

**New Program Proposal
M.Ed. in Teaching
University of South Carolina-Columbia**

Summary

The University of South Carolina-Columbia (USC-Columbia) requests approval to offer a program leading to the Master of Education degree in Teaching, to be implemented in Spring 2006.

The proposal was approved by the USC Board of Trustees on June 23 2005, and submitted for Commission review on July 21, 2005. The proposal was reviewed without substantive comment and voted upon favorably by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs at its meeting on September 29, 2005.

The purpose of the proposed program is to expose beginning and experienced teachers in grades 2-12 to research-based concepts and develop in them the skills critical to successful teaching. It would replace two existing M.Ed. degrees (one in Elementary Education, and one in Secondary Education) and is designed to articulate with three relatively new undergraduate programs in Early Childhood, Elementary, and Middle Level Education that were implemented at USC-Columbia in 2003.

The proposed program reflects the recommendations of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future which emphasize the need for teacher education programs to create strong learning communities. In an effort to build and support these communities, the proposal notes three distinct components: 1) a small core of common courses; 2) a larger, flexible set of courses influenced by the teacher candidate's own areas of inquiry; and 3) an "action research" component that attempts to bridge the gap between theory, research, and practice. It is also expected that the proposed program will aid in teacher retention, since research suggests that teachers graduating from high quality mentoring, preparation, and induction programs are more likely to remain within the nation's teaching force.

The proposal notes that although South Carolina post-secondary institutions offer 79 M.Ed. programs in 25 different areas, only four institutions – Charleston Southern, Columbia College, Converse College, and Southern Wesleyan University – offer similar wide-ranging (e.g., K-12) Master's degree programs in teacher education. Notably, all of these institutions are private, thus making USC-Columbia the only public research institution in the state to offer such a program.

The proposed program is not subject to review by any national Specialty Professional Association (SPA), though it will be reviewed by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as a part of South Carolina's accreditation requirements. In addition, the proposed program conforms to the Commission on Higher Education's policy requirement that Master's programs for teachers address the core propositions outlined by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Admission requirements to the proposed program include two favorable letters of recommendation, eligibility for certification in a grade 2-12 teaching area, acceptable scores on the Miller's Analogy Test or the Graduate Record Examination, and a Letter of Intent to pursue graduate study that addresses the dispositions of the College of Education Conceptual Framework. Recruitment will focus on potential candidates who are currently enrolled in USC's undergraduate programs in elementary and middle level education, as well as current candidates in the M.Ed. in Elementary and Secondary Education program.

A recent survey indicates that more than half of USC-Columbia's current undergraduate Early Childhood, Elementary, and Middle Level Education majors are both eligible and interested in pursuing a Master's degree. First semester enrollment in year one is estimated at 25 FTE students and is projected to grow to 75 FTE students by year five. If enrollment projections are met, the program will meet CHE productivity standards.

The proposed program will consist of 36 semester hours, including: nine semester hours in the core curriculum; 21 semester hours in Areas of Inquiry (Teaching, Learning, Assessment); three semester hours in an NCATE-required Program Midpoint course (Action Research in Teaching); and three semester hours consisting of an action research project and a comprehensive exam. There are four new courses associated with the proposed program: EDTE 710 – Developing as a Professional Educator; EDTE 711 – Ideas and Issues in Teaching; EDTE 712 – Action Research in Teaching; and EDTE 713 – Action Research Capstone Seminar. Each of the new courses will also serve candidates in the existing M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education program.

Personnel for the proposed program include 13 existing full-time faculty, two Clinical Instructors, and three new faculty members to be hired in 2008 if enrollment projections are met. All faculty, including Clinical Instructors, have terminal degrees. The proposed program allocates 0.2 FTE for administrative support, and anticipates the need for an additional 0.5 FTE staff member in 2007 to provide administrative support.

There are no new facility requirements associated with the proposed program. New equipment requirements are estimated at \$3,000 in each of years three thru five and reflect office furnishings and computer technology for the new faculty members.

The proposal notes the need to expand library holdings, due to an absence of materials specifically addressing middle level education. The budget reflects an estimated cost of \$500 for new library holdings in the first year, and \$1,000 in each subsequent year, totaling \$4,500 by the end of year five.

New costs for the program are estimated to begin at \$8,000 in the first year, increasing to \$31,000 in the second year, increasing to \$66,500 in the third year, increasing to \$99,000 in the fourth year, and increasing to \$131,500 in the fifth year. Categories of costs over the first five years of the program’s implementation include faculty salaries (\$195,000); graduate assistants (\$54,000); clerical and support personnel (\$60,000); supplies and materials (\$13,500); library resources (\$4,500); and equipment (\$9,000). Estimated new costs for the program during the first five years total \$336,000.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state and new costs not funded by the MRR associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are the 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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Year 2	\$310,294	\$0	\$310,294	0	\$129,526	\$129,526
Year 3	\$372,353	\$0	\$372,353	119,831	\$156,151	\$275,983
Year 4	\$620,588	\$0	\$620,588	144,056	\$260,564	\$404,619
Year 5	\$620,588	\$0	\$620,588	239,964	\$260,564	\$500,527

These data demonstrate that if the institution meets the projected student enrollments and contains costs as they are shown in the proposal, tuition and state funding will not be able to cover costs during each of its first five years: However, because this program will replace two existing programs, resources should be adequate to cover costs.

In summary, USC-Columbia will offer a program leading to the Master of Education degree in Teaching. Two existing degrees will be discontinued (M.Ed. in Elementary Education and M.Ed. in Secondary Education) and certified teachers in grades 2-12 will be served by the proposed program. The program will prepare graduates for teaching careers by providing a unique course of study that emphasizes core pedagogy and action research while affording students the flexibility to emphasize areas of inquiry unique to their own teaching practice and personal interest.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends that the Commission approve the proposed program leading to the Master of Education degree in Teaching at USC-Columbia, to be implemented in Spring 2006, provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested, and provided further that admission to the M.Ed. degree in Elementary Education and Secondary Education is suspended immediately and degree requirements for candidates currently enrolled in these programs are completed by May 2009.