

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Arts in Teaching at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro requests authorization to establish a Master of Arts in Teaching degree program (CIP 13.1299).

Program Description

The School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro requests permission to establish a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree. This will result in a change of the type of degree that is offered for an existing degree program track associated with their Master of Arts in Education (M.Ed.). This request represents a structural change, not substantive, in that MAT degrees are designed to prepare candidates and prospective teachers at the graduate level for an initial teaching license.

Currently, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has a M.Ed. degree program with two established tracks: the Classroom Practice Track and the Teacher Leadership Track. The M.Ed. has proven to be a strong program with outstanding faculty and appropriate facilities; local availability of placements and market demand; and consistently high enrollment numbers. It is difficult, however, to analyze enrollment completion data for initial licensure candidates because both initial and advanced licensure exists within the same degree program. This requires manual identification within the enrollment data and each semester involves time-consuming efforts to identify the initial licensure candidates. The proposed MAT degree program will prepare students to enter the teaching field at the initial level only, alleviating the data management issue. With the establishment of the MAT degree, initial licensure candidates will be routed from the existing M.Ed program Classroom Practice Track to the MAT program. The M.Ed degree program will continue to exist and prepare candidates that are seeking an advanced teaching license.

The newly established MAT will have the same structure, content and requirements as the current M.Ed. Classroom Practice Track program, preparing candidates for initial licensure in Elementary Education; English as a Second Language; Middle Grades Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies; Secondary English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies; French, Latin and Spanish. The MAT concentrations will have the same outcome expectations, core content and extensive field experiences as the M.Ed. Classroom Practice Track concentrations, with adjustments as appropriate for the particular teaching content and grade level.

The current M.Ed. Classroom Practice Track program undergoes regular review and program improvement. The MAT will continue this self-study and revision process by monitoring candidates' successful progression through the program; students' professional knowledge, skills and dispositions during and at completion of the program; candidate, alumni and employers' satisfaction with candidates' professional performance; and enrollment and completion data.

Relevance to Institutional Mission and Strategic Plan

The MAT degree program will contribute to University of North Carolina at Greensboro's mission to be a learner-centered, accessible, and inclusive community fostering intellectual inquiry to prepare students for meaningful lives and engaged citizenship. Moreover, this request supports the University's emphasis on the value of responsibility in that the MAT helps respond to community needs. The MAT program will help to (1) attract increasing numbers of highly qualified students of all backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses (UNCG Strategic Plan 1.5); (2) develop programs to enhance leadership and professional expertise in response to the changing expectations for birth-12 education professionals (UNCG Strategic Plan 1.6); and (3) expand opportunities for graduate students to create new knowledge within their academic disciplines (UNCG Strategic Plan 3.1).

At an employment and economic level, there remains a significant need for teachers in North Carolina. As noted by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education in *Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listing 1990-91 through 2011-12* (March 2011), North Carolina continues to have critical needs in mathematics (grades 6-12), science (6-12) and special education even as schools have reduced staffing. It is the intention of the School of Education to continue their recruitment efforts, particularly in these high need areas. In fact, there have been a number of efforts at the campus to increase STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) offerings and recruitment, among them the National Science Foundation – GK-12 Award, National Science Foundation Noyce Scholarship Program – Project ExSEL, and the Cumulative Effective grant. As a result of these efforts, the School of Education anticipates increased enrollments in both the MAT and M.Ed. degree programs.

Resource Implications

No new resources or facilities will be needed to offer this program.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's requests permission to establish a Master of Arts in Teaching degree program (CIP 13.1299) as described above.