

The University of Montana-Western
School of Education, Business, and Technology
Proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education

Program Description

- 1. Briefly describe the proposed new program. Please indicate if it is an expansion of an existing program; a new program; cooperative effort with another institution, business, or industry; or an on-campus or off-campus program. Attach any formal agreements established for cooperative efforts.**

Purpose

The University of Montana-Western (UM-W) proposes offering a Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education that takes advantage of Western's expertise in this discipline as well as its current base of placebound students around Montana who have indicated an interest in pursuing a four-year degree after successfully completing Western's Associate of Applied Science Degree in Early Childhood Education.

Rationale: What Makes This Program Unique

This program will be offered through a combination of on-line and intensive coursework to meet the needs of place bound students who are currently working in the early childhood field. The B.S. Degree in Early Childhood Education will seamlessly articulate with the UM-W A.A.S. Degree in Early Childhood that is currently offered by Western in Butte, Bozeman, Billings, Great Falls, Havre, Dillon, Helena, Missoula, and Hamilton.

- 2. Summarize a needs assessment conducted to justify the proposal. Please include how the assessment plan was developed or executed and the data derived from this effort.**

Needs Assessment/Evidence in Support of Need

Early childhood education positions are increasing in Montana. Specifically, in 1988 there were 904 child care jobs in the private sector; in 1998 this number had increased to 1,869. The Research and Analysis Bureau of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry predicts that by the year 2008, there will be 2,696 jobs in private sector child care in Montana. In addition, there is significant expansion in federal Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Starting in 2003, regulations require that fifty percent of teachers in these programs have associate, bachelors, or masters degrees in early childhood education. In Montana, most directors require 100% of teachers have at least an associate degree. Head Start Regional and National staff suggest that the federal regulations will next require teachers to possess a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. Currently, many Head Start and Early Head Start programs require that all coordinators have bachelor's degrees.

A survey conducted in the spring of 2001 asked current A.A.S. Early Childhood students if they would be interested in a four-year early childhood degree, if the degree were available and accessible. Seventy-five students stated that they were interested in the degree. Since then, fifteen other practitioners have contacted the early childhood program expressing interest. There is thus an established demand for the program should it be made available.

Impact on the Local, State of Montana, and National Economy

As previously reported the employment growth in child care is high. This is impacted by the fact that quality care requires low ratios of clients to providers and there is limited potential for substitution of technology or capital for labor. The early childhood industry in Montana includes Resource and Referral Agencies, child care centers, State agencies, federally funded program such as Head Start, etc. Each of these has an impact upon the Montana economy. Examining only child care we find that there were 1,434 licensed child care facilities in Montana in 2001, with 22,020 child care slots, resulting in an estimated \$83,257,620.00 in parent fees to these industries. An additional, \$2,782,498.00 was provided to the child care industry through State grants and special quality initiatives, and \$9,500,000 was awarded from the Child and Adult Food Program. According to the

Department of Labor, every dollar (\$1.00) generated by a business stimulates the economy by \$1.70.

Child care not only contributes to economic vitality through the dollars it generates, but it is also a keystone industry. Child care is a vital element to a successful and healthy economy for all socioeconomic groups. According to statistics from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the majority of mothers in the United States with children under the age of 18 work, including 59% of mothers with infants. Fifty percent of working families rely on child care providers to care for their children while they are working (Census Bureau). Without this vital service, other industries would be severely impacted

3. Explain how the program relates to the Role and Scope of the institution as established by the Board of Regents.

UMW Mission

Western's mission statement begins with the following: "The unique mission of the University of Montana-Western provides innovative interdisciplinary education through experiential learning. Western serves citizens of all ages with its academic, community-service, and lifelong-learning programs."

The proposed early childhood degree combines coursework with field experiences to provide for the needs of place-bound students who are currently working within the field of early childhood. This has been an under-served population of students.

Western has been dedicated to excellence in teacher education since its founding in 1893. Currently, approximately 60% of Western students are education majors. Early childhood has been available at Western and in field sites around the State since the mid 1980's. The early childhood education A.A.S. degree is the second highest enrolled program at Western, with over 200 students.

4. Please state what effect, if any, the proposed program will have on the administrative structure of the institution. Also indicate the potential involvement of other departments, divisions, colleges, or schools.

Effects on UMW Administrative Structure

There will not be any impact on the administrative structure of the institution. The program will be administered under the auspices of the School of Education, Business and Technology.

5. Describe the extent to which similar programs are offered in Montana, the Pacific Northwest, and the states bordering Montana. How similar are these programs to the one proposed?

There are similar programs available in the Northwest, including those listed below. However, with the exception of the University of Wyoming, these are traditionally taught, campus-based programs.

Montana State University-Bozeman-- Bachelor of Science in Health and Human Development (Family and Consumer Sciences Option-Early Childhood Education concentration)
Idaho State University-Early Childhood Education
Washington State University-Human Development (Early Childhood Education Option)
Central Washington University—Early Childhood Education
South Dakota State University--Human Development, Consumer, and Family Sciences
University of North Dakota—Early Childhood Education
North Dakota State University—Child Development and Family Sciences (Child Development Option)
University of Mary—Early Childhood Education/Elementary Education
University of Wyoming--Family and Consumer Science (Professional Development Option)

6. Please name any accrediting agency(ies) or learned society(ies) that would be concerned with the particular program herein proposed. How has this program been developed in accordance with criteria developed by said accrediting body(ies) or learned society(ies)?

Accrediting Agencies

Since this program is not designed to provide state certification of P-12 teachers, NCATE (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education) will not be involved. The program is designed to meet all regional (Northwest Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities) accreditation standards.

7. Prepare an outline of the proposed curriculum showing course titles and credits. Please include any plans for expansion of the program during its first three years.

General Education Courses

Foundational Courses 12-14 cr.

All four (4) of the following:

ENG 101 Freshman Composition 3

ENG 131 Oral Communication 3

COMS 101 Introduction to Computers 3

MATH 104 Math for Liberal Arts

(or higher level math course) 3-5

Behavioral & Social Sciences 9 cr.

PSY 100 General Psychology

AND one (1) 100- or 200-level course

from HIST rubric 3

AND one (1) of the following five:

ECON 251 Prin of Macroeconomics (3)

ECON 252 Prin of Microeconomics (3)

GEOG 141 Prin of Geography (3)

GEOG 241 Human Geography (3)

POLS 121 American Govt (3) 3

Natural Sciences 6-8 cr.

Successfully complete **two (2)** 100- or 200-

level courses from any **two (2)** science

rubrics--BIO/CHEM/GEOL/PHYS 6-8

Arts & Humanities 6 cr.

Two (2) of the following:

FA 101 Intro to Creative & Perf Arts (3)

PHIL 100 Intro to Philosophy (3)

ENG Literature Series

ENG Writing Series

Early Childhood Core Courses (These courses are required as part of the A.A.S. in Early Childhood Education and are currently taught in Butte, Billings, Bozeman, Helena, Great Falls, Havre, Missoula, Hamilton, and Dillon)

ED 142/143 Intro to Early Childhood/Lab

ED 144/145 Creat Environ for Learning/Lab

ED 240/241 Positive Child Discipline/Lab

ED 242/243 Meeting Needs of Family/Lab

ED 246/247 Early Child Professional/Lab

ED 250/251 Child Growth & Development/Lab

ED 320/321 Early Childhood Curriculum I/Lab

ED 324/325 Early Childhood Curriculum II/Lab

Additional Required Early Courses for B.S. Degree

ED 455 Child Development Theories and Research (3)

ED 422 Family, Communities, Culture (3)

ED 424 Early Childhood Assessment and Outcomes (3)

ED 346 Early Literacy (3)

ED 348 Math and Science for Early Childhood (3)

ED 352 Enhancing Physical Skills in Early Childhood (1)

ED 354 Fostering Social Competence in the Early Years (3)

ED 457 Coaching and Mentoring Adults (3)

ED 421 Creativity and the Young Child: Exploring Reggio Emilia and the Project Approach

(currently offered as a professional elective for A.A.S. in ECE)

ED 326 Infant Toddler Development and Group Care

(currently offered as a professional elective for A.A.S. in ECE)

ED 341 Exceptional Learner

Area of emphasis 12 credits (Individually designed by the student with input from a mentor)

ED 496 Early Childhood Practicum (6)

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR NEWLY DEVELOPED COURSES:

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ED 455 Child Development Theories and Research (3)

In-depth examination of theories and current research relating to child development from pre-natal to age eight.

Pre-requisite: ED 250

ED 422 Family, Communities, Culture (3)

Examines characteristics, research, and theories on families and communities including socioeconomic conditions, family structures, relationships, stresses, supports, home language, cultural values, ethnicity, community resources, cohesiveness, and organization influences.

ED 424 Early Childhood Assessment and Outcomes (3)

Examines the goals, benefits, limitations, characteristics, and uses of assessment for young children, families, staff, and programs. Explore the relationship between assessment and outcomes; examine and critique different assessment tools and strategies; develop and implement assessment plans; and practice skills in collaboration to form assessment partnerships.

Pre-requisites ED 251

ED 346 Early Literacy (3)

Examines language and literacy research, including second language acquisition, bilingualism, and sociopolitical contexts of major language groups. Students critique a variety of curriculum models and strategies based upon research, developmental appropriateness, and National and State standards. Based upon these findings, students will design and implement high-quality, meaningful, research-based language and literacy experiences and environments in early childhood settings.

Pre-requisites ED 320, 321, 324, 325

ED 348 Math and Science for Early Childhood (3)

Focus on developmentally appropriate, research-based curriculum, methods, and assessment in early childhood mathematics and science. Examine the integration of technology, state and national standards, and key concepts and skills into science and math curriculum. Develop high quality, meaningful science and math experiences, which focus on hands-on exploration and investigation of meaningful content.

Pre-requisites ED 320, 321, 324, 325

ED 352 Enhancing Physical Skills in Early Childhood (1)

Examines high quality, meaningful physical activity and physical education experiences across a developmental continuum, including discussions of cultural differences and gender expectations.

Pre-requisites ED 320, 321, 324, 325

ED 354 Fostering Social Competence in the Early Years (3)

The course will examine the development, components, and influences of social competence in the early years and explore common social difficulties. Students will develop and implement plans to enhance social competence through examining the contexts for social development, utilizing effective teaching strategies and practices, and strengthening specific components found to relate to social competence.

Pre-requisites ED 240, 241

ED 457 Coaching and Mentoring Adults (3)

Examines adult learning theory, supervisory and mentoring models, adult development, stages in teacher development, and effective mentoring and coaching skills. Students will practice mentoring skills including relationship building; observation and conferencing; assessing early childhood skills, knowledge, and dispositions; and planning and implementing effective training sessions.

ED 421 Early Childhood Practicum (6)

Provides students with a supervised field experience in the area of their emphasis. The practicum will be based upon an individualized training plan which outlines goals and activities for the practicum.

Faculty and Staff Requirements

1. Please indicate, by name and rank, current faculty who will be involved with the program proposed herein.

The following names include those faculty with tenure track rank who will teach the professional early childhood coursework.

Julie Bullard, Ed.D. Professor of Education/Early Childhood Education
Jennifer Gilliard, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education/Early Childhood Education
Linda Reiten, Ph.D., Professor of Education/Special Education
General education coursework will be provided by general education faculty

- 2. Please project the need for new faculty over the first five-years of the program. Include special qualifications or training. If present faculty are to conduct the new program, please explain how they will be relieved from present duties.**

A new full-time, tenure-track, early childhood faculty member will need to be hired to meet the needs of this program.

- 3. Please explain the need and cost for support personnel or other required personnel expenditures.**

Currently the early childhood department has a grant funded support personnel to assist in meeting the needs of student and faculty enrolled in our off-campus programs. This grant funding ends December 2003. This position is crucial in meeting the needs of our current program and will be even more critical to meet the needs of an expanded program.

Capital Outlay, Operating Expenditures, and Physical Facilities

- 1. Please summarize operating expenditure needs**

Some additional costs will occur due to distance delivery. These costs will be covered by a distance delivery fee.

- 2. Please evaluate library resources. Are they adequate for operation of the proposed program? If not, how will the library need to be strengthened during the next three years?**

Since the library holdings are proportional to student enrollment in a program, as enrollment increases, more resources will go towards early childhood books and periodicals.

- 3. Please indicate special clinical, laboratory, and/or computer equipment that will be needed. List those pieces of equipment or computer hardware presently available in the department.**

Since several courses will be offered on-line, current faculty and the new faculty hire will need new computers or upgrades.

- 4. Please describe facilities and space required for the proposed program. Are current facilities adequate for the program? If not, how does the institution propose to provide new facilities?**

Field experiences and off-site courses will make use of facilities provided by partners or will be provided using course or program fees to students.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSED PROGRAM

- 1. Please name faculty committees or councils and have reviewed and approved the program herein proposed.**

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by The University of Montana-Western's early childhood program instructors, Education Department, the UM-W academic and administrative officers, the campus Curriculum Committee; and the Faculty Senate.

- 2. If outside consultants have been employed, please list the names of these consultants, their current positions and titles. Append copies of their written reports (this is a requirement of new doctoral programs).**

No outside consultants were used. However, input from prospective employees, prospective students, and state and national early childhood experts was utilized in determining program coursework and design.

Conclusion

UM-W is recognized for its expertise in the area of early childhood education. Western is currently serving place-bound, working early childhood practitioners through offering its Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education in nine locations throughout Montana. Western also offers an EC Rural program that combines intensives with self-study to meet the needs of those students who are in very remote locations. This degree would allow our current and past students to continue with their education while meeting an increasing market demand.