



Office of the President

January 29, 2008

Dr. Gail M. Morrison, Director and Deputy Director  
Academic Affairs and Licensing Division  
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
1333 Main Street, Suite 200  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Dr. Morrison:

Please find attached the Program Planning Summary for the Master of Education in Teaching, Learning and Advocacy housed within the School of Education here at the College of Charleston. In short, this program is structured for efficient use of resources, coherence across credential spans, and specializations which reflect the needs of current South Carolina teachers. All candidates share a core of knowledge and experience which contributes to their area of specialization. Throughout the core and the specializations, the degree provides an advanced focus on students and teachers.

The College plans to submit a new program proposal for the TLA M.Ed. in the very near future. Our hope is for a favorable review from the Commission Staff. Thanking you in advance, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

With best regards,

*P. George Benson*  
P. George Benson

PGB/ch

**Program Planning Summary**  
**Master of Education in Teaching, Learning and Advocacy**



*P. George Benson*  
P. George Benson, President

January 29, 2008

**College of Charleston  
Program Planning Summary**

New Program Proposed:	Master of Education in Teaching, Learning and Advocacy
Academic Unit Involved:	The School of Education, Health, and Human Performance (EHHP)
Degree:	M. Ed.
Proposed Date of Implementation:	Spring, 2009
Hours required:	31 to 33
CIP Code:	<b>13.1299</b>

The College of Charleston is pleased to submit a Program Planning Summary for a new program: Master of Education in Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy (TLA M.Ed.).

- **Designation:** This is a new Program Proposal, consisting of 31 to 33 credit hours. It combines a set of five core courses (15 credits), two specializations, each consisting of five courses (15 credits), and a capstone course (one to three credits depending on student readiness to complete the capstone). This degree is structured for efficient use of resources, coherence across credential spans, and specializations which reflect the needs of current South Carolina teachers. All candidates share a core of knowledge and experience which contributes to their area of specialization. Throughout the core and the specializations, the degree provides an advanced focus on students and teachers. The five core courses (Educational Research; Home, School and Community Relationships; Learning, Cognition and Motivation; Curriculum Theory and Application; Class, Race and Gender in Education) provide a base for all candidates to better understand and apply advanced theories and practice in their work and additional courses. The capstone course (Research and Development Project) serves as a culminating seminar in which candidates complete and present a research-based project.

By choosing one specialization of five courses, candidates focus their exploration and learning on either the students they teach or themselves as teachers and members of the teaching profession. In either case, candidates are asked to pay attention to the relationship among educational policies and practices, local context, and learners. One specialization, Teaching Children and Youth in the Contemporary Context, focuses on developing a deep understanding of diverse children and youth and how the school, community, and societal context shape their engagement in learning and life, as well as their sense of accomplishment and belonging. Another specialization, Teachers as Change Agents, explores teaching as both reflective practice and collaborative change making. Candidates in this specialization develop skills of reflection and support that help them improve their own practice and their profession. By offering two specializations within one degree, the College of Charleston is responsive to individual teacher needs and interests while remaining responsive to new knowledge and state and local initiatives.

- **Proposed Date of Implementation:** Spring 2009
- **Justification of Need for the Proposed Program:** This program serves four purposes.

First, it addresses the need in the Lowcountry for advanced degrees. According to a survey conducted in 2007, teachers indicated a desire for an advanced degree in order to increase their earning capacity (75%), become better classroom teachers (67%), and become more knowledgeable in a particular content area (64%),

Second, the program meets growing demand for advanced degrees that go beyond, in focus and depth, the content that is offered in initial certification. Such a degree prepares candidates for

professional advancement. The TLA M.Ed. develops the skills, pedagogy and understanding of educators who want to improve their own practice. They also might seek positions as teacher coaches, curriculum specialists, or lead teachers, or they may assist in mentoring new teachers. In these roles, teachers are able to mentor and support colleagues who struggle to work effectively with children and youth in contemporary society.

Third, the program provides support and mentorship for teachers new to the profession. Currently, new teachers are concentrated in poorly performing schools, most of which serve predominantly high poverty populations. For example, in Charleston County School District (CCSD), 59% of the district's first-year teachers (teachers who have just entered the profession) work in the 39 schools designated as low-performing. Novice teachers are also more likely to leave these schools. As a district, CCSD lost 42% of its first-year teachers from the 2005-2006 school year to the 2006-2007 school year. Many of these teachers may have remained in the profession with support that concentrated on helping them better understand their teaching and the children and youth they teach.

Fourth, the TLA M.Ed. provides another avenue for exchange between the College of Charleston and area school districts. The College of Charleston currently has many successful collaborative relationships with Lowcountry schools and districts (e.g. the Center for Partnerships to Improve Education, the Center of Excellence in New Literacies, Partners for Acceleration) that inform our program development and provide excellent outreach to educators; all of these efforts focus on improving student achievement in high poverty schools. Additionally, this degree will meet needs expressed directly by area superintendents regarding their teachers.

- **Anticipated program demand and productivity:**
  - **Demand** There is great need in the Lowcountry for the proposed M.Ed. There are currently over 6,000 teachers in the Lowcountry. According to 2006 Report Cards for Lowcountry districts, 47% of teachers do not have advanced degrees. As more experienced teachers retire in the coming years, this number is likely to grow. According to survey data collected in spring and fall 2007, 48% of respondents indicate interest in obtaining a Masters degree; 38% indicating interest in the next 1-2 years. There are currently only five M.Ed. programs in education actively enrolling students in the Lowcountry. The College of Charleston offers two M.Ed. degrees (Languages and Science and Math for Teachers), and the Citadel offers M.Ed. degrees in Counselor Education, Literacy Education, and Educational Leadership. The College of Charleston's M.Ed. programs in Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Grades, and Special Education will be discontinued upon approval of this proposed program because this program better meets the expressed needs of teachers and administrators in our area.
  - **Productivity.** The proposed program combines several elements to enhance productivity. First, the single degree with specializations makes efficient use of faculty and facilities. By sharing five core courses and a capstone seminar, enrollments in the core will be consistently high and cross-specialization collaboration will be enhanced. Each specialization will need to meet enrollment expectations, so core courses will always enroll at least twice the minimum number of candidates. Second, we propose enrolling candidates in a modified cohort model, pairing some courses to assure enrollments and encourage on-time completion. Pairs of courses will be offered in the summer, fall, and spring assuring that candidates are able to complete the program in two years. Third,

varied delivery, through course offerings at P-12 schools, through the Lowcountry Graduate Center, on-line, and at the College of Charleston, meets the demands of busy professionals. Finally, some courses will also enroll non-degree and MAT students seeking advanced coursework that may further their professional goals.

- **Duplication of Existing Programs in the State** Currently no public institutions in South Carolina offer M.Ed. degrees in teaching, learning, and advocacy. Winthrop University offers a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction and USC Columbia and USC Beaufort offer an M.Ed in Teaching. None of these programs are within easy driving distance from the Charleston area, and none offer a choice of specialization or go into depth in relation to understanding diverse children and youth or teaching and the teaching profession. The program does not duplicate programs offered by the Citadel.
- **Relationship to Existing Programs at College of Charleston** The TLA M.Ed. provides a clear extension of the College of Charleston undergraduate and MAT initial certification programs. Where these programs provide the essential knowledge and experiences needed for initial certification, the M.Ed. extends this knowledge and provides specializations sought by experienced teachers. The M.Ed. also links closely with two existing M.Ed. programs offered at College of Charleston, sharing several core courses with the Science and Mathematics for Teachers and Languages degrees. The TLA M.Ed. replaces existing College of Charleston M.Ed. degrees in Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Grades, and Special Education; with approval of this degree, these M.Ed. degrees will no longer be offered.
- **Relationship to Other Institutions** The TLA M.Ed. will offer some courses through the Lowcountry Graduate Center, a consortium of state institutions offering graduate programs in the Lowcountry area. Additionally, Clemson University contributed to early discussions of the degree in anticipation that it potentially feed into their Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction. Possible connections also are likely with programs offered through USC Columbia and the Citadel (e.g., Ed. D. in Educational Leadership).
- **Total New Costs** Given our initial enrollment projections, we do not anticipate requiring additional faculty members or facilities. Given our experiences offering courses in various venues (at school sites and on-campus) and online and on-site courses, we recognize additional expenses related to such varied delivery. We anticipate \$3,200 for travel for on-site delivery and field observations annually. Our goal is to offer at least five of the courses on line. This will require faculty training, software, and technical assistance, for a one time cost of \$5,000. The first year cost will be \$8,200 and subsequent years will be \$3,200. We plan for these costs to be covered by the revenues generated.