Approved by the Board of Trustees

May 22, 2025

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Board Meeting

May 22, 2025

ESTABLISH THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CHILD HEALTH, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AND THE GRADUATE COLLEGE, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Master of Science in Child Health, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and the Graduate College

**Funding:** No new funding required

The chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, with the advice of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Senate, recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) to establish the Master of Science in Child Health.

The proposed MS in Child Health is designed for students who wish to pursue careers as child life specialists or related positions. Child life specialists, who are certified by the Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP), are health care professionals who help children and families navigate medical intervention to reduce the effects of stress and trauma related to injury, illness, hospitalization, bereavement, and related medical experiences. The MS in Child Health is designed to meet the requirements of Child Life Specialist Certification Exam eligibility, which includes a 600-hour clinical internship under the supervision of a certified child life specialist. While the program is focused on creating a pathway into the child life profession, graduates will be prepared for other relevant career pathways including extension work, community health, or family life education.

The ACLP notes there is currently a shortage of qualified certified child life specialists. The ACLP recognizes clinical internships, as commonly structured, are a significant barrier to certification. Typically, these clinical internships are outside of degree programs, unpaid, and difficult to obtain even if the student has financial resources. The proposed program is designed to remove barriers to these internships by making them part of the degree.

The Department of Human Development and Family Studies has one child life faculty member already and has the funds to hire a second one. Tuition from the proposed program will generate revenue to support both these positions. The current child life faculty member will alter their workload to half course instruction and half clinical supervision. (Currently, they are 100 percent course instruction.). There will be no impact on other departmental faculty. Existing advising and career services are sufficient to support the proposed program as are existing facilities. The University Library’s collections, resources, and services are sufficient to support the proposed program.

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 executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further senate jurisdiction is involved.

The president of the University of Illinois System recommends approval. This action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.