

Fitchburg State University
Educational Studies Proposal
Submitted for Board of Trustee Approval on August 21, 2018

Introduction

Faculty and staff from Fitchburg State University began work on the Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies degree in the fall of 2016. The process began with a discussion of non-licensure education programs, documented student interest in working outside of a classroom setting and clear gap in the department's educational offerings. A committee was formed to further the program development. This committee interviewed students and potential employers, completed a market analysis and reviewed similar curriculums at other universities and colleges. Guided by the education faculty and with the support of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the program was approved by governance as a new major within the Education Department in April 2018.

Purpose and Goals

The Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies presents an opportunity for students to examine broad educational topics from a number of diverse perspectives. This comprehensive program offers specific interdisciplinary courses and an internship that will bridge educational concepts and principles in political, historical, theoretical, and social contexts. In addition, students in the Educational Studies program will acquire critical understandings of learning and the sociological culture of the classroom, educational institutions, and society. Graduates of the Educational Studies non-licensure program will have a broad view of education necessary for career paths that require a background in formal and informal educational settings.

This Educational Studies program would serve students in multiple ways. First, candidates who wish to study education, but do not want to be a classroom teacher will have the opportunity to work in the field in a focused, practical, and positive program. Secondly, this program will serve students who struggle with passing the required Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). Rather than dropping their Education major and adding it as a minor, students can continue to study and remain in an education major. Finally, this interdisciplinary program would complement many majors on campus and can serve as a second major to any student at Fitchburg State University.

Need for the Proposed Program

The field of Education encompasses a broad fund of knowledge and skills located within a variety of socio-cultural contexts. In addition to teachers, educational professionals and stakeholders consist of lawmakers, lawyers, teachers, tutors, advocates, professors, paraprofessionals, etc. Although the focus of our Education Department has been on training licensed classroom teachers, there are multiple paths to employment working with children and adults utilizing an educational background outside of the classroom.

There is a strong and varied demand for graduates with education-related and instructionally based skills in school support contexts, industry, media, and human services. Positions in behavioral health, children's camps, business personnel professional development, museum programs, school program administration, child care referrals, children's media design, and publishing, for example, all require educational background but not necessarily the classroom teaching license. Our visits with local

agencies, such as the Fitchburg Art Museum, indicate they would be interested in sponsoring internships for our students.

Currently there is candidate demand from within our teacher licensure programs. Many candidates have expressed their desire to study education but they do not want to be a classroom teacher. In addition, some have expressed an interest in working with people with disabilities outside of a classroom setting. A third population of candidates in our programs are those who struggle to pass the licensure exams (MTELs). Currently these candidates drop their Education major, and add it as a minor and complete an Interdisciplinary Studies major or pick a new major – depending on credits completed.

According to Education Department data, 64% of our students complete their program and teach in Massachusetts public schools. Many of those students who do not complete the program abandon their interest in education and either shift to another major or leave the University. Our internal data, based on a 2014 cohort of 501 students, shows that 441 of those students enrolled in their sophomore year of education (an 88% retention rate), but also shows that by junior year 57% (n=441) have left the education program – of that 90% go to another degree and that 10% leave the university. Our goal is to open an opportunity for these students to stay in an education related career. Although students leave our teaching programs for many reasons, the majority of students leave due to their struggle to pass the MTELs or a realization that they prefer an educational setting outside of the regular classroom.

Curriculum

Please see the attached proposed curriculum for details. Graduates from the Educational Studies program will demonstrate competency in the following concepts, practices and skills:

1. Analytical understanding of broad educational concepts from a number of critical perspectives
2. Knowledge of curriculum theory and design for all including those with disabilities and English Language Learners.
3. Educational theory and practices of key concepts and thinkers in the field in political, historical, and social contexts.
4. Critical understandings of learning in relation to the child and his/her family.
5. The sociological culture of the classroom, educational institutions, and society as it pertains to learning.
6. Educational laws, regulations, and accountability of education in a local and global context.
7. Role of educational stakeholders, community engagement, and the collaboration among professionals to foster positive outcomes for all students.

Faculty

A core group of existing faculty will initially teach in the curriculum. Full-time faculty in the department of Education are qualified to teach the core education courses. There will be dedicated resources to supervise internships and hire adjunct faculty if needed.

Students

We anticipate that enrollment in the first year of the major will be 20-30 students. This includes first-year students, external transfers, transfers from within the Education Department, and transfers from other majors within the University. As Fitchburg State University markets the program, we expect the five-year student enrollment to increase. Although private institutions in Massachusetts offer an Educational Studies major, four-year public colleges and universities do not.

Administration and Operation

The major in Educational Studies will be housed within the Education Department. Primarily drawing on faculty from the department to teach major core curriculum courses, the program will be supported by an existing administrative assistant, and the field placement coordinator for education. Program oversight (scheduling, faculty hiring, personnel actions, student recruitment and advisement, budgeting, program assessment, etc.) will include the chair and faculty of the Education Department, as well as the Dean of Education, offices of the Provost, Admissions, the Registrar, Human Resources, Institutional Research and Planning and more.

Resources

Resources to support the B.S. in Educational Studies are already in place at the university. The program requires a limited resource input as it makes use of current courses and structures, including the use of the education placement coordinator to organize and oversee the internship process. There will be decided resources to supervise internships and hire adjunct faculty as needed.

Budget

<i>One Time/ Start Up Costs</i>	<i>Cost Categories</i>	<i>Annual Expenses</i>			
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	Full Time Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$20,502	\$27,951	\$35,624	\$43,526
	Staff	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
	General Administrative Costs	\$2,080	\$2,652	\$3,242	\$3,849
	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions	\$1,000	\$1,030	\$1,061	\$1,093
	Facilities/Space/Equipment	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
	Field & Clinical Resources	\$1,000	\$1,030	\$1,061	\$1,093
	Marketing	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
	Other (Professional Development)	\$750	\$773	\$796	\$820
	TOTALS	\$25,332	\$33,436	\$41,784	\$50,381

<i>One Time/Start-Up Support</i>		<i>Annual Income</i>			
		<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Year 4</i>
	<i>Revenue Sources</i>				
	Grants				
	Tuition and Fees	\$158,188	\$280,460	\$289,332	\$298,012
	Departmental				
	Reallocated Funds				
	Other (specify)				
	TOTALS	\$158,188	\$280,460	\$289,332	\$298,012

We anticipate needing no new hires, and the addition of up to 4 adjuncts for 3 credits each per year to offset the workload of full-time faculty who will be doing the internship supervision or teach new courses. Other staff and administrative responsibilities will be assumed by existing personnel. Some funds have been added to pay a program area chair, if there is a demand.

The program, will share resources with the existing education department. However, as we move forward, we will need to add some professional development in the area of general and employer based education. The library holdings in the area of corporate training will also need to be reinforced. The financial support needed for these has been included throughout the years of the budget.

Please note, anticipated revenue projections were generated using current tuition and fee rates. If enrollments meet expectations, and we fully anticipate that they will, we project revenue exceeding total costs, including start-up support, by the end of Year 1 of the program and continuing.

Conclusion

We believe that the B.S. in Educational Studies is clearly aligned with the mission of Fitchburg State University. Not only does it work to serve the needs of communities in the Commonwealth, but it blends educational pedagogy with a liberal arts & sciences core and creates a unique workforce that can bring quality educational program to organizations outside of public school education. Our faculty have sufficient experience and the resources necessary to offer a program that will meet national and regional needs for education specialists for museums, businesses and other organizations in need of education specialist. We look forward to submitting a final application forthwith. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The program has received internal approvals from Education Curriculum Committee, the All College Committee and the President.

It still requires approvals from the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees which would then permit us to forward to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education for final approval.

We therefore respectfully request the Board's approval of the Fitchburg State University Education Studies major.