

**New Program Proposal  
Master of Education  
Montessori Education  
With Concentrations in Preschool (ages 3-6) and Primary (grades 1-3)  
Lander University**

**Summary**

Lander University requests approval to offer a program leading to the Master of Education degree in Montessori Education with concentrations in Preschool (ages 3-6) and Primary (grades 1-3), to be implemented in Spring 2008.

The Board of Trustees approved the proposal on March 27, 2007. It was submitted to the Commission on April 2, 2007, and reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs without substantive comment and voted upon favorably on July 25, 2007.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the program is to offer a Master of Education degree in Montessori Education to prepare teachers to be employed in Montessori classrooms and to receive certification by the American Montessori Society (AMS). The proposed program's two concentrations will lead to AMS certification at either the Preschool (ages 3-6) or Primary (grades 1-3) level. The degree is designed with a small core of foundations courses, including a field-based practicum that includes an action research component and a block of Montessori-specific pedagogy courses.

The need for the program, according to the proposal, is to provide more Montessori-certified teachers to teach in Early Childhood classrooms. There is no state certification specifically for Montessori Education in South Carolina, but the Montessori program is one of the state's approved curricula for Early Childhood Education. In addition, two surveys were submitted to local districts to ascertain the need for Montessori Teachers, with approximately a 40% return rate. The results of these surveys indicated a *moderate* need at the Pre-K level and a *high* need at the Elementary level. In addition, increased funding for Early Childhood Education has become a priority as a response to the Circuit Court ruling on Abbeville vs. the State of South Carolina (December 2005). Lander University was recently designated a Center for Montessori Education. The Master of Education in Montessori Education supports the mission of Lander University.

The curriculum of the proposed program consists of a minimum of 36 credit hours of graduate coursework in Foundations of Education (15 hours) and Curriculum

and Instruction-Montessori (21 hours). Students in the proposed program are typically teachers employed full-time in South Carolina school districts. Six hours of the Montessori theory classes will be taught as on-line courses. There are no new courses to be added to the catalog of the institution.

Admission standards require that students interested in pursuing the Master of Education in Montessori Education must meet the same criteria required for all graduate education programs at Lander University through an application (minimum GRE/MAT scores, transcript requirements and application fees) and an essay.

There are no similar programs in public or private institutions in South Carolina currently. According to the proposal, Lander University is the only institution that currently offers an option for Montessori emphasis or that offers courses leading to an internationally recognized Montessori certification. The current Montessori emphasis will be deleted as an option for the M.Ed. in Elementary Education if the proposed program is approved.

Enrollment in the proposed degree program is estimated to begin at three headcount students (3 FTE) in Spring 2008 and increase to five headcount students (5 FTE) in the second year, seven headcount students (7 FTE) in the third and fourth years and nine headcount students (9 FTE) by the fifth year of the program. If the enrollment projections are met, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards.

Lander University currently has four existing faculty with expertise to teach the core foundations classes in the proposed program in Montessori education. No new faculty will be needed during the first five years. There will be eight adjunct professors (seven with Master's Degrees) who will teach the majority of the Montessori pedagogy courses. According to the proposal, the extensive use of adjunct faculty to teach Montessori methods classes is the norm for university-based Montessori teacher education programs. That a large percentage of Master's-prepared faculty (as opposed to doctorally prepared faculty) are teaching this *graduate* program. This fact may become important if it is pursued by the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools (SACS) or the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) during accreditation processes. In this regard, the proposal notes that no institution of higher education in the U.S. currently offers a doctoral program in Montessori Education. There will be one headcount administrator (0.5 FTE), 14 headcount faculty (1.66 FTE), and one headcount staff (0.375) serving the new program. New faculty must have expertise and certification in Montessori Education. There will be one new staff member (0.375 FTE) required in the first year.

The proposed program will be subject to accreditation by professional organizations including the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

(NCATE), and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Additionally, the current program is accredited by the Montessori Teacher Accrediting Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) through 2009, which is not required by CHE, but is required for Montessori Certification.

No additional physical plant or equipment requirements exist for the proposed program within the first five years of implementation. The Jackson Library at Lander University 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. Preliminary searches indicate that there is no need to purchase additional materials for the library as there are over 112 volumes specific to Montessori education currently in the 10,200 + holdings of the library.

New costs for the program are estimated to begin at \$61,500 in year one and include program administration (\$15,000), faculty salaries (\$42,000), clerical/support personnel (\$5,600), supplies and materials (\$1,000), and program fees to AMS and MACTE (\$1,100). Estimated new costs are estimated to increase to \$66,100 in the second year, \$67,100 the third year, \$68,100 the fourth year, and \$69,100 the fifth year. The total estimated new costs for the program for its first five years will total \$320,700. Revenues will be generated through tuition funding. No “unique cost” or other special state appropriations will be required or requested. The School of Education will need to hire adjunct faculty with experience in Montessori education for meeting the anticipated program needs for at least the next five 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	\$11,198	\$0	<b>\$11,198</b>	N/A	\$5,914	<b>\$5,914</b>
Year 2	\$63,453	\$0	<b>\$63,453</b>	\$5,976	\$35,482	<b>\$41,458</b>
Year 3	\$89,580	\$0	<b>\$89,580</b>	\$35,858	\$51,456	<b>\$87,314</b>
Year 4	\$91,446	\$0	<b>\$91,446</b>	\$50,745	\$53,146	<b>\$103,891</b>
Year 5	\$115,708	\$0	<b>\$115,708</b>	\$52,453	\$66,662	<b>\$119,115</b>

These data demonstrate that if Lander 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 fourth year of its implementation.

In summary, Lander University will offer a program leading to the Master of Education degree in Montessori Education with concentrations in Preschool (ages 3-6) and Primary (grades 1-3). This program is needed in South Carolina and will allow students to obtain a unique skill set required of Montessori teachers in early childhood education. There is no state certification specifically for Montessori Education in South Carolina, but the Montessori program is one of the state's approved curricula for Early Childhood Education. The proposed program at Lander University will contribute to increased effectiveness in early childhood education in South Carolina schools. The proposed program will include a large percentage of adjunct faculty with Master's degrees to teach at the graduate level, as there is no doctoral program in Montessori Education in the United States.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commends favorably to the Commission approval of Lander University's proposed program leading to a Master of Education degree in Montessori Education with Concentrations in Preschool (ages 3-6) and Primary (grades 1-3) to be implemented in Spring 2008, provided that no "unique cost" or other special state funding be required or requested, that national recognition be received from the National Association for the Education of the Young Child

(NAEYC) and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and that the Montessori emphasis in the existing program leading to the M.Ed. degree in Elementary Education be discontinued.