

Board Meeting
March 13, 2007

ESTABLISH MASTER OF EDUCATION (M.ED.) IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT,
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, CHICAGO

Action: Approve the Establishment of the Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Youth Development, College of Education, Chicago

Funding: No Funding Required

The Chancellor at Chicago with the advice of the Chicago Senate, the Graduate College, and the College of Education, recommends the establishment of a new degree program, the Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Youth Development.

The proposed degree will be offered through the College of Education's Educational Psychology Area. It is designed to enhance the College of Education's ability to fulfill its mission by preparing individuals focused on serving youth via youth service organizations during out-of-school time, as well as through conducting research within the field of youth development. It will also serve as a point of entry into the doctoral program in Educational Psychology for students who do not have the typical educational background and preparation.

In the past 15 years the field of youth development has gained increased attention due to research evidence that youth—particularly low income, diverse, urban youth—able to participate in high quality out-of-school programs demonstrate significant decreases in negative behaviors and significant increases in positive behaviors and reflect

improved developmental outcomes. Due to this research there has been a proliferation of youth-serving organizations, as well as a significant increase in federal, State, and private funding for youth development programs across the country, particularly in urban areas.

Evaluation research on the effectiveness of youth service organizations suggests that one of the main factors in the success of these programs is the quality of staff, but that staff rarely have or are provided adequate training for engaging in this work. Despite the evident importance of staff, very few programs exist that are specifically aimed at developing high quality youth development professionals. The proposed program will fill a void in the education and development of such professionals and will supply individuals equipped to conduct high quality research in this field. No comparable programs exist in the State.

The curriculum is designed to provide core competencies in developmental theory and research. The program includes an applied option for professionals to work in the field of youth development and a thesis research option for those who wish to seek a doctoral degree. A minimum of 32 credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree must be completed.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University concurs. This action is subject to further review and approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.