ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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APR Committee
Lynn C. Hart, Chair
Caitlin Dooley
Carla Tanguay

Sections
Part I. Where is Your Unit Now?
Part II. ECE Strategic Plan
Part III. Undergraduate Programs
Part IV. Graduate Programs
Part V. Where Does ECE Want to Go?

Peer and aspirational institutions referenced:
Florida State University
Kennesaw University
Michigan State University
University of Illinois – Chicago Circle
CONTEXT

The Department of Early Childhood Education (ECE) is conducting its Academic Program Review (APR) targeting academic years 2011 – 2014. The department’s previous APR was conducted in 2005 with a focus on data gleaned from 2002-2005. There have been two accreditation reviews by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission since 2005. During these intervening years, the national conversation about education and teacher education was influenced by federal initiatives including Goals 2000, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and most recently, Race to the Top. These mandates, often implemented with insufficient funding and minimal research, have controlled state initiatives and transformed local policies driving reforms in public schools and colleges of education, turning the attention to all-consuming assessment and accountability measures for both preservice and inservice teachers. For some, this Zeitgeist has made the teaching profession uninviting. According to US DOE estimates, nationwide enrollments in university teacher preparation programs have fallen by about 10% from 2004-2012. Additional significant factors influencing the direction and work of ECE during the period of this review include:

* Many states have eliminated pay raises to teachers contingent on earning master’s degrees that has suppressed enrollment in graduate programs. Georgia State University and her sister USG Institutions are experiencing similar enrollment downturns.
* Georgia has experienced a significant demographic shift, growing to be the state with the 10th highest Latino population (doubling between 2000 and 2011). The need to prepare teachers to teach English Language Leaners has become an imperative for ECE.
* Georgia is in the national forefront as a provider of education for the very youngest children, birth through Pre-Kindergarten. Since 1993, proceeds from the state lottery have been used to support the establishment of a vast network of Pre-K programs, administrators and teachers, serving 1.3 million youngsters.

When reviewing ECE programs, it is necessary to recognize these contextual influences.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

ECE was established as a department in the College of Education in 1971 with a faculty of 6, a student body of primarily master’s and doctoral students, and a “laboratory school” housed in a church basement located near the Capitol Building. By the end of the 1970’s, the department’s enrollment patterns shifted with declines in applicants for graduate programs and an increase in undergraduate and specialist degree programs, shifts mirroring state and national trends in the teaching work force. By the mid-1990’s, ECE was emerging as an innovator in teacher preparation, with professional development partnerships that embraced an “urban perspective,” novel to other teacher education programs in the region. Faculty ethnic and cultural demographics more closely
represented the rich diversity of the student body. From its humble beginnings, the Department of Early Childhood Education has grown to include 27 permanent faculty members who now teach about 700 undergraduates (BSED and Birth Through Five), 218 masters and 26 doctoral candidates in traditional, hybrid and online learning environments. Students may participate in faculty-led study abroad and/or exchange programs in eleven countries. ECE faculty provide professional development in several of these countries and regularly host international colleagues from, for example, Turkey, China, Korea and The Netherlands for week-long, semester and year-long collaborations. Students in both the undergraduate and graduate programs also have adequate library resources at their disposal to do research on topics in Early Childhood Education (see page 77 in the Appendix).

The former church basement lab school developed into two NAEYC Accredited and GA Quality rated Child Development Centers of Distinction serving 175 children. Saturday School, Reading Recovery and Best Practices, ancillary programs of longstanding, have had an enduring impact on educational opportunities for Georgia’s young children and their teachers. The department is fortunate to have a strong support staff. Between 1996 and 2014, four different department chairs led ECE, including the incumbent, elected in 2005, who is serving her 4th and final three-year term.

At the time of ECE’s 2005 APR, the department faculty presented their established mission, vision and values statements but was lacking a strategic plan. The department is now in the midst of the second (2012-present) strategic planning cycle, Envisioning ECE 2020. In our current plan faculty delineated goals in four focal areas: research, advocacy, perspectives and innovations that align with both the COE and GSU Strategic Plans. This plan is described in detail later in this report.

QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE ECE STUDENTS 2011 – 2014

ECE undergraduates are strong. Upon entry, ECE students have a Freshman Index of 2729 compared to their college (2689) and university (2724) peers. Students are required to have at least a 2.75 GPA for entry into ECE, a number higher than the COE requirement and those of Florida State University and Michigan State University, both aspirant universities (required GPA = 2.5) and Kennesaw University with entry GPA of 2.0. The majority of ECE majors enter with an average GPA of 3.2. ECE also has a higher percentage of first generation and Pell eligible students when compared to their university counterparts (see Table 1) and admits a high percentage of minority students, for example, spring 2014 admits in ECE were 75% minority while GSU as a whole was 61%. The 2011 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report indicates that the US teaching force as a whole was only 16% non-white.

ECE undergraduates engage in a rigorous 2-year 67-credit program of study. Approximately 1300 hours of mediated practica and clinical practice (student teaching) are included; this far exceeds national norms (e.g., University of Illinois-Chicago Circle requires 450 hours). Of students admitted to the program, 98.4% graduate in 4 years. (See Table 2 for 6-year data of declared majors). Upon graduation, ECE students have a weighted GPA of 4.22, which is higher than their college (3.73) and university (3.75) peers. Additionally, an average of 93% of ECE graduates pass in language arts/social studies and 96% pass in math/science on the Georgia Assessment for the Certification of Educators (GACE), the GA teacher licensure examination.
Further, 94% (three years post-graduation) and 91% (five years post-graduation) continue to teach compared to the national average of 46% retention from three to five years after graduation. Profiles of our undergraduate programs (Birth through Five and BSE) are described in detail later in this report.

Personnel from the COE Dean’s Office distributed a 4-point Likert scale survey to metro Atlanta cooperating teachers to ascertain their ratings of the GSU Professional Education Faculty (PEF) Conceptual Framework (CF) of 10 learning outcomes (http://education.gsu.edu/files/2013/12/GSU-PEF-Conceptual-Framework1.pdf). The response rate was 640/38% (308 working with ECE interns). MANOVAs revealed that PEF program affiliation (see Figure 1 below) as a factor had a significant effect on effectiveness ratings with ECE rated significantly highest across all CF outcomes (1.1-3.3) by the ECE cooperating teachers.

College personnel conducted a post-hoc analysis of the difference in the effectiveness of programs using the qualitative feedback regarding program strengths and areas needing improvement. The open-ended responses of cooperating teachers were thematically coded and five themes emerged: school context, field experience, program design, candidate readiness, and university communication. A majority of the qualitative responses showed program design, candidate readiness, and field experience to be the strengths of the ECE program. Cooperating teachers perceived strengths in the ways in which ECE’s programs incorporated field experiences across grade levels and for extended time periods. They also found ECE candidates’ preparation to teach using research-based practices and making connections to coursework, as assets in their field
experiences. Furthermore, cooperating teachers appreciated intensive supervision support provided to candidates and clear communication of requirements and expectations from the program.

![Figure 1. Program Differences in CF Ratings Provided by Cooperating Teachers](image)

Key: ECE - Early Childhood Education; M/S – Middle & Secondary; P-12 – SPED/HPE/ART/MUS/Foreign Language

For the purpose of this APR report, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) conducted surveys with ECE undergraduate alumni and current students that are fully reported in the Appendix. Survey results for 74 undergraduate alumni revealed positive results. For example, most respondents indicated that they strongly agreed that the program made a positive contribution to the quality of their life (mean = 5.35/6), that they have used skills learned in the program in their professional work (mean = 5.08/6) and that they were satisfied with their program (mean = 5.44/6). Qualitative comments were consistently positive, noting in particular, how well prepared they were.

Current undergraduate students (N = 102) also rated the program positively, though slightly below alumni. For example, respondents indicated that the program prepares students for their career (mean = 5.32/6), is academically challenging (mean = 5.08/6), provides high quality courses (mean = 4.64/6), and provides high quality instruction (4.56/6). In addition, most current students indicated that they would recommend their program to other students (mean = 4.99/6). Qualitative observations ranged from the challenges of being full time students in a demanding program while simultaneously working, parenting, or both.

As described above and depicted in Table 1 of the Appendix, undergraduate enrollment has declined since 2012. There was a high of 871 students in 2012 that has dropped to 696 in 2014. This represents a nearly 20% decline. We have taken a number of steps to overcome this state and national trend, and our college remains the 3rd largest producer of teacher candidates in Georgia. Further evidence of our successful efforts to counter this trend is that Kennesaw University (the largest producer of teachers in the state) experienced a 67% drop in enrollment (personal communication with Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies in Teacher Education).
QUALITY OF GRADUATE ECE STUDENTS 2011 - 2014

Students with undergraduate degrees may enroll in one of three ECE master’s degrees: two alternative certification programs 1) Urban Accelerated Certification and Master’s (UACM) and 2) M.A.T., for non-certified teachers of record; or 3) Master’s of Education/M.Ed. in elementary education for practicing teachers. Advanced students can enroll in one of two doctoral programs: 1) a Ph.D. in ECE, or 2) the newly launched (summer 2014) Ed.D., co-administered by the ECE department and the Middle Secondary Education department. The Ed.S. Degree was deactivated in 2014.

Consistent with the national trend of declining enrollments in teacher education programs in general, it is not surprising that there has been a decline in enrollment in ECE master’s programs. Nevertheless, we report a growth in Ph.D. candidates from 18 to 26 students (see Table 1 in the Appendix) and 20 students enrolled in the new Ed.D. program. One factor contributing to the growth in attracting and retaining Ph.D. candidates has been our intentional and consistent assistanship support. Also, ECE is heartened by steady enrollment in the revised M.Ed. (described later in this report).

ECE also has a strong rate of completion for graduate students. 79.5% of M.Ed. students entering in 2011 completed the program in two years (Appendix Table 12). This is particularly impressive because most masters’ students are full time teachers. In addition, records from four cohorts of UACM students indicate that the large majority of newly certified teachers took positions in schools ranging from 87% (2009) to 96% (2011). Based on retention data from two UACM groups (2009, 2010), retention rates far exceed US national trends with 100% of the teachers remaining in schools three years later and 95% and 91% (2009, 2010 respectively) remaining for five years.

ECE Ph.D. students are diverse with 30% African American. On average 3 Ph.D. candidates graduate each year. We are pleased to contribute to the college’s ranking as the highest producer of minority Ph. D.s in the Georgia, 13th in the US. These students have distinguished themselves by presenting at national conferences, co-authoring published manuscripts (Appendix, p. 66), winning local and national awards (Appendix, p. 64), and being hired as university faculty (e.g. University of Nebraska, James Madison University, College of Charleston, Spelman College, Western Carolina University), school leaders (e.g. Assistant Director, Rollins Online and Evaluation Rollins Center for Language and Literacy; K-8 Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction Specialist for Forsythe County), federal agency positions (e.g. Centers for Disease Control), and private sector educational enterprises (e.g. CEO SeeBeautiful.com).

Results from the GSU OIE survey of graduate alumni are fully reported in the Appendix. Data gleaned from 25 respondents, indicated positive views of our graduate programs. For example, alumni reported that the program of study made a positive contribution to their lives (4.88/6), they have applied skills learned in the program (4.64/6), and they were satisfied with their program (4.72/6). In addition, 79.2% indicated that they use research skills in their job, 100% indicated that they can interpret data in a critical manner, 100% indicated that they can analyze problems from different perspectives, and 95.8% reported that they had the ability to work with diverse populations. These outcomes are important because they are aligned with the ECE, COE
and GSU strategic plans. Qualitative comments were generally positive focusing primarily on best practices for teaching in high needs schools, the cohort structure, faculty expertise and teacher-student relationships.

Current graduate students (N = 22) also rated the program positively. For example, they report that the program is academically challenging (5.18/6), that it provides sufficient research opportunities (4.64/6) and that the overall quality of graduate courses is high (4.95/6). All eight items reflecting Faculty Interaction were rated very highly (range from 5.0/6 to 5.5/6).

QUALITY OF ECE FACULTY 2011 - 2014

The department has 19 tenure track/tenured faculty, 8 clinical faculty, and 5 limited-term clinical faculty. ECE ranks in the top GSU departments’ garnering grants/contracts (see Tables 3 and 5) and is ranked 5th for FY 15. Further, during this 3-year APR cycle, ECE faculty members have produced a scholarly publication record of 112 journal articles, 5 books, 28 book chapters and over 250 national and international presentations. Faculty served as journal editors, editorial board members, and leaders of international, national and state organizations, Special Interest Group Officers in national organizations, and statewide task force member.

Faculty in the department are outstanding teachers as evidenced in student evaluations. For example, the average range of full-time faculty for spring 2014 GoSolar scores was 4.50 to 4.67 on a 5-point Likert scale for all items. Examples of faculty ingenuity and colleagueship include the following initiatives: Yearly overnight retreats, Diversity Exchange, Pilcher Research Forum, Book Groups (e.g. we read Ravitch’s *Reign of Error* and Goldstein’s *Teacher Wars* this past year), Lesson Study, syllabi critiques, and semi-annual writing retreats.

Results from the GSU OIE survey of faculty are reported fully in the Appendix. These results reveal that ECE faculty members (N = 29) have high regard for the department. For example, faculty agree that they are involved in setting departmental objectives (5.31/6), are comfortable expressing their views in department meetings (5.34/6), and are proud of the department’s standing in the university (5.26/6). Faculty also report that they have adequate support in securing external funding (4.93/6), have opportunities to collaborate with other GSU researchers (5.04/6), that colleagues encourage team work and collegiality (5.55/6), that undergraduate (5.14/6) and graduate (4.97/6) programs have high levels of academic rigor. The three questions that are rated the lowest were whether ECE faculty have adequate time available for scholarly research (3.93/6), whether the department enables its members to achieve a balance between work and their personal life (4.28/6), or whether university service work was viewed as constructive (4.37/6). Qualitative comments support numeric data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Faculty Productivity</th>
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<td>All publications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
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The Early Childhood Education Department’s strategic plan (2012-2016) emphasizes four major areas: (1) research; (2) advocacy; (3) global, diverse, and social justice perspectives; and (4) innovations. ECE has engaged in strategic planning processes for almost a decade, as recommended in the previous Academic Program Review Committee report in 2006. An initial plan served us from 2006 to 2011. The department’s current strategic initiatives map on to the current University and College strategic plans (see Table 4). They are:

**Research**: Conduct and attend to research that addresses the most challenging issues in the 21st Century as it relates to the education of young children and their teachers.

**Advocacy**: Be critically informed and inform others about pertinent policies that affect early childhood education. Advocate for policies, practices, and legislation that is in the best interest of families, children, and the teaching profession.

**Global, diverse, justice perspectives**: Integrate global experiences and perspectives and attend to issues of injustice as it relates to the education of young children.

**Innovations**: Incubate, promote, and amplify innovative educational changes, especially through the use of technology in our programs, research and school partnerships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECE Strategic Plan Initiatives</th>
<th>College Strategic Plan</th>
<th>University Strategic Plan</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>I. Research</td>
<td>Goal 1, 3, 4</td>
<td>Goals 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>II. Advocacy</td>
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<td>III. Perspectives</td>
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<td>IV. Innovations</td>
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**TABLE 4. Overlap of Strategic Goals**

### I. RESEARCH

Under the **Research Initiative** we developed a system for tracking research productivity, created more opportunities for discussion of research and policy in department meetings and retreats, freed time for research by decreasing the number of administrative meetings and discontinuing individual student admission interviews for large-scale programs. We also maintained a high level of external support for our research and scholarship by obtaining external grants totaling $3,799,001 in 2011, $2,810,319 in 2012, and $3,310,225 in 2014 (see Table 5). Finally, we continue to collaborate with our colleagues across the college and the university, participating as co-PIs on externally funded grants such as the 13.5 million dollar Net-Q grant awarded to the College of Education.
Table 5. External Funding

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<th>PI</th>
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We enhanced the department’s prominence in the field through active dissemination of data based, peer-reviewed research, nearly doubling publication of peer-reviewed, published journal articles from 2011 to 2014 (see Table 6).

Table 6. ECE Faculty Publications and Presentations

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We enhanced the department’s prominence in the field through active dissemination of data based, peer-reviewed research, nearly doubling publication of peer-reviewed, published journal articles from 2011 to 2014 (see Table 6).
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<td>Regional/Local</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. ADVOCACY

Under the Advocacy Initiative we compiled information about USG, GSU, and College policies related to political advocacy as well as information about different non-partisan advocacy organizations focused on children’s education and welfare. In 2013, a university attorney addressed ECE faculty about university positions, policies and procedures for advocating. Faculty and the department chair regularly share pertinent articles from news media about these topics via email to encourage engagement with timely issues and news.

Related to this work, faculty have taken leadership roles in the state and the nation in various capacities. Dr. Caitlin Dooley was the Policy and Legislative Committee Chairperson for the Literacy Research Association (2012-2014) where she co-produced several federal legislative updates. We also have faculty members who work directly with local organizations that provide services and advocate for underrepresented groups. Dr. Laura May and Dr. Terry Fisher work with organizations in the Clarkston UN-refugee-resettlement community; Dr. Brian Williams works with the U.S. President’s “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative to serve and advocate for African American boys; and Dr. Cliff Johnson shares political updates through his involvement with “The Gold Dome Gang,” a group of education professionals who attend legislative sessions.

III. INNOVATIONS

In addition to specific program innovations discussed later, the Innovations Initiative targeted GSU tech fee grants to purchase iPads for use by both undergraduate and graduate students in their coursework, obtaining two grants in the amounts of $45,690 (2012) and $47,042 (2013). Faculty completed several technology-needs surveys and we responded to those needs by inviting speakers and providing time for “sharing” best practices for using innovative technologies in our department meetings. Dr. Tim Merritt of the Instructional Technology Center in the College of Education has been a tremendous resource for us, offering short tutorials during faculty meetings and coaching faculty in their classes as they utilize these tools. We also installed interactive white boards in two classrooms on the 5th floor and, in 2011, provided a workshop for faculty on how to use the “lesson toolkits” that come with the boards. ECE faculty members frequently utilize the Exchange for further professional development and coaching for technology support.

Although not a direct goal of the Innovations initiative, a natural outcome of attention to technology has been an increase in the number of hybrid courses offered. ECE faculty
members are offering more online and hybrid courses. The number of planned online
ECE courses has risen from 2 to 5 between the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. We
also have an increase in hybrid courses from 17 to 29 (17% to 28% of the total number of
courses taught by the department) over the past two years.

One of our most pioneering projects was development of a master’s level degree
program on educational innovations that support children’s creative learning, currently
unavailable at any institution in the state of Georgia. In 2014, we developed the Creative
and Innovative Education master’s degree program that will leverage extensive
community partnerships (e.g., Alliance Theatre, Children’s Museum of Atlanta, National
Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Woodruff Arts Center, national award-winning
independent children’s book store Little Shop of Stories, and several local, start-up
education-related businesses) as well as partnerships with the Non-profit Management
Program in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, the Marketing and Management
departments of the Robinson College of Business, the School of Music, and the Art and
Design Department in the College of Arts and Sciences. The program is currently
pending Board of Regents approval.

We also are incorporating the use of innovative technology tools for departmental
marketing and communications for outreach and recruiting. MailChimp.com provides a
means for scheduled and tracked electronic delivery of recruitment and informational
materials. Finally we developed Facebook pages for the undergraduate and graduate
programs that provide a way for our students and alumni to maintain a connection
through social media.

IV. PERSPECTIVES

The work in our Perspectives Initiative focused primarily on expanding global
initiatives. ECE now leads the College of Education in international endeavors,
expanding the number of study abroad programs for undergraduate and graduate students
from 1 in 2011 (7 students) to 7 in 2014 (46 students) with a total of 125 students for the
period of this report. Our students studied in China, Ethiopia, Korea, Morocco, Norway,
Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. Nine students participated in full semester
study abroad in Sweden and the Netherlands. Already active in China, ECE faculty
members have created international exchange and study abroad programs in Korea and
Turkey, covering 3 of the 5 GSU targeted countries. Forthcoming programs are under
development for South Africa and Brazil (see Table 7).

Our most established partnership is Sichuan Normal University in Chengdu, Sichuan
Provence, China. We began collaboration in 2006. Because of this relationship, ECE was
fortunate to send over 75 students and 8 faculty members to China across the past 8
years. Additionally, ECE hosted multiple Chinese exchange students, scholars, and
teachers at Georgia State University. The following student quotation reflect the feelings
and observations of many, many ECE student participants’ about their time in Chengdu:

Words cannot express how much I truly appreciate all of [the program director’s] hard work. You have
created one of the most memorable experiences of my life. I have come to understand the cultural
differences in this world and appreciate this newfound knowledge ... I wouldn’t trade this trip for anything.
ECE Faculty have participated in research presentations and internationally recognized conferences in each of the University’s Strategic Plan’s five target countries, as well as other countries (Appendix p.56). ECE faculty also held leadership positions in international professional organizations, serving as President of the National Council for the Social Studies International Assembly (Zhao) and Chair of the Board of the North American Chapter of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education (Hart), president of the International Play Association (Jarrett).

ECE takes pride in global relations and providing opportunities locally and abroad for faculty and students to grow as global citizens. The ever-growing number of international programs, conference presentations, and integration of global connections within teaching evidence this commitment and are fully documented in the Appendix, p. 56.

Table 7. Student/Faculty Participation in Study Abroad & Exchange Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term – Year (time abroad)</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Student Participants</th>
<th>Faculty Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maymester 2011 (2 weeks)</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012 (full semester)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break 2012 (1 week)</td>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break 2012 (1 week)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maymester 2012 (2 weeks)</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013 (5 weeks)</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maymester 2013 (2 weeks)</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2013 (full semester)</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2013 (3 weeks)</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break 2013 (1 week)</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break 2013 (1 week)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014 (full semester)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014 (5 weeks)</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014 (3 weeks)</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break 2014 (1 week)</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maymester 2014 (2 weeks)</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maymester 2014 (2 weeks)</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014 (5 weeks)</td>
<td>Turkey, Switzerland, Spain</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Table information provided by Georgia State University Office of International Initiatives.

Our work around our strategic plan is on-going and is further shaped through this APR process.

III. UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Birth Through Five (B-5) Teacher Education Program (BSED)

Where is the program now?

The Birth Through Five (B-5) Program prepares candidates for teacher certification in birth through Kindergarten with an endorsement in Preschool Special Education. The B-5 program’s primary purpose is to prepare highly qualified teachers to positively impact the
quality of programs for very young children and their families in the urban metropolitan area. As an urban institution, we also focus on serving the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse children. (GSU Strategic Plan, Goal 4, COE Goal 4, ECE Perspectives Goal). A brief historical look at the Birth through Five program is provided in the Appendix, p. 70.

B-5 curriculum is aligned with national standards and is interdisciplinary. Five of the 15 courses are offered by the EPSE department and develop competencies in working with children with disabilities. Candidates complete 900 clock hours of field experiences across age levels, infancy through Kindergarten, including children with disabilities. B-5 students have broadened their international perspectives and cultural awareness through ECE study abroad opportunities in China, Spain, Korea and Sweden (GSU Strategic Plan, Goal 5, COE Goal 5, ECE Perspectives Goal).

Several distinctive features set us apart from other institutions offering B-5 programs. Instead of the typical daytime, cohort based program, our class schedules and field requirements are designed for working teachers with both evening and hybrid formats. Students can complete many of their required internships in approved work-based settings, so they do not have to quit their jobs to return to school. We have very strong articulation partnerships with our metro area Technical Colleges and received foundation grants for $441,000 for B-5 scholarships for transfer students as well as professional development activities with community early care and learning centers. Another unique feature is that our program has a research-based clinical supervision model that creates high quality teachers. Taking our lead from the Professional Development School (PDS) model, the B-5 program has identified a “network of professional development B-5 partner centers.” These centers have embedded GSU internships funded through grant sponsored student scholarships or work-based MOUs. Center staff participate in professional development training offered by the B-5 faculty. (ECE Innovations Goal).

Our candidates are diverse with about half starting as freshman at GSU and half matriculating as transfer students. The program coordinator actively recruits prospects from local technical colleges. We admit students three times each year, with approximately 15 students accepted annually. For FY 14 we had 31 students enrolled in the program with an additional 52 declared majors at GSU not yet accepted (See Appendix, p. 2). Our admit GPA is aligned with our other undergraduate BSE program at 2.75. Additionally, candidates must pass a state required program admission test (proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics). While the majority of our program applicants are successful with this admission requirement, some of our technical college transfer students have been delayed or denied admission, generally due to lack of mathematics proficiency. Some of these students have defaulted to other degree programs that do not require state admission tests. More than 95% of candidates completing the program pass the B-5 Content Assessment required by the state for teacher certification, many of them passing at the higher professional (versus induction) level of performance. We have one B-5 student who is a member of the Honors College and two students who have participated (with notable awards) in the Undergraduate Research Conference. (GSU Strategic Plan, Goal 1, COE Goal 1).
Candidates are racially diverse and range from zero-15 years of experience in teaching young children. While over 100 students have declared B-5 as a major since 2009, only two males have enrolled and graduated from the program. Both are still employed as PreK teachers. Retention and graduation rates for the program are above 90%. Once admitted into the program, advising is personal and individualized due to the small size. Thus most struggling students are fully supported with professional action plans that promote successful retention and graduation.

Career opportunities for B-5 graduates are quite varied and include Certified Kindergarten and Pre-K Teacher, Early Childhood Program Director, Home Visitor Program Specialist, Child Care Center Owner-Operator and Inclusion Teacher or Early Intervention Specialist. Upon graduation and certification, B-5 students are readily hired or receive salary and position advances at their places of work. Several graduates have moved into early education leadership positions as program directors or consultants. At least five have taken international teaching positions (Korea, VietNam, Canada, Abu Dhabi, and Bermuda) and several have entered graduate programs, often in special education (Vanderbilt, GSU). About 1/3 of our graduates have taken jobs in special education inclusion classrooms or with early intervention agencies to meet this growing professional need.

**How adequate is the program’s current resources?**

The program is adequate in terms of personnel. There are three designated program faculty: one tenured Associate Professor, one tenure-track Assistant Professor, and one Clinical Associate Professor who serves as the Program Coordinator. These faculty members are active in scholarship and leadership in the university and professional community. The Department of Educational Psychology, Special Education and Communication Disorders effectively staff the five required EXC courses. The GSU Child Development Centers provide support for laboratory experiences for teaching and research. The Best Practices Training Project, funded annually by the state early education agency since 1998, also provides staffing and technology-enhanced teaching modules for the B-5 program. The B-5 program has strong support from the ECE department chairperson and the dean of the college.

**Where does the program want to go?**

During the past 5 years, the B-5 program has gained positive visibility among state agencies, community stakeholders, foundation donors, and prospective students. However, program admissions have been short of projections. Our primary goal is to increase admissions through a two-fold approach: 1) increase the applicant pool through rigorous marketing and recruitment efforts; 2) increase the number of successful admissions by continuing to advocate for mathematics tutoring and test-taking support at the technical colleges and at GSU. This goal is aligned with the GSU strategic plan goal to become a national model for undergraduate education (GSU Goal 1). Additionally, expansion of the B-5 program is consistent with the strategic plan goal of leadership in understanding the complex challenges of cities and developing effective solutions (GSU Goal 2).
According to city and state leaders, creating effective systems for the delivery of high quality early care and education (of which teacher quality is front and center) is a top priority.

**What Do You Need to Do or Change to Get There?**

In order to meet the primary goal of increased enrollments through recruitment and marketing, the program needs support for activities such as: (1) College fair recruitment at technical colleges and two-year colleges; (2) emails to tech-transfer students identified through Banner; (3) advertising at early childhood conferences, and (4) social media recruitment.

Concurrently, we need to identify free college or university resources that are available to support mathematics tutoring and test prep skills. We have been able to use grant funds for a small scale mathematics tutoring project for technical college transfer students this past year; however, we need new resources and strategies at the end of the grant period.

**Where is Your Program Now?**

The Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (BSE) in Early Childhood Education is a comprehensive program designed to prepare teacher candidates who will be qualified to teach young children from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade (P-5). In addition, the program offers credentials in a concentration of study: English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Endorsement or certification in Special Education General Curriculum (P-12), each with varying requirements, coursework, clinical experiences and expectations. The theme of the BSE program is to develop teachers as facilitators of learning. The program is large. For FY 14 we had 305 students accepted in the program (See Appendix, p. 2). All were placed in 170 geographically and culturally diverse elementary schools across grade levels each semester, culminating in over 13000 hours of supervised field experiences and clinical practice for each candidate. In addition, teacher candidates participate in a two week “opening school experience” to gain experience setting up a classroom and beginning the school year. The BSE Program uses a research-based clinical model of supervision that emphasizes teacher candidate self-assessment and reflection through mediated conferences with university supervisors and school-based personnel following all observations. Additionally, BSE supervisors participate in monthly meetings (Support our Supervisors/SOS) to review supervisory practices and assessment procedures.

The BSE Program is aligned to the GSU/COE/ECE Strategic Plans. Focused on teaching diverse learners, candidates participate in coursework and field experiences simultaneously using what we call a developmental model, a unique configuration grounded in child development (GSU Strategic Plan Goal 1; COE Goals 1; ECE Goal 4 Innovations). A full description of the developmental approach of the program is provided in the Appendix, p. 71. Briefly, the BSE is a cohort program in which students
move sequentially through coursework and placements, starting with Pre-K, Kindergarten/First, Second/Third, and Fourth/Fifth grade experiences.

As noted above, the BSE program takes pride in its quality with selective admissions processes, rigorous coursework with corresponding internships in schools, and high retention and graduation rates. BSE candidates are highly marketable and readily hirable. BSE candidates are diverse. Graduates are eligible to seek many career opportunities as certified P-5 teachers for general education and special education. Due to the additional ESOL Endorsement or certification in special education embedded in the program, candidates may also serve in ESOL teaching positions and/or special education teaching positions (Pk-12th grade, mild disabilities).

As a result of robust collaborations with community partners, BSE faculty have been awarded technology mini-grants to incorporate technology and to integrate the arts in coursework emphasizing the use of technology for P-12 student learning (GSU Strategic Plan Goals 1; COE Goals 1; ECE Goal 4 Innovations). BSE literacy and social studies faculty engage community partners (The Alliance Theatre and Young Audiences in Atlanta) to provide seminars focused on digital storytelling and composition embedded in a Digital literacy class and drama embedded in a social studies class. These partnerships are an innovative, collaborative approach to using technology in connection with clinical practice involving teacher candidates, P-12 students, and their teachers.

Through the Writing Mentor Program (GUMS – Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, & Style), an innovative structure embedded in the BSE, faculty offer candidates support in their development as strong thinkers and writers (GSU Strategic Plan Goals 1; COE Goals 1; ECE Goal Innovations). Several BSE courses are offered at the Honors level. Candidates also benefit from opportunities to participate in research with faculty and in the undergraduate research conference. Through this work several BSE grads developed expertise in the area of Autism (GSU Strategic Goals 1, 3; COE Goal 3; ECE Goal Research).

BSE candidates have multiple opportunities to develop global perspectives by participating in programs abroad during their internships and clinical practice experiences (GSU Strategic Goals 1, 5; COE Goals 1, 5; ECE Goal 3 Perspectives). Scholarship support is available for undergraduates who apply to International Programs through the College of Education. They learn to teach English to diverse student populations. It is through these immersion experiences that they have opportunities to learn about and to appreciate many cultural traditions, values, and varied perspectives on teaching and learning.

**How Adequate Are Your Program’s Current Resources?**

Currently, we rely heavily on limited term faculty and doctoral students to teach undergraduate classes and supervise field experiences. Although these instructors have been beneficial to date, new federal and state mandates for teacher certification are making reliance on short-term employees impossible. Due to GSU response to the Affordable Care Act, we can no longer rely on part-time, limited-term instructors due to specifications on the amount and length of time permitted for their service. This inhibits
the ability to create long-term institutional learning and build a shared knowledge base among instructors. The need for a permanent faculty is especially necessary now as we implement national performance-based assessments of teacher candidates (e.g., edTPA). We expressly need permanent faculty members to anchor each content area so that we can ensure that our prospective teachers are well prepared for these new requirements.

Also, recent teacher certification mandates have led to substantial increases in fees incurred by our students for entrance and exit assessments, roughly $730 - $1000, threatening to make teacher certification less affordable and desirable. We believe these changes also contributed to our recent drop in enrollment. Additional resources in the form of scholarships to support students who cannot afford the credentialing assessments would be useful.

**Where our Program Wants to Go?**

We hope to continue to draw strong applicants to the degree program in the future. Our four primary goals are to:

- develop a viable pathway for working students (response to current student survey)
- develop opportunities for more students to study abroad
- secure a more permanent, less transitional faculty base

**What Do You Need to Do or Change to Get There?**

- support for marketing and recruiting for the program
- conduct a needs assessment of current students to assist in identifying attractive strategies for flexible delivery models (e.g., Saturday classes, hybrid classes, etc.)
- identify international sites with school schedules that would allow for summer study abroad for working students and others to study abroad
- conduct on-going assessment of hiring needs (See Appendix, p. 73)

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**PART IV. GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

The department offers three master’s programs (The MED in Elementary Education, the Urban Accelerated Certification and Master’s program, and the Master’s in Teaching) and a PhD program. Each is described below.

**MED in Elementary Education (MEDEE)**

**Where is the program now?**

The MED in Elementary Education (MEDEE) first admitted students in the summer of 2013. Two previous master’s programs in ECE, the Collaborative Masters (CMP) and the Masters with a concentration in mathematics (MED), were re-conceptualized to form the new MEDEE. A brief history of the need for this transition is provided in the Appendix.
The new MEDEE recognizes the need for a program with flexibility that teachers can step in and out of and still complete in a reasonable amount of time, as well as the appeal of the potential to complete some courses online. The program also recognizes the increased demand for content specialists in elementary schools, i.e., math and science coaches. The result is the MED in Elementary Education with endorsements in mathematics, science, and/or reading. Teachers in this program take a common set of courses in the professional core, elementary education, and in a chosen content concentration that leads to an endorsement. The embedded endorsements not only make teachers more competitive in the marketplace but in the cases of mathematics and science, also provide an additional stipend awarded by the state. Moreover, rather than strain resources in ECE, the Reading Endorsement is a collaborative effort with the Middle Secondary Education (MSE) department in the COE, with 9 hours taught in MSE and 27 hours in ECE. (GSU Strategic Goal 2, COE Goal 2, ECE Goal Innovations).

Although the MEDEE is too new (starting date Fall 2013) to have retention data, metrics from its precursor programs (CMP and Math Masters) suggest the department does well in graduating MED students, with a 3-year completer rate of 84.8% for starters in 2010 and 2-year completer rate of 76.9% for starters in 2011. The program has a current pool of 42 students at some point in the program (see Appendix, p. 2). Three graduates of the MEDEE are pursuing a PhD in ECE, one of whom received the Dean’s Fellowship Award ($27,000 annual stipend and tuition remission). The MEDEE is distinctive on a national level because it provides focused study of mathematics, science, and reading at the elementary level and has an end goal of developing content specialists, which is a pressing need and significant focus for elementary schools.

How adequate are our program’s current resources?

Resources for the program are reasonable with three dedicated TT faculty. The department currently houses two additional mathematics education faculty (1 tenured, 1 clinical), 2 science education faculty (1 tenured, 1 limited term clinical) and 8 additional reading/literacy specialists (2 of whom are limited term faculty); however, all are primarily dedicated to other programs (BSE, MAT, PhD). We have several doctoral students pursuing concentrations in mathematics and reading who are able to support our undergraduate programs, thus allowing faculty availability for graduate courses in the MEDEE. While this has served our needs to date, the science endorsement was first offered in Fall 2014 and has not reached full potential; therefore, we anticipate a need for science education faculty. We also anticipate attrition due to retirement of some TT faculty in mathematics and science within the next few years.

In terms of technology for the program, in 2013 the department obtained an internal grant from GSU to purchase iPad minis for all our graduate students (including the MEDEE students). This allowed us to integrate technology into all of the coursework and to offer hybrid courses with some face-to-face time and some on-line time. Over time, we expect our current equipment will need upgrading and replacing.
Where our program wants to go.

Faculty in the department are very excited about the opportunities offered to teachers in the new MEDEE. With increased interest in content-specific education in the elementary schools and particularly within STEM, our program will meet the varied interests and needs of elementary teachers who want to continue their professional learning and development. With the new tiered certification state requirements, it will be critical for teachers to prepare themselves with the capabilities and skills needed to obtain advanced levels of certification. We believe the outstanding reputation of our undergraduate programs will continue to draw practicing teachers to this master’s program.

While reading will certainly remain a major content focus of K-5 schools, the opportunity for schools to become STEM certified, requiring teachers school-wide to hold endorsements in mathematics and/or science, is an enormous opportunity for the MEDEE. Therefore our goals are to:

(1) gain recognition as a superior program for teachers wanting to receive endorsements in mathematics, science, or reading in the state of Georgia
(2) become the go-to program for schools that want to receive STEM certification
(3) create a mechanism for contracts for multiple teachers within a school to seek endorsements that would serve as a viable recruitment tool for the MEDEE degree
(4) collaborate with the other master’s programs in the department (UACM and MAT) to create opportunities for all master’s students to have international teaching/exchange opportunities

What does the program need to do or change to get there?
We have several needs for continued growth of the MEDEE.

(1) We need support for purposeful and systematic recruitment of teachers into the program. Recruitment of teachers for master’s programs remains an on-going challenge. We must develop a premier reputation for the program with high visibility for what the MEDEE offers teachers, schools, and school systems.
(2) We must be able to hire and support qualified faculty in the content areas of the program. We need assurance that lines will be retained to replace retiring faculty and as enrollment grows, that we will be able to support the program with appropriate faculty appointments. (See Appendix, p. 73 for hiring needs.)
(3) We need to coordinate the resources of the MEDEE and two alternative master’s degree programs in order to better serve the needs of our students in all areas of their learning, including, but not limited to, integration of technology, international experiences, and complexities of teaching in urban schools.
Where is the program now?

The Urban Accelerated Certification and Master’s (UACM) program promotes the success of elementary learners in urban contexts by preparing culturally responsive, equity-oriented, empowered teachers who are change agents inside and outside the classroom. UACM is a two-year, six-semester program in which graduate students earn a teaching certificate (PreK-5th grade) and an English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) endorsement at the end of their first year of the program (47 credit hours) and a Master’s Degree of Education at the end of their second year of the program (30 additional credit hours). The UACM is a cohort-based program with intense field experiences that rely on intentional collaborations among faculty, teacher candidates, school-based mentor teachers and school administrators. Within Year One of the program, teacher candidates receive multiple opportunities to interact with children and families of diverse backgrounds. Candidates support English learners through literacy tutoring in collaboration with Refugee Family Services in the Clarkston area as well as participate as interns in a Summer STEM Camp. Additionally, each teacher candidate has an eight-month student-teaching experience and a spring semester ESOL placement in an urban public elementary school. During the second year of the program, UACM candidates become certified teachers-of-record in high-poverty urban schools. (GSU Strategic Goal 4, COE Goal 4, ECE Goal Perspectives). For FY 14 the program had 62 students in the program (See Appendix, p. 2). The UACM program attracts a highly diverse candidate pool. For example, the 2014 summer admit pool was 64% non-white. UACM completion rate is 86% with newly certified teachers extensively hired in high-needs urban-partner schools.

The UACM graduate certification and Master’s degree model is unique. Most certification models either develop candidates prior to obtaining a job (traditional model) or develop the candidates while they are the teacher of record (alternative model). As a part of the UACM model, candidates spend the first year of the program in an accelerated certification process with a heavy focus on culturally responsive pedagogy and field experiences. Throughout the second year of the program the candidates are supported through intense mentorship during the critical first year of teaching to help enable the candidates to implement what they learned during the certification portion of the program, which may look different from what is being implemented in the schools where they teach. In other words, teacher induction is built into the program of study. Other distinctive aspects of the UACM program include: (a) developing six Professional Development School partnerships in which we do site-based instruction; (b) training school-based mentor teachers to help bridge university theory to school-based practice (24+ hours of training); and (c) implementing the co-teaching model over an eight-month student-teaching experience. (GSU Strategic Goal 2, COE Goal 1, ECE Goal Innovations).
How adequate are the program’s current resources?

The UACM program’s current resources in the areas of personnel and funding are very adequate. A key resource is UACM faculty expertise that includes 2 tenured or tenure-track faculty, 3 clinical faculty, 5 full time graduate students who each apply their content specialty to the urban context.

UACM faculty have obtained significant external funding to support our work: Quality Instruction for English Learners (QuIEL) program (2011-2016), A USDOE National Professional Development Program grant to serve English Learners. The project recruits, educates, and supports teachers in partnership with DeKalb County School System and other members of a professional learning consortium in the system. (Funded at $1.9 million)

3-STEMS (2011-2016). A USDOE Transition to Teaching Program to support teachers for high-need schools. The project recruits, educates, and supports teachers with a special emphasis in STEM and in partnership with Atlanta Public Schools. (Funded at $2.1 million)

Transition to Teaching Project Grant (2007-2012). U.S. Department of Education Grant. The primary goal of the grant was to recruit, train, and retain teachers who are committed and able to successfully respond to the needs of children of low socio-economic backgrounds and/or children who are English Language Learners (ELLs). The project’s emphasis was to developing Professional Development School partnerships and adding an ESOL endorsement to the UACM program of study. (Funded at $1.9 million).

Money from these federal grants supported 109 teacher candidates during the period of this APR review. It also allowed us to purchase iPads and other technology for teacher candidate and faculty use. This allows us to integrate technology into our coursework and to offer hybrid courses with an online professional learning community component. Additional internal funding from the GSU COE International Fund supported the Partnering Pedagogical Practices for Language and Literacy Acquisition-focused Teacher Learning to help establish a partnership with University of Alcala de Henares in Spain. (GSU Strategic Goal 5, COE Goal 5, ECE Goal Perspectives).

Where does the program want to go?

In order to be competitive with other alternative certification programs, UACM will need to become more streamlined. A typical graduate certification program that leads to a Master’s degree is 45 credit hours; the UACM program is currently at 77 credit hours. As more alternative online programs compete for post-bachelor candidates, the UACM may be at a competitive disadvantage because of the cost and time commitment needed to complete the program.

As a program we want to continue to develop our expertise in STEM/STEAM education and to expand our ability to support urban schools in this area. Additionally, as mentioned above, The UACM program is also working toward creating opportunities for faculty and students to have international experiences/collaborations.
What does the program need to do or change to get there?

To continue the advancement of the UACM program we need to:

- have support for recruitment of post-bachelor teacher candidates for the program. Online alternative certification programs are widely marketed, and we need similar promotion of our highly effective program to stay competitive.
- hire and retain qualified faculty in the urban-focused content areas of the program. The upcoming retirement of a science/social studies education faculty member will be difficult to supplement without the hiring of a qualified faculty member with such expertise
- streamline the UACM program to be more competitive without compromising the effectiveness of the program. This includes possibly reducing the amount of credit hours. Other possible solutions include looking at the tuition cost for the college of education and/or securing money to offset the cost of tuition.
- obtain additional funding to support the collaboration with our partner university (UAH-Programa de Formacion del Profesorado Universitario y Desarrollo de la Innovacion Docente-Spain) to develop a viable long-term collaboration

Where is the program now?

The Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) is a rigorous alternative certification program for uncertified classroom teachers and other school-based professionals (e.g., paraprofessionals) working in metro-Atlanta elementary schools that started in 2011. The MAT prepares teachers to meet the needs of pupils within urban school contexts. MAT candidates’ work concurrently toward a master’s degree and elementary teaching certification (grades PreK-5). This coaching-intensive program for work-based learning is a five-semester (44 credit hour) cohort model designed to link theory, content, and practice across all courses and the candidate’s classroom context. As working educators in their own classrooms all day, each day, candidates simultaneously support learners and develop their practice. (GSU Strategic Goal 4, COE Strategic Goal 4, ECE Goal Perspectives)

Originally the source of all our students was through TFA. In the six years (2009-14) of TFA affiliation, the number of students that TFA sent us fluctuated significantly: 93 in 2009, 36 in 2010, 103 in 2011, 13 in 2012, 6 in 2013, and 2 in 2014. These numbers reflect accepted students rather than students who actually enrolled (in reality several TFA students dropped each year). This fluctuation required flexibility and creativity in our use of resources, primarily the hiring of temporary clinical faculty. Subsequently TFA received Race to the Top (RTT) funding in order to become their own certifying body (as of 12/14, TFA informed us that they will relinquish their role as certifiers and once again seek GSU as partners via our MAT for fall 2015).
With the uncertainty of further TFA students, the department determined it was important to support other (non-TFA) teachers in metro Atlanta who were not certified. In 2013, we opened the program to non-TFA candidates. Our incoming cohort (Fall 2014) has one TFA student, with the remainder (n=11) being school-based professionals working in schools in metro Atlanta who desire a PreK-5th grade teaching certificate. The program has an MOU in place with DeKalb County that ensures collaboration to support any “provisionally licensed” teachers and paraprofessionals; however, unlike the TFA MOU, no applicant is ensured admission and all admission standards are required. The mean undergraduate GPA for 2011 admits was 3.48, for 2012 was 3.46 and was not available for 2013. Mean GRE score for 2011 admits was 297, for 2012 was 297 and for 2013 was 289. Unfortunately much data for this period is missing or not available. Race and ethnicity of our students is diverse.

Our students perform well on the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) with 100% pass rate for all years. Our students are frequently positioned as leaders in their schools (department chairs, instructional coaches), hired as instructional leaders by community organizations (e.g., two of our 2011 graduates were hired as teacher coaches at Rollins Center, Atlanta Speech School), actively recruited by a range of organizations (Teach For America, Achievement First), and go on to additional graduate schools/programs (Columbia, University of Georgia, Penn State, Ohio State, Seattle University Law School, Howard Law School, Georgetown University Law Center) with a focus on educational equity, education policy, and supporting and advocating for child health and learning (GSU Strategic Goal 2, COE Strategic Goal 1)

Currently, the MAT has one permanent clinical assistant professor, one temporary clinical assistant professor, and access to several affiliated faculty members within ECE (Clinical and Tenure Track). Primary MAT faculty systematically analyze and evaluate program goals and outcomes, the experiences and concerns of candidates, and make intentional and incremental shifts in programs, coursework, and opportunities offered to candidates (GSU Strategic Goals 2, 3; COE Strategic Goal 1, 3, ECE Goal Research). Collaborations with P-12 partners are extensive and an active Advisory Board of alumni and a Design Team of current and former candidates gather with faculty to discuss analysis and implications. The insight of graduates point to gaps in the preparation and support they received and indicates areas of strengths. Taken seriously, these collaborations have been the most fruitful resources for program design and development (GSU Strategic Plan Goal 4, COE Strategic Plan Goal 4, ECE Goal Innovations).

**How adequate are the program’s resources?**

The MAT has changed dramatically each year to serve a continuously changing clientele. For this work to be sustainable, an investment toward the long-term continuity and participation of faculty is important. Since the inception of the MAT program, it has been primarily comprised of temporary faculty. Only one permanent clinical faculty member is attached to the program. Obviously this has been in response to the fluctuation of students; however, significant innovations take time and investment in order to bear fruit.
Where does the program want to go??

- We want to increase our candidate pool by recruiting and supporting more paraprofessionals. This strategy requires offering financial support for these educators. This would help retention and recruitment since we consistently hear that financial limitations are the primary reason why candidates (a) choose TFA certification instead of university programs, as it is thousands of dollars less costly, and (b) determine that they cannot afford graduate school on the limited income of a paraprofessional. Last year we initiated an MOU with DeKalb County Public Schools and have been working to support and recruit their paraprofessionals and PreK teachers in our program this year. The overwhelming stumbling block has been program cost.

- We want to be able to take advantage of international initiatives. The MAT program is limited in our ability to do that because most study abroad/student exchange programs are designed for full-time students who have flexibility of scheduling. As a result, our students who work full time are seldom able to take advantage of these programs. (GSU Strategic Goal 5, COE Strategic Goal 5, ECE Initiative Perspectives).

What does the program need to do or change to get there?

We have three major needs in the MAT;

(1) We need to be able to move limited term clinical faculty members to permanent clinical positions and have more affiliated faculty invested in and associated with the program. This would bring the continuity and human capital needed to continue innovation and the ability to expand and make the program viable in the long term.

(2) We need to design international opportunities for our master’ students who are working on public school schedules.

(3) We need to provide a more constant stream of candidates for the MAT. External funding is being sought to support scholarships that could help with the cost of program participation and credentialing assessments.

Where is our program now?

The PhD in Early Childhood prepares scholars who are researchers and teacher educators for a variety of roles including basic and applied research, curriculum and policy development, and teacher education. On average, the ECE PhD graduates 3 students each year who accept prominent positions such as (a) professors at Carnegie 1 Research institutions and other major universities, (b) school leaders (e.g., curriculum specialists or content area leaders), and (c) educational industry experts (e.g., working for educational or non-profit agencies) (see Appendix, p. 64). A 63-semester hour program,
the PhD in ECE provides students with a strong foundation in educational theory, research methodology, and a specialized program of study of their choosing. Our students participate in empirical and systematic research that examines educational principles, strategies, and practices related to educational processes and outcomes for children, ages birth-12 years, in a variety of settings. The strength of our students is evident through dissemination of their scholarship in research publications and presentations at major international, national, and regional conferences. The program is proud to serve students of color; since 2012, the largest group includes 30% who identify as African American.

The vision and goals of our program are aligned with the urban mission of Georgia State University (GSU Strategic Goal 4, COE Goal 4) as we seek to produce (1) researchers who conduct quality, valid and socially responsible inquiry related to teaching and learning, (2) knowledgeable teachers who are capable of challenging students’ thinking and constructing knowledge relative to early childhood education, and (3) social activists who challenge the systems that limit the access, opportunity, and development of young children and their families.

ECE Faculty create collaborative scholarly opportunities for students via “reading and writing retreats” designed to facilitate intentional and supportive discussions and mentoring to assist their scholarly output. These types of experiences create sustainable networks of graduates who value collaboration and support a diverse scholarly community within and beyond the program itself.

Our program shares a global vision aligned with the University’s goals of global impact and outreach (GSU Strategic Goal 5, COE Goal 5, ECE Global Perspectives). Three of our 26 doctoral students are international (2 Turkish, 1 Korean) and nearly half of the remaining students have participated in international activities that lead to collaborations between GSU and China, Korea, Norway, and Turkey.

PhD students apprentice in research, teaching and service activities with faculty mentors who are established scholars in their fields of study. The three foci are accomplished through 7 key experiences as part of the doctoral students’ residency requirement. Research experiences include (a) participating in and presenting research/scholarship at a peer-reviewed research conference, (b) submitting a scholarly publication to a peer-reviewed journal as a primary or lead author, and (c) participating in grant work or writing for and obtaining either internal or external grant awards. Teaching practicum/apprenticeships prepare PhD candidates to independently teach undergraduate education courses.

Students are also mentored for professional development experiences with preservice or inservice teachers through (a) active supervision of novice teachers’ school placements or (b) professional development activities for experienced teachers. Finally, professional service is stimulated in candidates by requiring participation in professional organizations, service to the department or greater university community, and serving as a conference or journal reviewer for international or national organizations. In addition to their residency requirements, PhD students complete comprehensive examinations, a prospectus, and a dissertation. The students’ doctoral committee composed of ECE
graduate faculty as well as expert scholars from outside of our department guides these experiences.

**Where our program wants to go**

Two priorities shape our program and determine where we would like to go:

First, we are adding a class that focuses on scholarly reading to assist our students in becoming stronger and more knowledgeable critics of both quantitative and qualitative educational research. During the period of this review, we began offering a scholarly writing course that assists students’ academic writing. This course meets across three semesters and is focused on helping students create scholarship that can be submitted for publication. We envision a second class focused on scholarly reading. These course offerings are clearly aligned with the GSU strategic goal 2 to create a nationally renowned PhD program.

Second, the program faculty need more professional development and resources to engage technology for teaching, dissemination, and research. Developing doctoral students knowledge of and research on new media and technology are very important, we are offering more online and hybrid courses to meet the needs of both full-time and part-time students (ECE strategic goal Innovation). Integration of technology allows us to reach out to and incorporate the involvement of scholars from around the U.S. In addition, online integration has made it easier for many of our part-time PhD students to participate. A final metric of our focus on new media technologies is evident in the scholarship of several students who have focused research on technologies that can enhance children’s learning and well as students who have created digital products.

**What do you need to do or change to get there?**

To continue the advancement of the quality and impact of our PhD program we have two primary needs.

- Recruitment and retention high quality PhD students who share a strong commitment to our mission as an urban research institution requires marketing and communications strategy and effort that is beyond the skillset and time that faculty have. Although we have experienced increased interest in the PhD program over the last 5 years, we face increased competition for PhD students from the University of Georgia and EDD students at Kennesaw State University, as well as numerous competitors in other states. We do not currently have a recruitment budget and few avenues that allow us to advertise our program in strategic ways. We need resources that will allow us to compete with other top quality programs both within and outside the state. The investment in recruiting will easily be recouped when we have more of our PhD students placed in institutions of higher education across the country.

- The second need is to be able to support and sustain highly qualified PhD students. Recent efforts to increase the level of funding for PhD level students has placed a substantial burden on our ability to fund both full-time and part-time students. Although faculty do their best to support students with grant funds, this funding ebbs and flows from year to year and makes it difficult to promise funding to students in a timely fashion. In addition, because many students can
make more money as a classroom teacher than as a full-time PhD student, we are placed in a unique position of needing to pay our students more than the current funding rate in order to attract and maintain talented emerging scholars. New resources are needed to allow us to recruit and support these individuals.

- Program faculty need support in developing more technology-infused courses, hybrid courses and on-line opportunities for our students.

### PART V. WHERE DOES ECE WANT TO GO?

The Department of Early Childhood Education is a harmonious and innovative department that is facing the challenges of Birth through Grade 5 teacher education at the undergraduate (2 programs) and graduate (4 programs) levels. Over the past 3 years we addressed many of our needs and goals through our strategic planning process. As a result, some of our remaining goals require support external to the department.

The strengths of this department include:

1. The faculty is professionally prolific as demonstrated in the amount of external grants, number of data-based, peer-reviewed publications, and professional service in the form of journal editorships and leadership in professional organizations.
2. The department is a leader in the college for international opportunities for students and faculty to become global citizens.
3. The department faculty has strong community partnerships throughout the Atlanta metro region and utilizes these partnerships to support engaged scholarship and coursework.
4. As noted above and affirmed in student surveys, faculty in the department are outstanding teachers.
5. A collegial, respectful atmosphere contributes to abundant collaboration and productivity of the department.

The challenges of this department include:

1. The department developed recruitment communications and used social media technologies to amplify our research and program innovations and to aid in recruitment; however, we have limited support available from College and University resources in these areas. As of Jan 2015, the College plans to hire a recruitment professional; however, with so many programs across the college and limited marketing and public relations services, we anticipate that recruitment will continue to fall primarily on program coordinators.

2. The department offered 232 courses for FY14, not including supervision loads. Part-time instructors and doctoral student instructors cover the difference between faculty capacity and course offerings. Additionally, we are currently relying on
part-time instructors and doctoral students to teach and supervise 46 loads in the B.S.Ed. in fall/spring. These temporary instructors cannot effectively support students’ needs for the new, high-stakes edTPA assessment. New faculty lines are critically needed. (See Appendix, p. 73 for analysis of hiring needs.)

Summary of needs of individual programs:

**Birth through Five**
(1) Recruitment
   - college fair recruitment at technical colleges and two-year colleges
   - emails to tech-transfer students identified through Banner
   - advertising at early childhood conferences
   - social media recruitment
(2) Resources
   - identify free college or university resources that are available to support mathematics tutoring and test prep skills

**Bachelor of Science in Education**
(1) Recruitment
   - purposeful and systematic recruitment for the program
(2) Faculty Needs
   - hire and support qualified faculty in the content areas of the program (e.g., ESOL, social studies, mathematics)
(3) Innovative delivery models and opportunities for diverse student populations
   - develop delivery models that consider students who are working and who have families (Pell, first generation students)
   - identify locations for non-traditional students and others to study abroad

**Master’s in Elementary Education**
(1) Recruitment
   - purposeful and systematic recruitment of students for the program
(2) Faculty needs
   - hire and support qualified faculty in the content areas of the program (e.g., TSC)
(2) Coordinated resources in the master’s degree programs
   - Develop strategies for integration of technology, international experiences, and complexities of teaching in urban schools across master’s programs

**MED Urban Accelerated Certification and Masters Program**
(1) Recruitment
   - recruit post-bachelor teacher candidates for the program.
(2) Faculty needs
   - hire and support qualified faculty in the urban-focused content areas of the program, e.g., child development and social studies.
(3) Develop innovative delivery models and opportunities for diverse student populations
• streamline the UACM program to be more competitive without compromising the effectiveness of the program, e.g. collaborate with departments providing foundation courses (learning/child development)

(4) Obtain additional funding
• support collaboration with our partner university (UAH-Programa de Formacion del Profesorado Universitario y Desarrollo de la Innovacion Docente-Spain) to develop a viable long-term collaboration

Masters of Art in Teaching
(4) Recruitment
• provide a more constant stream of candidates for the MAT

(5) Faculty needs
• move limited term clinical faculty members to permanent clinical positions and have more affiliated faculty invested in and associated with the program

(6) Coordinate resources of the master’s degree programs
• design international opportunities for our master’s students who are working on public school schedules

(7) Obtain External Funding
• Seek external funding for support scholarships that could help with the cost of program participation and credentialing assessments

PHD in Elementary Education
(1) Recruitment and retention
• recruit high quality PhD students who share a strong commitment to our mission as an urban research institution
• increase the level of funding for PhD level students. Many students can make more money as a classroom teacher than as a full-time PhD student, so we are placed in a unique position of needing to pay our students more than the current funding rate in order to attract and maintain talented emerging scholars.
• Support for faculty in developing technology infused courses.

Based on (1) the strengths and challenges of the department (listed above), (2) results of the APR surveys, (3) the current ECE strategic plan, and (4) goals of individual programs, we identified the following goals:

Goal 1. As outlined in the ECE strategic plan and consistent with the GSU and COE strategic plans, the department will maintain our focus on high quality research productivity.

Objective 1. Continue to support research and improve reporting about research.

Action Plan 1. Convene the strategic plan subcommittee on research each semester to identify ways to support faculty research (this addresses lowest rated faculty survey item 3.93/6).
Action Plan 2. Provide administrative support for faculty to improve data quality in Digital Measures to allow accurate tracking of research productivity.

Action Plan 3. Construct a digital media site in the front office to dissemination current research activities in the department.

Action Plan 4. Provide staff support and faculty mentorship for pre and post grant awards as needed.

Goal 2. As outlined in the ECE strategic plan and consistent with GSU and COE strategic plans as well as the goals of individual undergraduate and graduate programs, the department aims to (1) strengthen our current undergraduate and graduate programs in teacher education and (2) leverage our metro Atlanta location to create programs for educators in non-school based settings.

Objective 1. Revise programs as needed to reflect changing credentialing requirements and changing demographics of public school students. (See BSE and UACM goals)

Action Plan 1. Self-evaluate all programs annually prior to curriculum revisions deadlines to consider course and program revisions with attention to changing student demographics (dual language learners) and needed innovations (STE(A)M).

Action Plan 2. Curate available professional learning resources for faculty development in, for example, EdTPA, Teacher Keys.

Action Plan 3. Analyze hiring needs yearly to provide accurate and up to date data for hiring decisions and to assure diverse faculty hires. (See Appendix, p. 73 for current analysis.)

Objective 2. Develop/increase learning technologies and other innovations for programs.

Action Plan 1: Create a plan for assigning load for faculty creating online course content and make professional learning resources available for faculty development in hybrid course development, on-line course development. Goal is to add 2 new hybrid courses per year.

Action Plan 2. Apply yearly for internal technology grants to support undergraduate and graduate programs.

Action Plan 3. Conduct an assessment of affordances and strengths of requiring students to “bring your own technology” (BYOT).

Action Plan 4. Expand potential applicant pool through on-going development of cutting-edge programs (e.g., Creative and Innovative Education Masters).
**Goal 3.** Consistent with the GSU, COE and ECE strategic plans, the department aims to increase the number, diversity and quality of our applicant pool in both undergraduate and graduate programs.

**Objective 1.** Evaluate and enhance our on-line communications, marketing, and recruitment strategies conducted via social media.

*Action Plan 1.* Initiate regular, on-going review of the departmental web site to assure accuracy and ‘friendliness’ for prospective students.

*Action Plan 2.* Consult with newly hired COE communications and marketing expert to evaluate current plan and develop a cost-effective communications/recruitment plan for the future.

*Action Plan 3.* Assign graduate student support each semester for on-line recruiting activities such as MailChimp.

**Objective 2.** Increase recruitment of Latino and other under-represented populations in our programs.

*Action Plan 1.* Identify significant community resources for assistance in dissemination of recruitment materials for undergraduate and graduate programs, e.g., Clarkston community refugee organizations.