

**CLEMSON UNIVERSITY**  
**College of Health, Education and Human Development**  
**Eugene T. Moore School of Education**  
**REQUESTING TO OFFER A NEW DEGREE PROGRAM**

**Education Specialist Degree**  
**In**  
**Counselor Education**

Submitted to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
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## Program Planning Summary

### Classification

Program Title including options, concentrations, and tracks: Counselor Education with two concentrations: Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling

Academic unit involved: Eugene T. Moore School of Education, College of Health, Education and Human Development

Designation, type, and level of degree (if a baccalaureate, please specify four- or five-year): EdS (Education Specialist)

Proposed date of implementation: August 2012

CIP code from the current USDOE's Classification of Instructional Programs: 13.1101

Identification of Program as New or Modification: New EdS

Site: ALL CURRENTLY APPROVED SITES FOR THE M ED IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION: on campus; Greenville (UCG); Greenwood (Western Piedmont)

Program qualifies for supplemental Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship awards: Yes \_\_\_ No: x\_\_\_

Delivery mode (See definition, p. 3): Traditional, online, and blended

For teacher education programs only, area of certification: Certification in SC as school counselors at the masters+30 and for licensure in SC as professional counselors or counselor supervisors

The Educational Specialist (EdS) degree program in Counselor Education will use the existing 60-credit hour Master of Education (MEd) degree programs in the concentrations of school counseling and clinical mental health counseling. At the end of the sixty credit hours, a student would receive the Ed S. There will be two points of entry for the EdS.

First, individuals possessing a Bachelor's degree may apply to the EdS program and complete 60 credit hours. Students would be eligible to receive both the MEd and the EdS degrees upon completion of the existing 60-credit hour program.

Second, individuals who already possess a Master's degree (30 credits) may apply to the EdS program and complete a minimum of 30 credit hours earning the Ed S at the

completion. This allows students currently holding a master's and working in counselor education an opportunity to enroll in a degree program (rather than take courses as non-degree students) to develop additional counseling skills. Students not earning credit toward a degree are not eligible for financial aid.

EdS applicants will choose either school counseling or a clinical mental health counseling concentration. EdS students will enroll in existing courses, so no additional faculty will be needed.

**Justification:**

One main justification for this proposal relates to the existing certification-only program in school counseling. In addition, adding an EdS degree would be beneficial for future Counselor Education students:

(1) The counselor education program currently offers a school counseling certification-only program for individuals who possess a master's degree in some other area of counseling but wish to seek certification as school counselors. Applicants apply as non-degree-seeking students and are required to complete the current school counseling MEd program requirements that they have not already completed (either at Clemson or via equivalent courses at another institution). Most students in this non-degree certification-only program complete 24+ credits.

Between Fall 2008 and Fall 2011, a total of 35 people applied to the certification-only program. Twenty (57% of all applicants) were offered admission and 12 (60% of those offered admission) attended. Over half of those who chose not to attend cited financial reasons. Currently, there are 7 students enrolled in the non-degree certification-only program. In the past, we had as many as 16 students enrolled in any given semester. Between Fall 2008 and Fall 2011, we averaged 11 students each semester in the non-degree program and we averaged 6 program completers per year.

One trend noted in recent years through communications with potential applicants and individuals who choose not to enroll after being offered admission is related to financial concerns. Non-degree-seeking students pay higher per-credit tuition than do degree-seeking students (i.e., \$352 per credit for degree-seeking versus \$525 for non-degree). Also, students in the non-degree program are not eligible for federal student loans or campus assistantships; they can only secure private loans, which carry higher interest rates. Almost all certification-only students complete the program on a part-time basis and pay out of pocket each semester. It is this financial burden that has resulted in decreased enrollments. Creating an opportunity for individuals to complete the certification-only requirements as part of a degree program would allow them to take out federal student loans and pay a lower per-credit fee, thus minimizing the financial impact. We anticipate

that we would have higher rates of application to and enrollment in the certification-only program if financial concerns were alleviated for some applicants. Being able to complete certification-only requirements through an EdS degree would be one solution.

(2) The clinical mental health concentration has a number of requests to enroll as non-degree students so they can complete requisite coursework to become eligible for professional counselor licensure (LPC) in South Carolina. Having an EdS option for these individuals would offer an incentive for them to complete more than just the minimum requirements for licensure.

(3) The majority of practicing school counselors in the Upstate graduated from Master's degree programs that were less than 60 credit hours – and these individuals are paid at a Master's degree pay rate unless they pursue further graduate coursework or degrees. Selected numbers of these students will complete an EdS in Educational Leadership, but would prefer the EdS in Educational Counseling. Individuals who come back and complete the 30-credit EdS in Counselor Education would be eligible for Master's + 30 pay levels in South Carolina.

(4) Finally, graduates of the 60-credit hour school counseling program already receive recognition for an Educational Specialist-level degree by being eligible for salaries at the Master's + 30 level in South Carolina. The SC Department of Education recognizes our 60-credit hour program as the equivalent of a Master's degree + 30 credits. This is not necessarily the case in other states. By formally adding the EdS degree to our program, students who move to other states would be eligible for Master's + 30, or EdS-level pay eligibility.

**Proposed Curriculum:**

No changes in the program curriculum are planned.

**Assessment of extent to which the proposed program duplicates existing programs in the state:**

The University of South Carolina offers a 66-credit hour EdS program in counselor education with a school counseling emphasis, but they do not offer a Master's degree program in school counseling. Their EdS program is not set up as our proposed program would be where people could return and complete 30 credits only. Thus, we do not see this new EdS degree at Clemson University competing with the existing program at USC.

**Relationship of the proposed program to existing programs at the proposing institution:**

The EdS program will complement the existing MEd programs in Counselor Education. That is, the Counselor Education program of study currently has a 60-credit school counseling and a 60-credit clinical mental health counseling concentration. By offering an EdS degree, Clemson University will enable students to apply for and earn a MEd and EdS upon completing the 60-hour program. Individuals who already possess a Master's degree in Counselor Education may apply to the EdS program and complete a minimum of 30 credit hours – affording them an opportunity to enroll in a degree program (rather than take courses as non-degree students) to develop additional counseling skills or prepare for a second specialty area. Their coursework will be taken concurrently with students in the existing MEd programs.

**Assessment plan for the program:**

The outcome measures we will have for students in the EdS program will be consistent with our specialty accreditation standards and relevant to their specific concentration area: (1) each year the faculty conduct a student review meeting during which we discuss student progress related to academic and dispositional factors, (2) students complete a written final examination relevant to their concentration area, (3) students complete a standardized examination relevant to their concentration area (i.e., PRAXIS for school counseling and National Counselor Examination for clinical mental health). We expect students to maintain a 3.0 grade point average and to demonstrate professional and ethical behavior. We also expect students to receive passing scores on their final exam and credentialing exam.

**Anticipated Costs:**

No new costs are associated with the offering of this degree. Faculty and resources are currently in place.