data shared at these meetings paint an extraordinarily bleak picture of the future for students with disabilities in that there is not only a shortage of special education teachers nationally, but a shortage-- indeed a looming crisis-- in terms of dwindling numbers of higher education faculty who can train an adequate number of qualified special educators. As you note in your application, this national crisis is felt just as sharply in South Carolina, and it is my estimation that the doctoral program in special education you propose will be major positive step forward in stemming this crisis in your state. In short, there is no doubt that this is an extraordinarily high-need area, and evidence suggests that this demand will remain high for some time.

In addition to simply meeting a well-documented shortage that is projected to get worse in the near future, I can say that the proposed emphases described in your application are a particular strength, and indeed are precisely those I would recommend. In fact these reflect ideas I lobby for regularly in our own doctoral programming. As I read your proposal, I see among your purposes the desire to prepare students for one or more of three major roles: (a) researcher, (b) teacher educator, or (c) leader within the field. Moreover, the specific curricular themes you focus on-- high-poverty schools and students from culturally diverse backgrounds-- are at the nexus of the most thorny problems we face in special education. These problems include prevention and early intervention, and work with students who are at risk for, or already identified with, specific disabilities. That you focus on research

in these areas, and prepare students both to conduct and translate that research into practice is especially compelling.

I was particularly impressed with your focus on (a) a rigorous research core, and (b) the content emphases reflected in your course sequence. The 15-hour research core is exactly what I would recommend for special education scholars given the status of our field and the renewed and dedicated focus we have established on making special education an evidence-based field. Three quantitative courses, a single-subject design course, and a qualitative course represent to me the perfect mix of foundational courses here (noting too that students and their committees may opt for additional coursework in any of these areas). Also impressive to me are the specialty courses you propose, emphasizing (a) professional writing, (b) research on instructional design and delivery, (c) research on teacher education, (d) research on high-poverty schools with diverse populations, and (e) grant writing. I would submit that students with well-developed skills and knowledge in these areas would be highly competitive for positions in higher education, and well situated for success as teacher educators, researchers, and leaders in the field. From a curricular perspective, I see no holes in the program as mapped out in your proposal.

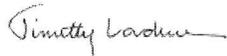
My read of your materials suggest no down side to this proposal in terms of current faculty, resources, and programs. You have an excellent mix of emerging and nationally relevant special education scholars on faculty, and the establishment of this program has few resource implications given that most courses are in place (I note only three new courses among the 63 hours in this program). I also see no issues with current programs at Clemson; my read is that the current doctoral program in Curriculum and Instruction serves its own primary constituents quite well, and special education has been somewhat corollary. My sense is that both programs will thrive and complement one another with some shared coursework (e.g., core research classes), but that each will also benefit from more specialized courses and experiences.

I would note too that the program proposed at Clemson would seem to complement, rather than compete directly with, the doctoral program in special education at the University of South Carolina. There is an easy argument to make that the shortage of special education PhD's can be ameliorated by having two doctoral programs in the state, but the fact that the programs are distinct in emphases should also be a major benefit. For example, Clemson will focus on instructional interventions in high need, diverse schools, along with advanced research methodology, while USC's areas of emphasis include administration and college teaching. I believe this will result in a major boon to the state, both in terms of attracting top flight students to study special education in South Carolina, but also in the increased number of PhD graduates produced by the two institutions who can now serve the region's many teacher training institutions.

In sum, I believe your rationale for this proposal is strong and well supported by national and local data. The focus and emphases you propose are consistent with current thinking in special education nationally, and it appears to me that the

program will fit well both within Clemson, and within the state of South Carolina. Your faculty and institution are more than prepared to support this endeavor with high quality and rigor, and I have no doubt it will be a program that thrives and produces well-qualified graduates who will have no trouble finding positions in higher education, or in other leadership roles, and indeed will fill a major looming void in our field. I'd be happy to elaborate on any of these thoughts, and hope you will not hesitate to contact me if I can do so.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Landrum, PhD
Professor and Chair



March 31, 2014

Department of Educational Studies
Special Education Program

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the proposal to develop a Ph.D. program at Clemson University. There is a critical shortage of Ph.D. level special education personnel at both research-oriented and teacher preparation institutions of higher education (IHE). This problem will only be exacerbated in future years as graduates from Ph.D. programs in special education decrease and retirements in special education programs at IHEs increase.

I have reviewed the Clemson proposal and believe it to be a rigorous, evidence-based personnel preparation program that will effectively educate the next generation of scholars in special education. Moreover, the faculty members in the personnel preparation program have the level of expertise to effectively implement the program. Indeed, many have graduated from some of the most highly ranked special education Ph.D. programs in the country such as Vanderbilt University, the University of Nebraska, and the University of North Carolina.

As a faculty member in the special education Ph.D. program at the University of South Carolina (USC) I do not believe the Clemson program will be duplicative of our efforts. Although we at USC also focus on preparing special education Ph.D. candidates for careers in conducting research, preparing teacher educators, as well as preparing candidates for administrative positions, the need in the United States for qualified personnel to fill positions in IHEs is so great that unless more programs come online, shortages will only continue and worsen.

Sincerely,

Mitchell L. Yell, Ph.D.

Fred and Francis Lester Chair of Teacher Education
University of South Carolina