



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

University Council

October 9, 2026

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2026-2027

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal from the Mary Frances Early College of Education for a Graduate Certificate in Intervention Specialist will be an agenda item for the October 16, 2026, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Rodney Mauricio, Chair

cc: Interim Provost Ron Walcott

Dr. Marisa Anne Pagnattaro

PROPOSAL FOR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Date: June 3, 2026

School/College/Unit: Mary Frances Early College of Education

Department/Division: Educational Psychology

Certificate Title: Intervention Specialist

CIP: 42280600

Effective Term: Spring 2027

Which campus(es) will offer this certificate? Athens, Online

Level (Undergraduate, Graduate, or Post-Baccalaureate): Graduate

Program Abstract:

This certificate supports the addition of a teacher certification field for educators in Georgia. The content of this graduate certificate would allow teachers to be recognized for an advanced credential by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). The Graduate Certificate in Intervention Specialist emphasizes comprehensive preparation in social-emotional learning, data-driven academic interventions, behavior management, and collaboration with families and communities—elements that are consistently linked to increased teacher retention in a high-demand workforce. Coursework equips teachers with the skills needed to address students' behavioral, emotional, and academic needs proactively, thereby reducing classroom stress and burnout—key contributors to educators leaving the profession. Research indicates teachers who feel efficacious in managing diverse learner needs and implementing evidence-based interventions report higher job satisfaction and a lower likelihood of attrition (Kraft, Simon, & Lyon, 2021; Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Additionally, the program's emphasis on collaboration with families and interdisciplinary professionals, along with a focus on trauma, resilience, and mental health, promotes supportive professional environments that serve as protective factors against burnout (Collie, 2021; Will, 2021). By preparing educators to use data-informed decision making, differentiate instruction, and foster supportive, responsive classrooms, the program strengthens the professional competence and relational capacity that are essential for retaining educators in Georgia's workforce (Georgia Department of Education, 2022).

The University of Georgia would be the third GaPSC education program provider to offer this valuable credential to Georgia's teaching workforce. All of the required courses are approved as face-to-face and online courses and have been successfully offered in both formats for many years. The university has already been approved to offer this program of study as an endorsement by the GaPSC. Consistent with all other state-approved endorsements offered at UGA, the department is also seeking to codify this program of study as a certificate. This coding will allow for accurate entrance and exit markers that populate the state teacher certification system as well as credit the university with program completion markers. Such university coding also allows for consistent data tracking of the number of program completers that the university supports and who use the credential in P-12 classrooms.

1. Purpose and Educational Objectives

State the purpose and educational objectives of the program. How does this program complement the mission of the institution?

The Intervention Specialist Graduate Certificate is designed to prepare educators with advanced knowledge and skills in social-emotional learning, data-driven academic interventions, behavior management, and collaboration with families and communities. The certificate provides a pathway for educators to earn an additional certification field recognized by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and equips them to address students' academic, behavioral, emotional, and mental health needs using evidence-based practices. The program strengthens educators' capacity to implement proactive interventions, use data-informed decision making, and create supportive learning environments that promote student success and teacher effectiveness.

Educational Objectives

Upon completion of the certificate, candidates will be able to:

Standard 1: Plan and implement developmentally and individually appropriate curricula and instructional practices based on knowledge of individual children, the family, the community, curriculum goals and content, and effective instructional practices for at-risk learners

Standard 2: Develop and implement curriculum that focuses on individual students' needs and interests, and takes into account culturally valued content and students' home experiences

Standard 3: Develop and implement learning activities that correlate with the Georgia mandated content standards for students and with the content domains and the designated assessment measure(s) identified by Georgia as being the most proficient in demonstrating student understanding of mandated content standards

Standard 4: Assess students' cognitive, social-emotional, communication, motor, adaptive, and aesthetic development using multiple valid and reliable assessments and the resulting data to appropriately differentiate instruction

Standard 5: Demonstrate understanding of the developmental consequences of stress and trauma, protective factors and resilience and the development of mental health, and the importance of supportive relationships

Standard 6: Establish and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with families

Standard 7: Collaborate/consult with other professionals and with agencies in the larger community to support children's development, learning, and well-being

Alignment with and Support of the Institution's Mission

The certificate complements the mission of the University of Georgia and the Mary Frances Early College of Education by preparing highly qualified educators who improve educational outcomes for children and youth while addressing critical workforce needs in Georgia. The program advances the university's commitment to teaching, service, and outreach by developing professionals who can support diverse learners, promote student well-being, and implement evidence-based educational practices in schools and communities. Additionally, the certificate responds to a documented state need for educators with intervention expertise and supports teacher retention by providing advanced professional preparation in high-demand areas. By offering both campus-based and online delivery formats, the program expands access to professional learning opportunities for educators across Georgia and beyond.

2. Need for the Program

Explain why this program is necessary. In addition, provide the following information:

Necessity of the Program: The Intervention Specialist Graduate Certificate is necessary because it addresses a critical need within Georgia's educational workforce for educators who are prepared to support students' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional development through evidence-based interventions. The program provides a pathway for educators to earn a credential recognized by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and prepares them to meet increasingly complex student needs in P-12 settings.

Teacher retention is a significant concern and educators who are well prepared to manage diverse learner needs, implement evidence-based interventions, and create supportive learning environments are more likely to experience professional efficacy and remain in the profession. The certificate equips educators with competencies in social-emotional learning, behavioral intervention, academic assessment, and family collaboration, thereby addressing factors associated with teacher burnout and attrition.

The program is also needed because few institutions currently offer this credential. The University of Georgia would become only the third GaPSC-approved educator preparation provider to offer this certification field, expanding access for educators seeking advanced preparation in intervention services. Furthermore, the coursework is already approved for both face-to-face and online delivery, allowing educators throughout Georgia to access the program regardless of location.

Evidence of Demand. Several indicators demonstrate demand for the certificate:

- The credential has already been approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission as an endorsement area, indicating state recognition of the need for educators with intervention expertise.
- Georgia schools continue to require professionals who can address student behavioral, emotional, and academic challenges while supporting positive learning environments. The program directly prepares educators for these responsibilities through specialized coursework and applied intervention training.
- The Department of Educational Psychology anticipates attracting at least 20-25 new students annually, reflecting an expectation of sustained interest from practicing educators and graduate students. Approximately 50 students take courses within the department as part of the electives of their primary degree programs, including the courses that make up the program of study for the proposed certificate.
- Because the certificate may be completed alongside a graduate degree and will be offered in multiple formats, it provides a flexible professional development opportunity for educators seeking advanced credentials and career advancement.

Relationship to Existing Programs: The certificate builds upon existing strengths within the Department of Educational Psychology and utilizes courses already offered by the university. No new courses, faculty lines, facilities, or major infrastructure investments are required. The program formalizes an existing GaPSC-approved endorsement by creating a university-recognized certificate that provides clear admission, enrollment, completion, and reporting processes.

Benefits to Students and the State

The program benefits educators by developing expertise in:

- Human development and learning;
- Social-emotional learning;
- Prevention and intervention for behavioral and emotional concerns;
- Behavioral assessment and classroom management;
- Academic assessment and individualized interventions; and
- Data-based decision making.

For Georgia schools and communities, the program helps develop a workforce of educators who are better equipped to support diverse learners, improve student outcomes, and remain in the profession, thereby addressing workforce and educational needs across the state. For example, studies report high levels of stress, burnout, moral conflict, and inadequate support have been reported across diverse international contexts, from North America to Australia to Europe, revealing that teacher attrition is not only a U.S. problem but a global one (e.g., [Amitai & Van Houtte, 2022](#); [Carroll et al., 2022](#); [Sokal et al., 2021](#)). In summary, the Intervention Specialist Graduate Certificate is necessary because it responds to a documented workforce need, supports teacher retention, expands access to a valuable state-recognized credential, and prepares educators with specialized intervention skills that benefit students, schools, and communities throughout Georgia.

- a. **Semester/Year of Program Initiation:** Spring 2027
- b. **Semester/Year of Full Implementation of Program:** Spring 2027
- c. **Semester/Year First Certificates will be awarded:** Fall 2027
- d. **Annual Number of Graduates expected (once the program is established):** 25-50
- e. **Projected Future Trends for number of students enrolled in the program:** 25-50

3. Student Demand

- a. *Provide documentation of evidence of student demand for this program, including a student survey.*

There is strong evidence that the proposed Intervention Specialist Graduate Certificate will meet a significant workforce and professional development need among Georgia educators. Georgia continues to experience challenges related to teacher retention, educator burnout, and shortages in specialized instructional support areas. State workforce reports identify teacher retention as a critical concern and emphasize the need for advanced professional learning opportunities that strengthen educators' capacity to address students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. Further, the certificate directly addresses factors associated with teacher attrition by preparing educators to implement evidence-based academic and behavioral interventions, support students' social-emotional development, collaborate with families, and use data-informed decision making. Research suggests teachers who feel more effective in managing diverse learner needs and implementing interventions report higher job satisfaction and are less likely to leave the profession. The need for this credential is further demonstrated by the fact that only a limited number of Georgia educator preparation providers currently offer the GaPSC-approved Intervention Specialist credential. The University of Georgia would be only the third provider to offer this advanced credential, expanding access for educators throughout the state.

Student Survey Results

To further document demand, the department surveyed current graduate students, practicing teachers, and alumni who may benefit from the credential. Results indicate substantial interest in the proposed certificate.

Survey Population: 125 current graduate students, alumni, and practicing P-12 educators

Survey Item	Result
Interested or very interested in earning the certificate	82%
Believe the certificate would enhance professional effectiveness	89%
Believe training in SEL and behavioral intervention is needed in schools	94%
Indicated interest in completing the program online	76%
Would pursue the certificate within the next three years	68%

Representative Comments

- "Students' behavioral and mental health needs are growing, and teachers need additional training to respond effectively."
- "The certificate would provide practical intervention skills that can be used immediately in the classroom."
- "An online option would make it possible to complete the program while teaching full-time."

b. Provide evidence that demand will be sufficient to sustain reasonable enrollment.

Over the last two years, the department has added sections of the courses contained in the endorsement to meet student demand. This, along with the interest expressed by students and the documented need in the field, is preliminary evidence that the program is sustainable over time.

4. Program of Study

Provide a detailed program of study for the certificate program, including:

- a. Specific course prefixes, numbers, and titles*
- b. Identify any new courses created for this program*

The Intervention Specialist Graduate Certificate requires the successful completion of 15 total hours based on the standards from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's preparation rule (<https://www.gapsc.com/Rules/Current/Certification/505-2-.168.pdf>).

EPSY 6011, Foundations of Human Development for Education (3 hours)

EPSY 6020, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Classroom and Beyond (3 hours)

EPSY 6070, Prevention and Intervention with School-Age Youth (3 hours)

EPSY 6310, Application of Behavior Principles and Prevention and Intervention in School and Related Settings (3 hours)

EPSY 7330, Individual Academic Interventions (3 hours)

EPSY 6011, Foundations of Human Development for Education: The interactive influences of biology, family, culture, and extended environment on children's and adolescents' emotional, social, and cognitive development during the school years. The implications of regularities and diversity in development for teaching and learning and on principles of educational practice to enhance development.

EPSY 6020, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Classroom and Beyond: Theories and practices are examined that focus on social-emotional learning (SEL) among educators, children, and youth in diverse contexts. Students will examine pre-kindergarten through high school SEL programs and consider not only school-based approaches but community-based and youth empowerment approaches.

EPSY 6070, Prevention and Intervention with School-Age Youth: Development, prevention, and intervention approaches for social, emotional, and behavioral problems that occur with children and adolescents, with particular attention to the school context.

EPSY 6310, Application of Behavior Principles and Prevention and Intervention in School and Related Settings: Prevention and management of classroom behavior problems using behavioral, humanistic, and motivational strategies. Focuses on prevention of problem behaviors through effective teaching and classroom design.

EPSY 7330, Individual Academic Interventions: Candidates will learn how to conduct assessments of individual student's academic strengths and weaknesses using direct assessments and problem solving procedures, evaluate the quality of instruction being provided to a student, develop interventions through data based decision making procedures, and assess students' academic growth.

5. Model Program and Accreditation

- a. *Identify any model programs, accepted disciplinary standards, and accepted curricular practices against which the proposed program could be judged. Evaluate the extent to which the proposed curriculum is consistent with these external points of reference and provide a rationale for significant inconsistencies and differences that may exist.*

This program will be offered by adhering to the state rule for the program set forth by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. The university is reviewed every seven years for productivity and adherence to state standards for the content of this educator preparation program. The state has already approved the offering of this endorsement and certificate based on the university's proposal to the GaPSC. This proposal included approval of the university's efforts to align the curriculum and accompanying assessments with the state rule for the content.

- b. *If program accreditation is available, provide an analysis of the ability of the program to satisfy the curricular standards of such specialized accreditation.*

In 2021, the educator preparation programs at the University of Georgia were approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission with commendation and no material findings. The next program review will be conducted in 2028.

6. Student Learning Outcomes

Describe the proposed learning outcomes for the certificate program.

Mapping Code: **I** (Introduced) **P** (Practiced) **M** (Mastered)

Courses	Standard 1	Standard 2	Standard 3	Standard 4	Standard 5	Standard 6	Standard 7

	Plan and implement developmentally and individually appropriate curricula and instructional practices based on knowledge of individual children, the family, the community, curriculum goals and content, and effective instructional practices for at-risk learners	Develop and implement curriculum that focuses on individual students' needs and interests, and takes into account culturally valued content and students' home experiences	Develop and implement learning activities that correlate with the Georgia mandated content standards for students and with the content domains and the designated assessment measure(s) identified by Georgia as being the most proficient in demonstrating student understanding of mandated content standards	Assess students' cognitive, social-emotional, communication, motor, adaptive, and aesthetic development using multiple valid and reliable assessments and the resulting data to appropriately differentiate instruction	Demonstrate understanding of the developmental consequences of stress and trauma, protective factors and resilience and the development of mental health, and the importance of supportive relationships	Establish and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with families	Collaborate/consult with other professionals and with agencies in the larger community to support children's development, learning, and well-being
EPSY 6011: Foundations of Human Development for Education	I/P	I/P	I/P	I/P	M	I/P	I/P
EPSY 6020: SEL in the Classroom and Beyond	P/M	P/M	P	P/M	M	M	P/M
EPSY 6070: Prevention and Intervention with School-Age Youth	P.M	P/M	M	M	P/M	P	P/M
EPSY 6310: Application of Behavior Principles for Prevention and Intervention in School and Related Settings	P	P	P/M	M	P/M	M	M
EPSY 7330: Individual Academic Interventions	P/M	M	M	P/M	P/M	M	M

7. Assessment and Admissions

Describe how the learning outcomes for the program will be assessed. Describe the process and criteria for how students will be admitted to and retained in the program.

As required by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, all endorsement/certificate programs must present annual data for such programs of study across three assessments. The proposed certificate uses three key signature assessments that evaluate candidates' ability to apply developmental, social-emotional, and behavioral intervention knowledge in authentic educational settings.

Assessment 1: Human Development Applied Project (EPSY 6011)

In **Foundations of Human Development for Education**, candidates complete an applied project focused on a developmental topic relevant to educational practice. Students must define a developmental issue, review empirical research, explain its relevance to a specific audience, and demonstrate how developmental science can be applied to educational settings. The project assesses candidates' understanding of child and adolescent development and their ability to translate research into practice.

Assessment 2: Social-Emotional Learning Applied Project (EPSY 6020)

In **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Classroom and Beyond**, candidates develop an applied project such as a literature review, lesson plan, professional development training, or intervention resource. The project requires candidates to synthesize research on SEL, align content with a specific educational purpose, and demonstrate practical application for schools, families, or community settings. The assessment evaluates candidates' ability to promote social-emotional learning through evidence-based practices.

Assessment 3: Behavior Change/Self-Monitoring Intervention Project (EPSY 6310)

In **Application of Behavior Principles and Prevention and Intervention in School and Related Settings**, candidates complete a behavior-change intervention project. Students identify a target behavior, design and implement a self-monitoring intervention, collect and analyze data, and evaluate outcomes. The project includes an introduction and rationale, intervention methods, presentation of results, and reflection on effectiveness and future improvements. This assessment measures candidates' competency in behavior assessment, intervention implementation, data-based decision making, and evaluation of behavioral outcomes.

To be considered for admission, prospective candidates must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and must otherwise meet the requirements for admission to a graduate program at the University of Georgia. Students generally enroll in this certificate program as a supplemental program for a graduate degree. Specifically, the admission process requires:

- (a) Completion and submission of an online application including applicable fees;

- (b) Cumulative grade point average for all previous undergraduate and graduate courses, with a preferred standard of a minimum of 3.00 on a 4-point scale;
- (c) A brief statement of purpose for study in the Intervention Specialist Graduate Certificate;
- (d) A current CV/resume; and
- (e) Transcripts from all previously attended universities.

Admissions decisions are made on a continuous (fall, spring, and summer term) basis. No GRE or MAT scores are required. Standardized test scores are typically waived for graduate certificate programs at the master's or specialist levels within the College of Education. Although minimum and preferred requirements are outlined, applications are reviewed holistically, e.g., strengths in one area may mitigate relative weakness in another area. Students are classified as in-state or out-of-state based on University System of Georgia Board of Regents policy. There is a high likelihood for retention in the program given that the completion of the certificate offers teachers an additional credential to practice in Georgia schools. Further, the department structures course offerings so that it is possible to earn the credential in three terms.

8. E-Rate

An e-rate will not be requested for this program.

Documentation of Approval and Notification

Proposal: Graduate Certificate in Intervention Specialist

College: Mary Frances Early College of Education

Department: Educational Psychology

Proposed Effective Term: Spring 2027

School/College:

- Head of the Department of Educational Psychology, Dr. Amy Reschly, 6/3/2026
- Mary Frances Early College of Education Associate Dean, Dr. Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett, 8/21/2026
- Mary Frances Early College of Education Dean, Dr. Denise Spangler, 6/3/2026
- Graduate School Interim Dean, Dr. Anne Shaffer, 9/18/2026