

Approved by the Regents  
September 17, 2009

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION**

**ACTION REQUEST**

**SUBJECT:** New Graduate Degree Program by the School of Education and Human Services at the University of Michigan-Flint

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Approval to offer a new Education Specialist Degree through the School of Education and Human Services at the University of Michigan-Flint

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 1, 2009

The School of Education and Human Services at the University of Michigan-Flint (UM-Flint) proposes to offer an Education Specialist degree. The proposed graduate program is designed to address the needs of teachers and administrators who have a Master of Arts degree wishing to enhance their credentials/background to improve either classroom or administration performance, or as a step to ultimately securing a doctorate. The program is in response to an expressed need of UM-Flint service region practitioners for a degree program in curriculum or educational leadership.

The proposed program responds to relatively strong statewide, but specifically, regional demands. Surveys of potential graduate students in the region consistently reveal that this population of students is "place-bound." One of the highest factors affecting students' decision to enroll in a UM-Flint graduate program is the convenience of location as well as UM-Flint's reputation of offering quality graduate education. A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted which underscored the need and strong interest as well. Needs assessment study survey respondents seek a program with a particular set of features which the University of Michigan-Flint intends to provide.

The proposed Education Specialist is a 30 semester credit-hour, 18-month, cohort-structured degree program. It will be offered in a dual modality of online and on-campus coursework and will feature a two track focus in curriculum and educational leadership with an emphasis on field based-learning experience in a K-12 or post-secondary environment. A mentorship with a recognized school leader is required. Discussions with area superintendents and administrators were met with enthusiasm by the group and willingness to partner regarding the field based-learning experience component of the program.

The primary audience will be only those students who have at least three years of experience in an educational institution and have completed an MA or MS degree in an education related field. These students will be interested in enhancing their background in either curriculum or educational leadership, or in a curriculum position at the central office level. Those with the educational leadership focus are either practicing administrators who want to strengthen their leadership skills or are seeking a central office position, or are professionals in the classroom who someday aspire to be administrators.

The proposed Education Specialist degree has been thoroughly reviewed and supported by the School of Education and Human Services faculty, Graduate Programs Committee, Academic Affairs Advisory Committee, Chancellor's Advisory Committee for Budget and Strategic Planning, as well as the provost and chancellor. It has also been approved by the Presidents Council of the State Universities of Michigan.

The proposed program will be divided into four components: 12 credits in the core courses; 9 credits in one of the two tracks, leadership or curriculum and instruction; 6 credits in field experience, the purpose of which is to apply knowledge and skills acquired in the program in a field-based internship or project; and, 3 credits in a capstone seminar. Other features include a relationship to the existing Greater Flint Education Consortium Administrator's Academy academic program and utilization of local (Genesee County) administration and curriculum experts and sites.


Pending approval of the proposal, the program will begin to admit students for the fall 2010 semester. Existing faculty teaching load replacements in the short term will be funded by partial tuition return to the program. In the longer term, additional permanent instructional staff will be secured by an as-need basis, using partial tuition return to the program. At present, no additional space is required.

The program has a comprehensive student outcomes assessment plan which has been approved by the UM-Flint Academic Assessment Committee. The plan will be followed to determine if students completing the program meet the goals. We enthusiastically recommend and endorse establishing a new Education Specialist degree through the School of Education and Human Services at the University of Michigan-Flint, effective October 1, 2009.

Recommended by:

  
Christine Waters, Interim Associate Provost and  
Dean of Graduate Programs

Recommendation endorsed by:

  
Vahid Lotfi, Interim Provost and  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

  
Ruth J. Person, Chancellor  
University of Michigan-Flint

September 2009