



1. Submitted by: Missouri State University
2. Program Title: Early Childhood Special Education
3. Degree/Certificate: Master of Science in Education
4. Options: None Click here to enter text.
5. Delivery Site(s): Springfield, MO
6. CIP Classification: 13.1015
7. Implementation Date: Fall, 2017
8. Cooperative Partners: None

AUTHORIZATION

Dr. Frank Einhellig, Provost
Name/title of Institutional Officer

Frank Einhellig
Signature

3/28/17
Date

Dr. Julie Masterson, Associate Provost
Person to Contact for More Information

417-836-5335
Telephone Number

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a national shortage of Early Intervention (EI) Specialists (birth to age three) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) teachers (preschool – grade three). In every state, including Missouri, the demand for highly qualified ECSE teachers exceeds the available supply. Generally, rural and urban settings have the greatest need for professionals across all areas of special education. Over the last decade the national demand for ECSE teachers has increased by more than 100% from approximately 13,000 to 27,000.

Teachers who specialize in early childhood special education are in demand as more children with disabilities are diagnosed earlier – in fact the preschool, kindergarten, and early elementary levels are the fastest-growing areas of special education, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Young children with disabilities who receive special education instruction and related services vary greatly in their needs. Like all children, they differ from one another in ability, age, learning styles, and personality. Students with disabilities come from all cultural backgrounds and may speak languages other than English. They all have unique learning needs based on their disabilities that require a specially designed curriculum and adaptive materials. Early childhood special education teachers work in many settings. Public school settings include general education classrooms, resource rooms, and self-contained classrooms. Other public or private school settings include hospitals, medical centers, private practice environments, and the child's own home. The ECSE Master's degree was developed in direct response to school districts' needs. Districts are clamoring for early childhood special educators. Children who have special needs can be diagnosed early, receive intervention sooner, and be a part of inclusive classrooms with teachers who are trained to meet the needs of all children.

With skyrocketing rates of diagnosis of many different disabilities, (especially autism, which has increased 78% over the past decade), and the increased emphasis on early intervention, there are growing demands for early childhood special educators. The ability to expand existing programs or create new programs for young children is limited due to the shortage of ECSE teachers. In fact, the profession of ECSE is projected to grow about 16% in the next decade. Early intervention is key for many children with disabilities, and so the early childhood special education teacher has the potential to make a lifelong impact.

This accelerated master's degree program is designed for students working toward a Bachelor of Science in either Early Childhood Education or Special Education. The target population is to serve Missouri State University students in these programs. It is anticipated that the students would remain enrolled full time. Successful candidates will earn a Bachelor of Science in either Early Childhood Education or Special Education, Initial certification in either Early Childhood Education or Special Education, and with one additional year, a Master of Science in Early Childhood Special Education, and an add-on certification in Early Childhood Special Education. The Accelerated program requires 38 credit hours.

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STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS (Form SE:)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Full Time	8	12	16	20	25
Part Time	1	2	3	3	3
Total	9	14	19	23	28

1. Please provide a rationale regarding how student enrollment projections were calculated
 In 2015, an interest survey was given to three groups of current MSU students: 1) pre-admitted early childhood students (N = 86), 2) admitted early childhood students (N = 44), and 3) special education students (N = 21). In addition, 67 early childhood alumnae were surveyed and 23 responded. Results indicated high interest in "pursuing an Accelerated Master's degree in Early Childhood Special Education" and in "earning a traditional Master's degree in Early Childhood Special Education". A majority of the respondents indicated that they would like to begin their graduate work within the next 5 years.

2. Provide a rationale for proposing this program, including evidence of market demand and societal need supported by research (i.e., please cite sources for evidence used).

a. Market Demand:

The demand for Early Childhood Special Education teachers, which includes the career path of Early Interventionist, is high. The number of young children diagnosed with developmental delays and disabilities keeps growing exponentially. In the 2013-2014 school year, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) reported 4,988 children who qualified for First Steps (birth – age 3), over 11,500 3-5 year olds, and more than 28,000 children 5-8 years old. Missouri DESE reported that the number of children qualifying for early childhood special education is increasing at a rate of about 6.2% annually. Children receiving early intervention services through First Steps have more than doubled over the past 10 years. Two school districts in Southwest Missouri have written letters of support for the addition of a Master's in ECSE. Sherry Wilson, Assistant Director of Special Programs for Springfield Public Schools noted that "It is exciting to know that there is a potential plan for an accelerated Master's program in ECSE. There is a need for highly qualified ECSE teachers. There is truly a need for those folks who have the early childhood development background. The ECSE department currently has 317 students in 22 ECSE classrooms. This area is growing in leaps and bounds." Deborah Lawson, Administrator of Special Programs, Nixa Public Schools added, "During the 2014-2015 academic year, the District has added two early childhood special education teachers and a kindergarten teacher after the school year began. The need for well-trained teachers continues to grow." Over the last decade the national demand for ECSE teachers increased by more than 100% from approximately 13,000 to 27,000.

b. Societal Demand (i.e., factors other than employment indicating need for degree)

Young children with disabilities who receive special education instruction and related services vary greatly in their needs. Like all children, they differ from one another in ability, age, learning styles, and personality. Students with disabilities come from all cultural backgrounds and may speak languages other than English. They all have unique learning needs based on their disabilities that require a specially designed curriculum and adaptive materials. Students with disabilities include those with cognitive impairments, such as mental retardation, which can range from mild to profound. Other students have specific learning disabilities that require specific teaching strategies, including accommodations and modifications to the general education classroom curriculum. Still other students have physical disabilities that require the use of wheelchairs or other adaptive equipment. Some students' impairments are sensory, such as hearing loss or visual impairment. Others may

have emotional conditions. In addition, chronic health problems and multiple disabilities can complicate learning for some.

COLLABORATION (FORM CL):

Does delivery of the program involve a collaborative effort with any external institution or organization?
Not applicable

If yes, please complete the rest of this section. If no, state not applicable and go to Program Structure (Form PS).

Sponsoring Institutions: Click here to enter text.

Degree Program for Collaboration Click here to enter text.

Length of agreement (open-ended or limited): Click here to enter text.

1. Which institution(s) will have degree-granting authority?
Click here to enter text.
2. Which institution(s) will have the authority for faculty hiring, course assignment, evaluation, and reappointment decisions?
Click here to enter text.
3. What agreements exist to ensure that faculty from all participating institutions will be involved in decisions about the curriculum, admissions standards, exit requirements?
Click here to enter text.
4. Which institution(s) will be responsible for academic and student-support services (e.g., registration, advising, library, academic assistance, financial aid, etc.)?
Click here to enter text.
5. What agreements exist to ensure that the academic calendars of the participating institutions have been aligned as needed?
Click here to enter text.
6. In addition to the information provided by each participating institution regarding Financial Projections (below), please address the following items:
 - a) How will tuition rates be determined if they differ among the institutions?
Click here to enter text.
 - b) Has a formal agreement been developed regarding cost-sharing policies? If yes, please include it as part of the proposal. If no, please summarize the current understanding between all parties and the plans for developing a formal agreement.
Click here to enter text.
 - c) What arrangements, if any, have been made for exchange of money between participating institutions?
Click here to enter text.
7. What commitments have been made by all participants to evaluate the program systematically?
Click here to enter text.

8. If one institution wishes to discontinue the program, what agreements exist for terminating the offering?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

PROGRAM STRUCTURE (FORM PS):

1. Total credits required for graduation: 38
2. Residency requirements, if any: None specific to the program; Graduate College guidelines regarding transfer credit apply.
3. General education: Total credits: Not applicable
4. Degree requirements (Includes required, electives, thesis, capstone, internship): Total credits: 38

Graduate Courses Required for Students Pursuing Bachelor's in Early Childhood		
Total credits = 38		
Mixed Credit Courses (count toward both undergraduate and graduate degrees)		
Course ID	Course Title	Credits
CFD 660	Family Engagement	3
CFD 663	Administration of Programs for Children and Families	3
ECE 675	Working with Culturally/Linguistically Diverse Children and Families	3
SPE 623	Curriculum and Methods in ECSE	3
Courses Counting Only for Graduate Degree		
Course ID	Course Title	Credits
ECE 725	Inquiry in Early Childhood and Family Development	3
ECE 771	Proposal Development	1
ECE 762	Seminar in Early Childhood and Family Development	3
SFR 780	Educational Research Methods	3
SPE 616	Foundations of Applied Behavior and Interventions for Teachers in Applied Settings	3
SPE 779	Application of Technology in Special Education	3
SPE 782	Advanced Diagnosis and Remediation of Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities	4
SPE 792	Advanced Diagnosis and Remediation of Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities- Lab	2
SPE 618	Application of Applied Behavior Analysis and Intervention In Applied Settings	3
SPE 671	Clinical Practicum in Special Education	1

Graduate Courses Required for Students Pursuing Bachelor's in Special Education Total credits = 38		
Mixed Credit Courses (count toward both undergraduate and graduate degrees)		
Course ID	Course Title	Credits
SPE 616	Foundations of Applied Behavior and Interventions for Teachers in Applied Settings	3
SPE 660	Working with Families of Exceptional Individuals	3
SPE 618	Application of Applied Behavior Analysis and Intervention in Applied Settings	3
SPE 779	Application of Technology in Special Education Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities- Lab	3
Courses Counting Only for Graduate Degree		
Course ID	Course Title	Credits
SFR 780	Educational Research Methods	3
ECE 725	Inquiry in Early Childhood and Family Development	3
CFD 660	Family Engagement	3
CFD 663	Administration of Programs for Children and Families	3
ECE 675	Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children and Families	3
SPE 623	Curriculum and Methods in ECSE	3
ECE 731	Advanced Curriculum for ECSE	3
SPE 671	Clinical Practicum in Special Education	1
ECE 771	Proposal Development	1
ECE 762	Seminar in Early Childhood and Family Development	3

The Master of Science in Education - Early Childhood Special Education will require a seminar paper or thesis. The seminar paper can be a creative project, (e.g., curriculum development, program evaluation,) and the thesis will be a five chapter paper using original data. The seminar paper/thesis will be proposed in ECE 771 Proposal Development and completed in ECE 762 Seminar in Early Childhood and Family Development. Field experiences are required in SPE 671 Clinical Practicum in Special Education, SPE 618 Application of Applied Behavior Analysis and Intervention in Applied Settings, and SPE 792 Advanced Diagnosis and Remediation of Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities – Lab.

A **Comprehensive Examination** must be passed by the candidate before a degree will be granted. Specific requirements for the comprehensive examination will be determined by the graduate faculty for the program.

- Any unique features such as interdepartmental cooperation:
The Master of Science in Education, Early Childhood Special Education is a collaboration between the departments of Childhood Education and Family Studies (where Early Childhood Education is housed) and Counseling, Leadership, and Special Education. Child and Family Development (CFD) and Early Childhood Education (ECE) courses will be provided by the Childhood Education and Family Studies department while the Special Education (SPE) courses will be provided by the Counseling, Leadership and Special Education department. In addition, the department of Reading, Foundations, and Technology will provide SFR 780 Educational Research Methods.

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS (FORM PG):

Institution Name: Missouri State University
Program Name: MSED in Early Childhood Special Education
Date: March, 2017

(Although all of the following guidelines may not be applicable to the proposed program, please carefully consider the elements in each area and respond as completely as possible in the format below. Quantification of performance goals should be included wherever possible.)

1. Student Preparation

- a) Any special admissions procedures or student qualifications required for this program which exceed regular university admissions, standards, e.g., ACT score, completion of core curriculum, portfolio, personal interview, etc. Please note if no special preparation will be required. Before enrolling in a course that counts for both undergraduate and graduate credit and to count a course toward a Master's degree, an early childhood or special education undergraduate student must be accepted into the accelerated program and receive prior approval from the Graduate Director, the Department Head of Childhood Education and Family Studies, and the Dean of the Graduate College. A student will be fully admitted to the Graduate College upon completion of the requirements for the baccalaureate degree, provided the student meets all other requirements for admission to the Graduate College.
- b) Characteristics of a specific population to be served, if applicable.
None

2. Faculty Characteristics

- a) Any special requirements (degree status, training, etc.) for assignment of teaching for this degree/certificate.
Faculty teaching in this program must hold Graduate Faculty status at Missouri State and will have expertise in the area in which they are teaching. Faculty will be expected to complete departmental requirements for tenure and promotion. Those tenured will be expected to continue to pursue a research agenda. Faculty will be encouraged to develop and teach online courses as deemed necessary.
- b) Estimated percentage of credit hours that will be assigned to full time faculty. Please use the term "full time faculty" (and not FTE) in your descriptions here.
It is anticipated that 100% of the credit hours will be taught by full time, tenure-track faculty. Occasional use of adjunct faculty who meet the Graduate Clinical Faculty requirements may be hired to teach a course in a specific content area.
- c) Expectations for professional activities, special student contact, teaching/learning innovation. In addition to teaching graduate courses, faculty in this program will advise students in their course of studies and assist them in the completion of their research requirements and thesis/seminar paper.

3. Enrollment Projections

- a) Student FTE majoring in program by the end of five years.
28 FTE by the end of 5 years
- b) Percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of five years.
90% full time; 10% part time

4. Student and Program Outcomes

- a) Number of graduates per annum at three and five years after implementation.
We anticipate 6 graduates per annum three years after implementation at 10 to 15 five years after implementation.
- b) Special skills specific to the program.
Graduates of the program will meet all requirements set forth by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to pass the certification examination for Early Childhood Special Education and obtain certification.
- c) Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration.
The percentage of candidates who pass the Early Childhood Education certification exam has been 100%. The percentage for Special Education majors passing the certification exam has also been 100%. The anticipated proportion of students who will achieve certification in Early Childhood Special Education is projected to be 100%.
- d) Performance on national and/or local assessments, e.g., percent of students scoring above the 50th percentile on normed tests; percent of students achieving minimal cut-scores on criterion-referenced tests. Include expected results on assessments of general education and on exit assessments in a particular discipline as well as the name of any nationally recognized assessments used.
A written Comprehensive Examination will be administered to the students in this program. A 100% pass rate is projected.
- e) Placement rates in related fields, in other fields, unemployed.
Placement rates for candidates graduating from the Early Childhood Education program have been 95% and graduates from the Special Education program have placed at approximately the same rate. Given the performance of these undergraduate programs, the continuing increase of students qualifying for ECSE, and the demand for well-trained ECSE teachers locally, regionally, and across the state, it is projected that the placement rate for this degree will be 95% or higher.
- f) Transfer rates, continuous study.
Not applicable

5. Program Accreditation

- a) Institutional plans for accreditation, if applicable, including accrediting agency and timeline. If there are no plans to seek specialized accreditation, please provide reasons.
It is anticipated that after approval of this program, it will be submitted to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for national accreditation. Both the undergraduate Early Childhood Education and Special Education programs are nationally accredited. Missouri State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition, the College of Education and Educator Preparation Program are both accredited by NCATE/CAEP.

6. Alumni and Employer Survey

- a) Expected satisfaction rates for alumni, including timing and method of surveys.
The program will be reviewed annually by an Advisory Committee comprised of current and past students, graduate faculty, and community stakeholders, the College of Education graduate and employer survey, and on-going review by the program and department. An Exit Survey will be developed and administered prior to graduation.

- b) Expected satisfaction rates for employers, including timing and method of surveys. A survey will be administered each semester. We expect a high rate of satisfaction from employers, given the demand for ECSE teachers and the quality of our current students in Early Childhood Education and Special Education.

7. Institutional Characteristics

- a) Characteristics demonstrating why your institution is particularly well-equipped to support the program.

Missouri State was founded in 1905 as the Fourth District Normal School and became Southwest Missouri Teachers College in 1919. The university has had a long history of meeting regional, state, and national needs for preparing educated citizens. Missouri State is a public, comprehensive, metropolitan system with a state-wide mission in Public Affairs. The University's identity is distinguished by this Public Affairs mission, which entails a campus-wide commitment to foster expertise and responsibility in ethical leadership, cultural competence and community engagement. These "pillars" of our mission are integrated throughout six themes: professional education, health and human services, business and economic development, agriculture, creative arts, and science and the environment. The College of Education prepares a large number of teachers and other professionals working in social services agencies. By reviewing graduate and employer surveys, listening to advisory committees, maintaining ongoing dialogue with community partners, and participating in national professional organizations, Missouri State continually reviews its academic programs and services to students.