



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

To: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

From: Joseph P. Frey

Subject: Monroe College, B. S., Early Childhood Education, at the Main and New Rochelle Campuses

Date: December 27, 2010

Authorizations:

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment for Monroe College, authorizing the College to offer a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Early Childhood/Special Needs Education at its main and New Rochelle Campuses? Master plan amendment is required because this will be the College's first baccalaureate program in the discipline area of Education.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State regulation

Proposed Handling

The question will come before the full Board at its January 2011 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

Background Information

The mission of Monroe College, Bronx, is to provide professional, career-oriented higher education to students from diverse backgrounds. The Regents have authorized the College to award the degrees of Associate in Science (A.S.), Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.), Associate in Occupational Studies (A.O.S.), Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.), Master of Science (M.S.), and Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) The College offers programs in the disciplinary areas of Business, the Health Professions, and the Social Sciences.

Program Purpose. The purpose of the proposed B.S. program in early childhood education supports the College's mission to provide career-focused education that focuses on the special needs of students in high-need schools. Monroe College developed the program to address teacher attrition and retention through a three prong approach. The curriculum focuses on high need student populations aligned with NCATE and New York State Learning Standards. The College has developed close partnerships with high-need public and charter schools. The program will incorporate research-based mentoring practices, which extends beyond the program of study years. Monroe has agreements to work in partnership with four schools: P.S. 33, Bronx; PS. 73, Bronx; South Bronx Charter School for International Culture and the Arts; and the City School District of New Rochelle.

Review Findings. The Readiness Review visit and external program review reports reflect sound policies, curriculum, resources, and academic support. The College's response to issues raised in the Readiness Review report is in accordance with team findings and recommendations. The pedagogical core, liberal arts content, and field experiences/student teaching requirements are in compliance with the Commissioner's Regulations and certification requirements. Based on an audit report, Monroe College is financially sound and has the necessary resources to offer the program, which includes the hiring of full-time qualified faculty upon Regents authorization and program registration.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Accreditation. The curriculum comprises 120 semester credits of coursework, including 54 credits of general education core liberal arts and science, 30 credits in an interdisciplinary concentration that covers depth and breadth in the discipline, and 36 credits focused on teacher preparation pedagogical core that includes 180 hours of field experiences and 400 clock hours of college-supervised student teaching, which exceeds the certification requirements of 100 hours of field experience and 40 days of student teaching.

Academic assessment procedures are in place and are aligned with program goals. Monroe College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education; it is the intent of the College to seek NCATE accreditation for the Early Childhood/Special Needs program upon authorization and registration.

Faculty. Courses will be taught by faculty with appropriate graduate degrees as well as relevant school-based experience. Nine full-time faculty at the College are qualified to teach in the program; four hold doctoral degrees and five hold master's degrees. Three full-time doctorally prepared faculty will be hired with credentials in early childhood, linguistics, and literacy. The College is committed to having all of the required faculty members in place before it actively recruits any students for the program. A Dean of the School of Education and one full-time faculty member will be hired in the spring of 2011 and two additional full-time education faculty members will be hired between January and May 2012. The majority of education courses will be taught by full-time faculty, and teaching assignments will not exceed 12 semester hours a semester.

Students. Applicants to the proposed program will follow the same admissions and testing procedures as those in the College's other programs: completed application, admissions essay, high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma, high school transcript, two letters of professional reference, transcripts from all previous colleges or universities, a high school GPA of 80 or above, placement in college-level English and mathematics, interviews to assess a student's interest, motivation to become a teacher, and communication skills. The Admissions Offices will develop a program to recruit qualified candidates from the current body of teaching assistants and paraprofessionals working in the early childhood program in New York City and surrounding communities.

Monroe College is highly committed to student and faculty diversity. The following tables reflect this commitment.

Table 1. Student Ethnicity

Ethnicity	# Students	% of Total
American Indian	11	Less than 1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	195	3%
Black, Non-Hispanic	2,697	37%
Hispanic	2,738	38%
Multi-Racial	98	1%
Non-Resident Alien	230	3%
Unknown/Other	264	4%
West Indian	881	12%
White Caucasian	138	2%
Total	7,252	100%

Table 2. Faculty Ethnicity

Ethnicity	# Students	% of Total
American Indian	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	35	10%
Black, Non-Hispanic	146	41%
Hispanic	34	9%
Multi-Racial	1	Less than 1%
Non-Resident Alien	0	0
Unknown/Other	0	0
West Indian	0	0
White Caucasian	143	40%
Total	359	100%

In its first year, the Bronx campus will enroll 90 students and the New Rochelle campus 60 students. In the fifth year of operation, the College expects the total enrollment to be between 450 and 500 students.

Resources. Resources related to space, technology, and allocation of library resources to enhance the collection are all in place. An acquisition plan for the library collection has been developed that includes adding early childhood related volumes totaling 1,875. The Monroe College libraries belong to the WALDO (Westchester Academic Library Directors' Association) library consortium and are also members of METRO (Metropolitan New York Library Council), which provides continuing education and training for librarians and support staff. In addition the College libraries are full members of OCLC (Online Computer Library Center), which has over 35,000,000 bibliographic records.

Program Registration. The Department has determined that the proposed programs, if authorized, would meet the standards for registration of teacher education programs set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

Planning Review. The College expresses the need for the proposed program by referencing *Teacher Supply and Demand in New York State in 2005-2006*. The report indicates that New York City will continue to have shortages of highly qualified teachers in high poverty schools. Six institutions in New York City and four in the Mid-Hudson region offer baccalaureate programs leading to Initial certification in Early Childhood Education. One of the six in the City is located in the Bronx, the College of Mount Saint Vincent. Three of the four Mid-Hudson institutions are located in Westchester County: Concordia College, Manhattanville College, and Nyack College. The Teacher Supply and Demand report predicts that demand for early childhood teachers will continue to increase due to policies such as Universal Pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten. In addition, teacher attrition and retention in high poverty schools remains an ongoing concern. The Monroe College Early Childhood program focuses on special needs and urban settings, followed by mentoring support beyond program completion, in collaboration with partnership schools.

Following standard procedure, the Department canvassed the colleges and universities in New York City. Nine responses were received. Two institutions expressed support for the proposed program. Seven had no comment or stated that the program would have no impact on their institutions.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize Monroe College to offer a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) program in Early Childhood/Special Needs Education as its first baccalaureate program in the discipline area of Education. This amendment will be effective until January 31, 2012, unless the Department registers the program prior to that date, in which case master plan amendment shall be without term.