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M. MIDDLETON

**Create New Preliminary Proposal (This form replaces the Letter of Intent previously required by Board of Regents.)**

Questions should be directed to:

- Undergraduate programs – Val Whittlesey, Associate Vice President Academic Affairs, email [vwhittle@kennesaw.edu](mailto:vwhittle@kennesaw.edu)
- Graduate Programs – Teresa Joyce, Dean Graduate College, [tjoyce@kennesaw.edu](mailto:tjoyce@kennesaw.edu)

**Proposal Information**

Institution:

Kennesaw State University

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Name of Proposed Program: (required)

The Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Birth Through Five

Brief Description of the Degree:

The Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Birth Through Five has been developed to assist individuals who have a desire to instruct and work with infants, toddlers, preschool and kindergarten children. Teacher candidates in the program will participate in diverse field settings that address (1) developmentally appropriate practices, (2) current research and instructional strategies, (3) families and communities in a global setting, (4) children with English as a Second Language, and (5) children with special learning needs. This undergraduate program will allow teacher candidates to be recommended for the 0-5 certification offered by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Students that choose the Montessori Concentration track of the program will be recommended for Montessori Certification through the Pan American Montessori Association (PAMS).

**Procedures**

Procedures for seeking approval for new degree programs: The proposal submission consists of two parts: Preliminary Proposal and Formal Proposal. This is the Preliminary Proposal form, or rather, part I of the new program review process.

The items listed in each section below are not to be considered exhaustive, rather they are listed to provide an idea of the kinds of information being sought in order to judge the merit of each proposal.

## **Institutional Mission**

1. How does this program support the mission of your institution?

How does the proposed program help meet the priorities/goals of your strategic plan and the strategic plan of the Board of Regents? Please reference the specific edition and page number of your strategic plan.

The proposed Bachelor of Science Degree (B.S.) in Early Childhood Birth Through Five will support the mission of KSU by *responding to the needs of Atlanta and northwest Georgia*. Currently, there is no similar undergraduate degree program being offered in northwest Georgia. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) recently approved this program citing the need for degreed teachers in the field of early childhood and preschool education. This program will allow teachers within the surrounding counties to attain an undergraduate degree. Kennesaw State University also has received funding from The Gouizeta Foundation to be a model Early Childhood Education preparation program. Included within this program are courses related to inclusion, diversity, and global education. These courses emphasize the importance of KSU's mission to focus on promoting *integrity, global awareness, technological literacy, diversity, and lifelong learning* in the teaching process.

The proposed B.S. Degree in Early Childhood Birth Through Five will play a vital role in meeting the goals of KSU's new 2007-2012 Strategic Plan. The development of the proposed program occurred in response to **Action Plan Goal #1 Step #9** *Review and modify as necessary the general education curriculum and each degree program to assure continued relevance to the needs and interests of students, the state, and the nation*. The Bagwell College of Education currently is the second largest producer of teachers in the state of Georgia with a significant number of teacher candidates in the field of Early Childhood Education. These teachers will be able to teach children ages 4 years to fifth grade.

Currently there has been a national call for degreed teachers in infant, toddler and preschool settings. With the approval of a new Birth through Five certification through the Georgia PSC, Kennesaw State University will also have the ability to meet the needs of the state and *add degree programs that are strategically important to the local community, to Georgia, and to the nation (Action Plan Goal #1 Step #8)*.

The courses developed for the proposed degree program have a global focus. Teacher candidates will not only learn about early childhood education and the development of young children in this country but throughout the world. The implementation of the proposed B.S. Degree in Early Childhood Birth Through Five will assist Kennesaw

State University in fully implementing the Global Learning Quality Enhancement Plan required by SACS for re-accreditation (Action Plan Goal #1 Step 2)

2. Is it likely that a SACS visit for substantive change will be necessary? Why?

In compliance with the Commission on College's Substantive Change Policy, KSU has notified SACS of the university's intent to initiate a B.S. program in Early Childhood Education Birth through Five and has received approval to proceed with no further follow-up or visit required.

3. Will the program require an increase in state appropriation within the next five years?

The proposed B-5 major will require four new faculty lines over a three to five year period and the Montessori Concentration will require two faculty lines over a five year program. One new faculty line has been approved for 2009-2010. There are existing courses in our current Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education with certification in Prekindergarten (age 4) to Fifth grade that will occur in the proposed program. Faculty hired for the proposed program can serve the teaching needs of the new program and also assist in providing instructional support to the existing program.

4. If this is a baccalaureate program, will you be asking for an exception to the 120-hour expectation?

Yes. The proposed B.S. Degree in Early Childhood Birth Through Five program is aligned with the existing B.S. degree in Early Childhood Education with certification in prekindergarten through fifth grade. There are 123 hours in the existing degree program in addition to the 3 hours offered with the KSU 1101 course for a total of 126 hours. The proposed program will also offer 126 hours. The proposed program meets the National Standards recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Division of Early Childhood (DEC), a subgroup under the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The proposed will also meet the standards for the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), the national organization that accredits the existing Early Childhood Undergraduate Degree program. Therefore, the current program will ask for an exception to the 120-

hour expectation.

5. Are there program delivery formats that will be new or different for your institution with the establishment of the proposed program? What is the program delivery format?

On-campus

Some courses to be offered on-line (less than 50%)

External site (school, conference center, another campus, etc.)

What is the external site?

The delivery method of the program will be mainly on-campus with fewer than 50% of courses being offered on-line. This delivery method is aligned with the existing Early Childhood Education Undergraduate Degree program. In addition, there are courses offered in the proposed program that are being taught through the established delivery method at this university. Proposed courses will be delivered through this method as well.

Other?

6. If programs will be delivered externally, do you have an approved Instructional Delivery Plan (IDP) on file? Yes or No (Note: Please check to determine that you have a current IDP on file in the system office).

Yes  No

### Need

1. Need: Provide a brief justification and data for why the state needs graduates from this program and for why the University System needs this program.

Current research indicates that positive and strong early childhood programs with highly qualified teachers prevents harmful future conditions such as school failure, mental illness, and increased dropout rates. Nationally this research has caused a major push for an increase in the professional development of preschool teachers. Head Start, a nationally developed early childhood education program for children from low income families, required that at least half of the teachers in their programs

must have an associate, baccalaureate or advanced degree by September 30, 2003. This organization has continued to enhance this goal by requiring at least 50% of its Head Start teachers to have a baccalaureate degree or higher by 2011.

Recognizing the need for a degree program to be offered to preschool teachers, the Georgia PSC approved its first Birth through Five certification program in September 2004. This program will enhance the quality of preschool programs in the state of Georgia. Kennesaw State University has the opportunity to offer this program to preschool teachers and teacher candidates within the Atlanta Metropolitan area and northwest Georgia. This program will allow KSU to be viewed as a leader in the field of Early Childhood Education by offering courses in Play, Second Language Acquisition, Child Development, Families, and Global and Inclusive Education. Additionally, a track that focuses on Montessori Education will be provided.

2. Give a brief justification for why your institution should offer the program.

Currently, there is no degree program with a focus on Birth through Five certification being offered in the northwest Georgia area. Kennesaw State University has the opportunity to provide educational preparation to early childhood educators in surrounding counties, while providing leadership through its global education and diverse coursework, including the Montessori Concentration.

3. Demand: Provide data to support the need for the program and list the source. Estimate the number of students who will graduate annually from the program in the steady state.

According to a study conducted by the Child Policy Partnership (2008), approximately 375,000 children ages 0-5 are in the Metro Atlanta area and nearly 100,000 of these children are in some type of formalized child care. In northwest Georgia (which includes Paulding, Bartow, Floyd, and Gordon counties) approximately 15,000 of the approximately 75,000 children in the area are enrolled in child care.

In contrast, only 41% of early care providers in northwest Georgia have technical, associate or four-year degrees or higher, and only 42% of early care providers in the Metro Atlanta area have technical, associate, or four-year degrees or higher.

Kennesaw State University (KSU) serves and prepares teacher candidates in these

regions. By establishing the program at KSU, teachers within these regions can attain a four-year degree that focuses on the development and instruction of young children ages 0-5 years. It is estimated that approximately 15-20 students will graduate from the program and that number should increase as the program becomes known throughout the region.

4. Are there other similar programs in the USG system? List the institutions that offer a similar program.

Currently, Georgia State University and the University of Georgia are two USG institutions that are offering a similar program. Mercer University is currently the only private institution offering this program. Early Childhood Education faculty members have been working closely with these institutions throughout the state. Mercer University has developed a steering committee comprised of faculty who will offer and are currently offering this program. Participants in these meetings share ideas, address the needs in program development, and work with representatives from area preschools and Head Start programs to keep up with current issues in the field. A faculty member in the Department of Early Childhood Education has been an active participant at these meetings and will be presenting with group members at the Georgia Association of Young Children Conference in October 2008 to possible teacher candidates.

5. If similar programs are geographically nearby, how does your proposed program differ?

The KSU program will differ from the other programs across the state in that (1) it will offer courses that discuss the global aspect of Early Childhood Education, (2) it will offer a course that will focus on second language acquisition and working with English Language Learners, and (3) it will offer a track for teacher candidates interested in receiving certification in the field of Montessori Education.

### **Budget**

1. Estimate the steady-state cost of the program (in current dollars) and indicate the percentages from state allocation, reallocation, student fees, grants, and other outside dollars.

The implementation of the proposed B.S. Degree in Early Childhood Education Birth Through Five will require the addition of four new faculty lines over the next three to five

years. The lines include three tenure track and one lecturer positions. The Montessori Concentration will require one new tenure-track line and one lecturer line over the next five years. For a complete description of budget projections, please go to item #13 below.

Currently, the KSU Development Office is holding a seven million dollar Capital Campaign to raise funds for a state of the art Early Learning Center that will be a model site for the region. This site will eventually serve as a place for teacher candidates to learn about how to work with young children and provide high quality child care and instruction to KSU faculty, staff, students and the community.

2. Will the program require the addition of a new organizational unit to the institution (e.g., college, school, division or department)?

The program will be administered under the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education. Therefore, the proposed program will not require an addition of a new organizational unit to the institution at this time.

3. Will the program require additional resources? How do you plan to reallocate resources for this proposed program?

Initially, the program will utilize existing resources. Since there are courses that already exist in the department where teacher candidates conduct field placement in local preschool sites, many of the proposed program majors will be placed in these preschools. The Bagwell College of Education, along with the KSU Development Office, is currently raising funds to establish an Early Learning Center to assist in the preparation of the teacher candidates. The Development Office is currently working on a campaign to raise funds to accomplish this goal.

**Other**

Please share additional information that you seek to add concerning the proposed program before you submit the Declaration of Intent.

The proposed KSU B.S. Degree in Early Childhood Education Birth Through Five will be the first of its kind to offer certifications in Birth through Five and Montessori Education. It is currently the only program in the state that will have a global focus and coursework that focuses on working with English Language Learners.