Regional Collaboration to Enhance Pre-K-3 & Early Childhood Special Education Teacher Education
University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and University of Wisconsin – River Falls

Expanded Early Childhood Teacher Education Opportunities in West Central Wisconsin

- A University of Wisconsin System Cooperative Teacher Education Program in Early Childhood Education

- The System campuses at Eau Claire and River Falls are collaborating to improve the preparation of entry level early childhood teachers.

- Students enrolled on each of the campuses can now expand their preparation for teaching young children. Students who choose to do so can now add on entry level licenses in either general education or special education.

- University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire (UW-Eau Claire) Students admitted to the Special Education Program in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) can earn the Pre-K-3 general education license through the University of Wisconsin – River Falls. Students enrolled in the UW-River Falls’ Pre-K & Elementary Education Program can earn the ECSE license through UW-Eau Claire.

- Advantages:
  - Improved preparation for teaching children with a wide range of abilities
  - Increased employment opportunities in agencies serving children (birth to eight years of age) and their families,

- Very young children (CA's birth to eight) who are at-risk for or disabled must be served and educated to the maximum extent possible in environments that they would be in if they were not disabled with their typically developing peers (Inclusive, natural, Least Restrictive).
- Inclusive early childhood education programs are those that effectively address the needs of learners at-risk for or disabled in general education or natural environments such as homes, child care, early education, family resource, Early Head Start, Head Start and Early Childhood Special Education environments, and
- More opportunities for career long learning, including advanced studies and expanded career opportunities.
1. Rationale

1.1 Children at-risk for or disabled benefit greatly from early intervention and education programs.
1.2 Federal and state laws require that county and local school agencies provide intervention and education for these children starting at birth.
1.3 The early intervention and education programs and services must be delivered by teachers and related services personnel that meet State certification/license requirements.
1.4 These children must be provided services in environments which are described as natural and least restrictive to the maximum extent appropriate.
1.5 This requires that teachers in general (Pre-K-3) and special education (Birth to Eight) are prepared to work collaboratively with each other, parents and related service personnel to provide intervention and education services.
1.6 General education teachers require additional preparation to meet the needs of children with disabilities that will be enrolled in their classrooms and special education teachers require preparation to work with the general education teachers in programs that blend early education and early childhood special education interventions.
1.7 As a result of recent research, public policy, laws, and regulations have changed to require more inclusion of very young children at-risk or disabled in general education programs.
1.8 Community, local education, and county programs are employing teachers that possess general Pre-K-3 and special education early childhood certifications.
1.9 More and more teaching positions are requiring teachers to have both certificates.
1.10 While the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire has a long and positive record of preparing strong entry level teachers for the birth to eight population of children at risk for or disabled and the University of Wisconsin – River Falls has an equally long and positive history of preparing strong entry level teachers for same age children without disabilities, neither program offers both teacher education opportunities.
1.11 Faculty on both campuses will provide the needed education so that students enrolled in the Pre-K-9 program at UW-River Falls can earn the ECSE license through UW-Eau Claire and students in the ECSE (Birth to eight) program at UW-Eau Claire will be able to earn the Pre-K-3 certification endorsement through UW-River Falls.
1.12 This collaborative teacher education program will: 1. prepare teachers that are better prepared to meet the needs of changing children’s and families’ needs, 2. provide graduates of the teacher education programs with more employment opportunities, 3. make it easier for administrators to hire teachers that can address the changing needs of their communities, and 4. make it possible for UW-Eau Claire and UW-River Falls to strengthen teacher education programs without creating competing programs in the region or having to make additional financial commitments.

2. Institutional Approval Process

2.1 Each campus works through appropriate curriculum procedures to have the courses approved for undergraduate and/or graduate credit for students in their respective undergraduate and graduate programs.
2.2 Each campus describes the collaborative program and lists their own courses in campus catalogues, web pages, and other registration materials.

2.3 Students who have completed the teacher education programs and earned Pre-K-6 or Early Childhood Special education (608 or 609) licenses may enroll in the partner institution to earn the additional certification either in undergraduate or graduate credits. These credits when appropriate may be used to satisfy re-certification requirements and/or completion of graduate studies leading to Masters Degrees.

3. Registration, Payment, and Financial Aid Coordination

3.1 Each institution will designate a faculty program coordinator who will be responsible for insuring that his or her own Admissions and Registrar’s Offices, as well as the secondary institution is fully informed prior to the start of each term—with course offerings; students’ names, ID, status, and courses to be enrolled for each student.

3.2 Students will register with the institution providing the desired course/s.

3.3 Students would continue as admitted, degree-seeking students with their primary (“home”) institution, but would need to file an admission application and register as “specials,” e.g., non-degree seekers, when taking supplemental courses at the secondary (“teaching”) institution.

3.4 The Registrar of the campus offering the desired course/s will be responsible for contact with the other institution’s Registrar’s Office to initiate procedures for that term related to the transfer of student records.

3.5 Students outside of the plateau will pay applicable tuition and fees to the institution offering the course (per credit).

3.6 Courses delivered via distance education may carry an additional D.E. delivery charge. Students will be responsible for all D.E. fees and special course fees to the offering institution.

3.7 Payment of any pre-registration fees will be coordinated between the Registrars and Business Offices.

3.8 Students eligible for financial aid would require a consortium agreement, initiated by the student at their primary institution. One month before each semester begins, the sending institution program coordinator/s will provide Financial Aid with a list of students participating in the program for the upcoming semester.

3.9 We will agree through summer 2005 to a prorata tuition distribution for full-time students in the plateau—e.g., students are charged a single full-time rate when credits total 12 to 18 during the academic year and 6 to 9 credits during the summer—regardless of funding source for the course (whether the source is PR or GPR). The Bursar of the campus offering the desired course/s will be responsible for contact with the other institution’s Bursar to initiate procedures for that term related to the transfer of funds.

3.10 The faculty program coordinators will work with Admissions, the Registrar, the Bursar, and the Director of Financial Aid to insure continuous improvement in the coordination of services.

3.11 Students who enroll in courses offered through continuing education, extension or outreach offices from partner programs follow the registration, billing and other student service requirements of the continuing education, extension or outreach offices on the campus that is offering the courses.
4. Guidelines for Course Design and Delivery

4.1 Courses will be offered through asynchronous web-sites, distance education and traditional campus sites during the academic year and summer session calendars.

4.2 Required courses will be scheduled in such a way as to make it possible for students to complete studies leading to endorsement for certification from partner institutions in a three year period.

4.3 The course schedules for the three year cycle will be distributed by the campus coordinators to their respective students.

4.4 Requirements and grading procedures employed by the institution offering the courses will be used.

4.5 Students must meet program admission, progress and exit requirements adopted by their home institution which have been approved by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

4.6 Partners will share a summary of course assessment data with participating schools on an annual basis.

4.7 Endorsing institutions maintain enrollment information, collect class lists/student information, record grades and endorse students from the participating program for appropriate teacher certification.

5. Courses

5.1 Students who meet admission standards for the Pre-K-6 or Early Childhood Special Education Programs at their home institution will be required to complete studies leading to respective teacher endorsement programs that have been approved by appropriate bodies at the participating home institution.

5.2 Students admitted to the teacher education program in UW-Eau Claire’s special education: early childhood who elect to participate in the dual certification program will be required to complete the following UW-River Falls’ courses or equivalents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UW-River Falls Courses</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Semester</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Pre-Kindergarten (TED)</td>
<td>- Developmental Learning</td>
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<td>- Infant &amp; Toddler</td>
<td>- Kindergarten</td>
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<td>- Student Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervision and Management</td>
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Proposed Summer Course Inquiry through Science and Social Studies (Grades 1-3)
5.3 Students admitted to the teacher education program in UW-River Falls' Pre-K-6 who elect to participate in the dual certification program will be required to complete the following UW-Eau Claire's' courses or equivalents:

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<th>Fall Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Methods in Early Intervention (SPED 421)</td>
<td>- Measurement in Early Intervention (SPED 403)</td>
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<td>- Problems Teaching Children 0-9 (SPED 425)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Curriculum &amp; Methods for Students with Mild Disabilities (SPED 331)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Methods for Students with Learning Disabilities (SPED 431)</td>
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**Summer Session**
- SPED 331
- SPED 403*
- SPED 421*
- SPED 426*
- SPED 431

*Courses offered during the summer session may be offered through extension/outreach.

6. Time Line
6.1 This agreement to offer studies leading to UW-River Falls' endorsement of UW-Eau Claire's students for Pre-K-3 certification and UW-Eau Claire's endorsement of UW-River Falls' students for Early Childhood Special Education (809) certification begins with the Summer Session of 2004.

6.2 UW- River Falls and UW- Eau Claire will meet at least annually during the Spring Semester to assure quality, to suggest adjustments or improvements, and to determine the viability of continuing the partnership.

6.3 This agreement should be considered a pilot, which will be reviewed after two years of operation to assess its continued viability; and/or make alterations as needed.

Attachments:
- Study plans and course schedules
- Course Descriptions
- Draft brochure
Regional Collaboration to Enhance Pre-K-3 Teacher Education
University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and University of Wisconsin – River Falls

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