



The University of Georgia

University Council
Athens, Georgia 30602

September 19, 2008

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2008-2009

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal to change the high-demand selection process in Early Childhood Education (B.S.Ed.) will be an agenda item for the September 26, 2008, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley, Chair
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Dr. Arnett C. Mace, Jr.
Professor Jere W. Morehead

TO: UGA Curriculum Committee

FROM: Dr. Ron VanSickle, Department Head, Elementary & Social Studies Education

DATE: September 5, 2008

RE: Early Childhood Education (Partnership Program) High-Demand Major Selection Process

We are proposing a change in our selection process based on the need to more explicitly link our admission decisions with our newly revised mission statement. We also have a goal of selecting as diverse a body of beginning teacher candidates as possible in order to more effectively serve the broad range of students attending school in the state of Georgia. In view of our mission, our proposed selection process is designed to more clearly recognize and evaluate candidates' diverse intellectual experiences and skills as well as their active involvement and advocacy in work, community, and educational settings. Finally, we are interested in candidates' potential for collaborative inquiry with teaching colleagues, families, and community members.

In order to apply to our program, students currently must meet the minimum GPA requirement of 2.75 (overall, cumulative, and across Areas A and D or I-III of the General Education Curriculum). They also need to have completed Areas A and D of the Core Curriculum or I-III of the General Education Curriculum. Finally, they must get passing scores on or exemption of the GACE Basic Skills Assessment. In our new selection process, students will still need to meet these prerequisite requirements to apply. However, the proposed selection process will no longer include a GPA calculation in Areas A and D of the core curriculum. The essay in the current selection process will be replaced with an applicant statement and a resume. Students will still be expected to submit three letters of reference.

Current Process for Selection: Applicants meeting the entrance requirements (2.75 GPA overall, cumulative, and across Areas A and D or I-III of the General Education Curriculum; completion of Areas A and D; and passing or exemption of the GACE Basic Skills Assessment) are selected based on a weighted rating of the following items:

- ***GPA in Areas A and D of the core curriculum (40%).***
- ***Essay, together with References (60%).***

The essay and references are currently evaluated using a rubric that yields a single score.

The **essay** is completed in a computer lab in Aderhold Hall on a set date. Applicants are expected to present their perspectives on teaching and a critical view of their qualifications for becoming a teacher. In reading the essays, evaluators consider whether the student demonstrates the sort of knowledge and experience that would allow her or him to make a positive contribution as a teacher of children, the thoroughness of the student's response to the essay prompt, the student's ability to articulate ideas effectively, and the technical quality of the writing (as reflected in the structure of sentences, paragraphs, and the essay as a whole and in the more mechanical aspects of the writing).

The **references** component consists of three letters of recommendation, each attached to a reference form included in the application packet. The form asks references, "On a scale of 1 to

10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the potential of the applicant to become an exemplary teacher of children?" In reading the letters, evaluators consider, for each letter, the narrative evaluation of the student, the numerical rating the writer was asked to provide of the student, and the quality of the letter itself (as reflecting the writer's knowledge of the student, the extent to which that knowledge is relevant to the student's potential as a teacher of children, and the specificity provided in the description of the student's qualities).

Proposed Process for Selection:

Applicants meeting the entrance requirements (2.75 GPA overall, cumulative, and across Areas A and D or I-III of the General Education Curriculum; completion of Areas A and D; and passing or exemption of the GACE Basic Skills Assessment) will be evaluated on:

- ***Applicant Statement.*** Applicants will write a 2- to 3-page, double-spaced statement introducing themselves to the program faculty. This statement should concentrate on the applicant's experiences most relevant to the three guiding principles of the Early Childhood Education Partnership Program: Intellectual Work, Collaborative Inquiry, and Active Involvement and Advocacy in work, community, and educational settings.
- ***Resume.*** Applicants will provide a standard resume including educational background, work experience, extracurricular activities, community involvement, etc.
- ***References.*** Applicants will submit three letters of recommendation, each attached to a reference form included in the application packet. The form asks references, "On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the potential of the applicant to become an exemplary teacher of the diverse children who populate Georgia's schools?" In reading the letters, evaluators will consider, for each letter, the narrative evaluation of the student and the numerical rating of the student in relation to the key program principles.

The rubric for evaluating the Applicant Statement, the Resume, and the References is designed to apply common evaluation criteria based on the Early Childhood Education Partnership Program principles. It will focus on candidates' potential to meet the intellectual challenges of teaching in the 21st century and to support the learning of young children in Georgia who are coming of age in an increasingly globalized society.