

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION DEGREE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

WHEREAS, the existing master of arts degree in educational leadership and policy studies has two distinct tracks – educational leadership for K-12 educators and administrators, and higher education for student affairs practitioners in a collegiate setting; the two tracks share no coursework, faculty, or students; and

WHEREAS, a separate degree in higher education allows for meaningful and important system-level tracking of applications, enrollments, individual student progress and completions, and other evidence used for program evaluation and improvement, which is not possible in the current context of a merged degree; and

WHEREAS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) staff requested that separation of the programs be accomplished through a “new” degree program proposal because the areas of emphasis lacked the specified level of shared course content required for a “spin off” proposal; and

WHEREAS, the proposed master of arts in education degree in higher education already benefits from a regional and national reputation, engendering a significant number of inquiries and applications, a 100% placement rate upon graduation, and expressed student satisfaction from students and alums; and

WHEREAS, establishment of a separate master of arts in education degree in higher education does not require new institutional or School of Education resources to sustain current and proposed student enrollment;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the master of arts in education degree in higher education be approved effective spring 2014.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the resolution to approve the master of arts degree in higher education be approved.

June 3, 2013

Virginia Tech Degree Proposal
Master of Arts in Education in Higher Education
(CIP: 13.0406)

Type of degree action (circle one): New Spinoff **Revision** Discontinuance

Program description

This proposal requests to establish a standalone Master of Arts in Education (M.A.Ed.) degree in Higher Education, a track that has been in place for many years within the existing degree, M.A.Ed. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. The sponsoring unit is the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies within the School of Education in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at Virginia Tech. Once approved by SCHEV, the new degree title would be effective Spring 2014 and graduates would be awarded the renamed Higher Education degree at the May 2014 commencement.

The proposed M.A.Ed. in Higher Education (HED) is a 48-hour program that provides entry-level professionals with the essential knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for a wide variety of student affairs positions in higher education. Graduates will be eligible for employment in positions at colleges and universities in residence life, student activities, student success, academic advising, new student orientation, leadership development, multicultural affairs, and career services, among others. The existing track enjoys a positive regional and national reputation, a strong applicant pool for each entering cohort, and a 100% placement rate upon graduation. It is highly integrated with the larger university community, offering students a wealth of real-world student affairs experiences for their graduate assistantships, internships, and practica. Students generally enroll full-time and complete the program in two years, including summer enrollment.

Curriculum summary

The M.A.Ed. curriculum consists of 48 credit hours in Educational and Professional Foundations, Research, a Concentration area, and Cognate studies. There are no new courses in the HED curriculum; all courses are currently being taught.

Educational and Professional Foundations (21 hours required of all students)

EDHE 5304 Student Development in Higher Education (3 credits)

EDHE 5314 Theory & Appraisal of College Student Development (3 credits)

EDHE 5334 The College Student & the College Environment (3 credits)

EDHE 6054 College & University Administration (3 credits)

EDHE 6064 Higher Education in the United States (3 credits)

EDHE 6074 Higher Education Law (3 credits)

EDHE 6114 Staffing Practices (3 credits)

Research (6 hours required of all students)

EDHE 6424 Institutional Effectiveness & Outcomes Assessment (3 credits)

EDHE 5604 Seminar: Assessment in Student Affairs (3 credits)

Concentration (Total of 15 hours required)

EDHE 5284 Practicum (6 credits required of all students)

EDHE 5974 Independent Study (3 hours required of all students)

Students choose 6 credit hours from the following list:

EDHE 5614 Internship (variable credits)

EDHE 5604 Seminar: (variable topics; 3 credits)

EDCO 5214 Theories of Counseling & Consultation (3 credits)

EDCO 5224 Counseling Techniques (3 credits)

EDCO 5234 Group Counseling (3 credits)

EDCO 5244 Counseling Diverse Populations (3 credits)

EDCO 5254 Career Development & Information Services (3 credits)

Cognate (6 hours required)

Six hours of study in a discipline outside one's major area of study and normally outside of the area of education, for example Sociology, Human Development, Psychology, Management, or Instructional Technology. Students select cognate courses in consultation with their advisor.

Relevance to university mission and strategic planning

The Higher Education (HED) program participates in the university and college missions through its focus on preparing professionals and leaders for postsecondary education who use and produce high-impact research as part of their practice and who are committed to service in both professional and personal contexts. This new M.A.Ed. Higher Education degree also supports two of the primary goals of Virginia Tech's 2012-1018 strategic plan, *A Plan for a New Horizon*: (1) to grow graduate enrollment by an additional 1000 students over the next six years, and (2) to create and sustain environments for educational and research programs that support innovated, high-quality, and high-impact research.

Justification for the proposed program

In the past 25 years, a sea of change in the life of faculty has expanded the role of student affairs administrators and situated their work at the heart of the instructional mission: student retention and success. While faculty still deliver instruction, student affairs administrators increasingly are responsible for academic success by integrating the curricular and the co-curricular experiences of students.

Well-trained student affairs professionals play a critical role in addressing some of the most pressing issues facing higher education at this time, particularly issues related to serving a more diverse student body and student retention and

degree completion. Access and success issues for first-generation, low-income students, ethnic minorities and immigrants, returning veterans, and displaced workers present profound challenges for institutional leaders. Effective policies and programs need to be carefully crafted, based on evidence, and continuously evaluated. Student affairs graduate programs have addressed the growing diversity of students enrolling in postsecondary education by expanding the theoretical underpinnings that aspiring professionals must master to help students succeed. Both coursework and practical experiences prepare students to help institutions address the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly diverse student body.

There is convincing evidence that the work of student affairs professionals directly contributes to student retention, particularly in a residential setting. In summarizing a vast body of research on student retention, Tinto (2012) articulates the critical role of student engagement in retention as follows:

The more students are academically and socially engaged with other people on campus, especially with faculty and student peers, the more likely (other things being equal) they will stay and graduate from college. During the critical first year, involvement serves as a foundation upon which subsequent student and faculty affiliations are built and academic and social memberships established. This appears to be true for all students, majority and minority alike, and applies even after controlling for background attributes. (p. 64)

Student retention results not just from involvement in extracurricular activities but also from an engaged and supportive academic environment. Academic advising, service learning, peer study groups and mentoring programs, residential and non-residential learning communities, orientation and bridge programs, first-year seminars and study skills courses, and a host of related academic support services are designed, offered, and evaluated by student affairs professionals.

The need for student affairs expertise has never been greater. If students from all types of backgrounds are to succeed in college, they need the knowledge and skills that student affairs professionals bring to bear on the educational process. The Virginia Tech M.A.Ed. program is designed to produce today's student affairs practitioners and tomorrow's higher education leaders.

Since the Higher Education track is already in operation, actual applicant data amply document interest in the program and support enrollment projections of 11 new master's students per cohort. Over the last five years, there have been four to five applications for each available slot in the master's cohort. Moreover, the existing track has an excellent record of placement: all graduates in recent years have secured employment by July 1. Graduates are employed by a wide variety

of institutional types (liberal arts colleges, community colleges, master's and doctoral institutions, non-profit educational programs) throughout the country. Virginia Tech also benefits by hiring one or more HED graduates annually.

Resource Needs/Savings

This is an existing program. No new resources or additional reallocation are required to sustain the program at the proposed level.

RESOURCE	ESTIMATED COSTS (use NA if not applicable)
Faculty	NA
Administrative Staff	NA
Graduate Teaching/ Graduate Research Assistants	NA
Space	NA
Library	NA
Equipment	NA
Other	NA

References

Tinto, V. (2012). *Completing college: Rethinking institutional action*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.



M.A.Ed. and Ph.D. in Higher Education

Joan B. Hirt, Professor and Interim Director, School of Education,
College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences

Academic Affairs Committee – June 3, 2013

Background

- College/School reorganization
- School of Education degree realignment initiative
 - Consultation with SCHEV, VT Registrar, NCATE (accreditor)
 - Three stage process:
 - Stage 1: Degree discontinuances (2011-2012)
 - Stage 2: Educational Leadership degrees (2012-2013)
 - Stage 3: Learning Sciences degrees (2013-14)

Educational Leadership current status:

- 2 programs share M.A.Ed. And Ph.D. degrees
- PK-12 program: prepares school leaders (principals, superintendents)
 - Focus on personnel management, facilities, school law, curriculum development
- Higher education program: prepares college/university leaders, policy analysts, faculty
 - Focus on policy, finance, organizational management, student learning

Proposed change

- Retain M.A.Ed. and Ph.D. in Educational Leadership
- New M.A.Ed. and Ph.D. in Higher Education

Demand

- 19% job growth rate predicted for 2010-2020, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Kiplinger's *13 Careers for the Next Decade*
- <130 Higher Education Degree programs in United States
- 2 Higher Education Degree programs in Virginia
- Demonstrated demand for admission

Program Outcomes

- 95% on-time graduation
- 100% job offers by July 15
- Alumni employed in:
 - 34 states
 - 4 countries outside of the United States

Graduate and Alumni Careers**Presidents**

- Big Sandy Community and Technical College, President Emerita
- Millennium University, President

Policy Leaders

- Jack C. Kemp Foundation, Higher Education Program Associate
- Maryland Higher Education Commission, Director of Outreach and Grants Management
- National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, Research Associate
- UC Berkley, Center for Studies in Higher Education
- Virginia Community College System, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development Services

University Leaders

- Arizona State University, Academic Success Coordinator
- Brevard Community College, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Success
- Coastal Georgia College, Assistant Vice President for Student Services
- CUNY Potsdam, Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Emory University, Senior Associate Dean & Director of Campus Life External Relations
- North Carolina State University, Director of Assessment for College of Engineering
- UCLA Foundation, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Vice President for Finance/Treasury
- University of Virginia, Executive Director of Career Services
- University of Wisconsin, Madison, Assistant Vice Provost for Student Diversity and Academic Excellence
- Winthrop University, Associate Dean of Students

Faculty Leaders

- Atlantic Coast Community College, Dean and Professor
- East Tennessee State University, Assistant Professor of Postsecondary and Private Sector Leadership
- Florida Atlantic University, Professor of Higher Education Leadership
- Indiana State University, Associate Dean
- Marywood University, Assistant Professor of Higher Education Administration
- Ohio University, Professor of Counseling and Higher Education
- Rowan University, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership
- The Ohio State University, Associate Professor of Student Affairs and Higher Education

Student Affairs Leaders

- Duke University, Assistant Dean of Students
- Southern Methodist University, Associate Director of Residential Life
- The College of William and Mary, Assistant Dean of Students
- Virginia Commonwealth University, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
- Winthrop University, Associate Dean of Students

Virginia Tech Leadership



Dr. Catherine Amelink,
Research Analyst and
Assessment Specialist,
College of Engineering



Dr. John Dooley,
Chief Operating
Officer, Virginia Tech
Foundation



Dr. Rodd Hall,
Senior Associate Director
for Operations and
Finance, Virginia Tech
Transportation Institute



Dr. Michael Herndon,
Director, University
Summer Sessions



Dr. David Kniola,
Assistant Director,
Office of Assessment
and Evaluation



Dr. Ellen Plummer,
Assistant Provost



Dr. Donna Cassell Ratcliffe,
Director, Career Services



Dr. Susan Short,
Associate Vice President
for Engagement



Dr. Ken Smith,
Vice Provost, Resource
Management and
Planning

Request for Board to Approve

- M.A.Ed., Higher Education
- Ph.D., Higher Education

Questions?