



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

University Council

October 9, 2026

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2026-2027

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Graduate School – Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett

Ex-Officio – Interim Provost Ron Walcott

Undergraduate Student Representative – Christa Patterson

Graduate Student Representative – Samuel Siaw

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal from the Mary Frances Early College of Education to terminate the Graduate Certificate in Preschool Special Education on the Athens campus only 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 DEACTIVATION OR TERMINATION OF AN ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Date: June 1, 2026

School/College: Mary Frances Early College of Education

Department/Division: Communication Sciences and Special Education

Program (Major and Degree): Graduate Certificate in Preschool Special Education

Which campus(es) offer this program? Athens, online

Deactivation or Termination? Termination of the Athens campus only

Proposed Effective Date: Fall 2027

Last date students will be admitted to this program: Spring 2026

Last date students will graduate from this program: Summer 2027

Program Abstract:

As a state endorsement and a UGA graduate certificate, this program is recognized by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) for advanced educator preparation. The Graduate Certificate in Preschool Special Education is a three-course sequence for a total of 9 credit hours with applied field experiences. This certificate can be added to a candidate's teaching certificate in elementary education or special education. Completion of this certificate for a certified teacher allows the completer to teach young children with disabilities at the preschool level in both inclusive and self-contained school settings.

1. State the reasons for terminating the program and provide copies of any relevant documents.

This proposal is to terminate the Graduate Certificate in Preschool Special Education on the Athens campus only. Over several academic years, interest in the program has shifted from in-person matriculation to interest in matriculation in the online option for the program. The online option is attractive to students who are also employed as teachers during the general school day and might not have the extra time needed to travel to the Athens campus for the course work. The online option can serve students from across the state of Georgia. The campus-based option for the program appears to be inconsistent with market demands for the program. All current students will be switched to the online option.

2. What will be done to minimize the impact of the termination of the program upon the personal and professional lives of the faculty and staff involved? Include specific information on: a) how faculty and staff will be notified of the termination, and b) how faculty and staff will be reallocated.

There are currently two students enrolled in the face-to-face degree on the Athens campus. They have been contacted and have agreed to move to the online program.

3. What will be done to ensure that termination of the program does not weaken other programs (graduate, undergraduate, or professional) for which the department may be responsible?

Faculty and staff have been reassigned to the B.S.Ed., M.A.T., Ed.D. and Ph.D. options within the program. The faculty have initiated this proposal. There is no change in staffing as the graduate program administrator will shift their work on admission and other graduate school processes from serving campus-based students to supporting the online students.

Documentation of Approval and Notification

Proposal: Proposal to terminate the Graduate Certificate in Preschool Special Education on the Athens campus only

College: Mary Frances Early College of Education

Department: Communication Sciences and Special Education

Proposed Effective Term: Fall 2027

School/College:

- Head of the Department of Communication Sciences and Special Education, Dr. Jennifer Brown, 6/1/2026
- 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, 6/1/2026
- Graduate School Interim Dean, Dr. Anne Shaffer, 9/18/2026