Enclosure #1B

The University of North Carolina
Program Review and Recommendations Form

Date: 11/21/08

Constituent University: University of North Carolina Wilmington

CIP Discipline Number: 131209

Exact Title of the Program: Education of Young Children

Exact Degree Abbreviation: B.A.

1. **The accompanying guidelines list questions about centrality to mission, quality, faculty and physical resources, demand, costs, duplication, and consequences of deletion. After considering those issues, which of the following does the campus recommend?**

   Retain the program in its present configuration with specific steps to be taken to increase enrollments.

2. **As more programs, certificates, licensure programs, and courses become available online through the University of North Carolina Online would you be willing to consider online courses or programs from another campus to meet the needs in this program?**

   Not at this time. Would you be interested in exploring a joint online offering with one or more other campuses to meet the needs this program is currently addressing?

   Not at this time. Would you be interested in utilizing an online degree program or courses from another campus to meet the needs this program is currently addressing?

3. **Explain the above responses—either the rationale for leaving the program in its current configuration or specific steps proposed to increase enrollments or pursue other options.**

1. Introduction

The B.A. in Education of Young Children (EYC) program is offered in the Department of Education of Young Children and Special Education in the Watson School of Education. The degree provides initial B-K licensure. The program also provides routes to add-on licensure in B-K and Preschool for post-baccalaureate candidates.

2. Centrality to University's Mission

The University of North Carolina Wilmington's mission includes the enrichment of the quality of life and education in our region. The university is committed to providing life-long learning opportunities, assisting with the improvement of public education through effective recruitment, training and retention of teachers, and enhancing the personal, cultural, and economic health of the region. North Carolina currently faces a critical shortage of teachers including those who teach at the B-K level. UNCW's close proximity to Camp Lejeune Marine Base provides a unique opportunity for providing educational services to veterans and their families. With the relocation of soldiers from across the country to Camp Lejeune over the next 5 years there is an expected need for increased B-K services and thus certified B-K teachers to serve the children of veterans moving to this area. UNCW's EYC program provides an accessible means for training and certifying these education professionals.

3. Quality of the Program

The EYC program was included in the joint SDPI and NCATE review in 2006. The program underwent rigorous evaluation and was rated positively. The program faculty collect and analyzes data from multiple stakeholders including, students, public school partners, and private B-K agencies to continually monitor the success of the program and make revisions as necessary. Teacher intern performance ratings by university supervisors and public school partners show that the program provides exemplary preparation in understanding and implementing high quality instruction that meets all INTASC performance standards. Students report that their preparation in B-K specific performance competencies is exceptional in preparing them to work with diverse student populations and in serving the needs of students with disabilities. Public school administrators and teachers rate the program positively and report high satisfaction with the amount of professional growth observed over the course of students' field experiences and internship. Currently, the program is "re-visioning" its content and delivery to align with the new NC Professional Teaching Standards as well as 21st Century skills and dispositions.

4. Faculty Involved

Three full-time EYC faculty teach in the B.A. in Education of Young Children program. The teaching assignment of one of these full-time faculty members is split between the EYC program and the Special Education program, further emphasizing the importance given by the program to early intervention for B-K students with special needs. All of the faculty hold doctorates in the appropriate field and have graduate faculty status. Faculty in other Watson School of Education programs teach the foundation courses taken by students in this program. The average teaching load for research-active faculty is 6 courses per academic year with a requirement that faculty members maintain ongoing,

significant engagement with public and/or private educational partners.

5. Facilities/Equipment

The program is housed in the Education Building on the campus of UNCW. The facility is state-of-the-art. All classrooms are equipped with smart technology and there are, specially designed classrooms for distance education, a literacy laboratory, and on-site curriculum materials center. One classroom, designed for EYC courses, provides age-specific materials and curricula for students to use during the course of their program. The facilities and equipment available for faculty and students are appropriate for the program.

5. Demand

The B.A. in Education of Young Children program was established in 1995. The program is consistently rated highly by both students and employers. The program maintains Early Childhood Education Associate in Applied Science articulation agreements with 25 community colleges across the state. These community college partnerships are imperative to the growth and enrollment of the EYC program. In particular, the UNCW EYC program is developing a distance education program in collaboration with Sampson Community College (SCC). SCC estimates that a cohort of approximately 30 Early Childhood AA students currently exists. These students have indicated interest in completing their B.A. degree in EYC through UNCW when the distance education program is established. SCC also reports an increased demand for B-K professionals in their area and thus an ongoing need for well-trained and certified B-K teachers. The UNCW EYC distance education program will serve to fulfill this ongoing need for the area. In addition to the need in Sampson County, there will also be an increase need for B-K professionals in the Camp Lejeune area of Onslow County. Once the distance education program at SCC is successfully implemented, the program will have a model to potentially replicate in Onslow County and other partnership districts in need of this program. These partnerships will significantly increase program enrollment as well as teacher productivity.

6. Costs

The cost of the EYC program currently consists of 2.5 full-time faculty salaries as well as the cost of facilities to maintain office and classroom space for the program. Foundation courses are taught by faculty from other departments in the Watson School of Education and serve all education students. Thus, the cost of serving EYC students in foundations courses is negligible. If the program was discontinued, the Department of Education of Young Children and Special Education would still exist as enrollment in UNCW's two special education undergraduate programs maintain adequate enrollment and productivity numbers. However, the EYC program is unique to UNCW and the costs of discontinuing this program far outweigh the benefits especially given the increased need for B-K teachers in the area and the developing distance education program which will serve this need.

7. Duplication

The EYC program compliments the other undergraduate programs offered through the Watson School of Education, in particular the B.A. in Elementary Education. Both programs prepare and certify teachers to work at the Kindergarten level. The program does not duplicate any other undergraduate programs offered on the UNCW campus. Currently, the faculty of the EYC program are working to provide greater accessibility through the development of a distance education program. The program has a unique advantage for recruiting new students and increasing enrollment in the area because of a strong and long-standing partnership with 11 school districts in the southeast and a commitment to actively collaborate with community college partners in the area. The ongoing collaboration with these school districts and community colleges provides enhanced visibility of the program and frequent opportunities for prospective students to be actively recruited.

8. Critical Mass

The Department of Early Childhood and Special Education would continue to exist if the program was eliminated. There would be a significant negative impact on other undergraduate programs if the EYC program was eliminated because students from this program provide increased enrollment for shared courses offered by these other Watson School of Education programs. In addition, the elimination of this program would nullify the current Early Childhood Education articulation agreements between UNCW and 25 community colleges across the state.

9. Recommendation about the Program

The EYC program should be continued as a separate degree program at UNCW to provide the training and certification needed to meet the increasing demand for B-K teachers in the area. A distance education program is being developed to meet this increased demand. The expectation is that the distance education program will significantly increase enrollment and teacher productivity. Once successfully implemented at Sampson Community College, the EYC distance education program can be replicated in collaboration with other community colleges in the area and thus sustain satisfactory enrollment and teacher production.

4. Department contact person:

Hank Weddington
weddingtonh@uncw.edu
910-962-3361