

## **ATTACHMENT A: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION ON UCCS'S PROPOSED BACHELOR OF INNOVATION IN INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

This supplemental information is unrelated to the proposed Bachelor of Innovation in Inclusive Early Childhood Education (BI: ECE) degree's fit with UCCS's statutory role and mission and educator preparation statutory performance measures. The following is summarized from UCCS's proposal:

### **EVIDENCE OF NEED**

Previously in Colorado, students interested in a career in education were required to first complete a Bachelor of Arts degree in a content field, generally in liberal arts. Licensure was obtained through a post-baccalaureate program in education. In spring 2012, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education policy was changed so that students are now able to pursue a bachelor's degree in early childhood and/or elementary education.

The target market for this program includes:

- First-time UCCS students seeking a bachelor degree and licensure in early childhood education and early childhood special education. It is anticipated that most of these students will enter the program as first-time freshmen and pursue a traditional program. The Departments of Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education have received frequent inquiries from current and potential students about the existence of both early childhood and early childhood special education programs here at UCCS. In 2010 there were 18 recorded inquiries and in 2011, 27 inquiries were made. One of the BI authors presented the proposal to the superintendents of the 13 districts that comprise the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association where it generated considerable interest.
- Students transferring from community colleges or other universities. These students may have completed many of the general education requirements but will not have the innovation core. College of Education (COE) is collaborating with Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC) to create an articulation agreement that allows transfer students to continue their degree in their junior year; however, the innovation core requirement may mean students will need to complete an extra 1-2 semesters to complete the BI. In the College of Education's efforts to develop an articulation agreement with PPCC, we have learned that the students enrolled in PPCC's early childhood program are seeking four-year universities to attend to complete their bachelor's in early childhood education. UCCS expects to be the local choice for the students coming out of the PPCC early childhood program. In an effort to determine interest in both the four year degree in Inclusive Early Childhood Education (IECE) and the opportunity for dual licensure, a survey was recently conducted targeting Pikes Peak Community College students enrolled in Early Childhood Education programs. Of the 34 respondents, an overwhelming number reported being interested in the four year IECE degree program with thirty out of 34 (88%) answering "yes" to this question. When queried about their interest in licensure plus an endorsement, again, 30 of the respondents (88%)

reported interest in this opportunity. A further indication of serious interest was the response to the final question for more information about the program. Over half of the respondents (n=18) provided their contact information so that they could receive more information.

- Teachers that are currently working in the field of early child care or early childhood education and need to complete the degree in order to obtain/maintain their status as a teacher in an early childhood setting. The authors also met with members of the Alliance for Kids - El Paso County's Early Childhood Council and received enthusiastic support as this program would directly impact their centers and teachers. Some centers require their teachers to have a bachelor's degree in order for the center to be qualified for national accreditation while Head Start centers require a large percentage of their teachers to have a four-year degree.
- UCCS enrollees who are undeclared or changing their major to the BI.

Total student enrollment projected for the first five years is 103 students. Table 1 indicates an enrollment of 20 students the first year then uses an attrition rate of 20% in each of the next two years (from freshman to sophomore and from sophomore to junior). For the cohort's next two years, the attrition rate is projected at 0%. In other words, of the 20 students entering as freshmen, we project 13 will remain to complete the program. By Year 5 of implementation, the anticipated cohort size is 40 students – double Year 1's cohort size.

## **DUPLICATION**

The BI in Inclusive Early Childhood Education is one of a small, but growing number of programs nationally that has an 'inclusive' focus. There is increasing evidence that educator preparation programs that prepare all teachers to teach all children are more effective than those that include just a few special education courses to supplement "the main preparation."

In Colorado, University of Northern Colorado offers a baccalaureate program at the Lowry Campus that is a residency teacher licensure program for students employed in area schools as paraprofessionals in the morning and attending academic classes in the afternoon. The BI differs from the UNC-L program by not requiring students to be employed as paraprofessionals, having an innovation core focus, and preparing teachers for dual licensure/endorsement. The University of Colorado Denver has also proposed a new BA in Teaching, Learning, and Development, which UCCS has endorsed. That program provides three tracks (early childhood, elementary, and special education) that students may choose. This program differs from the BI in that students do not have an innovation core and students have the option of choosing one of the three tracks.

There are no other programs on campus or across the Pikes Peak region that contain the specific elements and address the same needs as the proposed BI in Inclusive Early Childhood Education.