

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
School of Education

*Proposal to the Administrative Boards of General College and
the College of Arts and Sciences
for an*
Undergraduate Minor in Education

The Need for an Education Minor

An Undergraduate Minor in Education has special appeal to UNC students. In 2010, UNC ranked 6th among large schools contributing the most graduating seniors to Teach for America (TFA). According to UNC Career Services, Teach for America hired more graduates than any other single employer in 2009 and 2010. Clearly, undergraduates manifest not merely an interest in education and teaching, but also a desire to serve under-served populations and their communities.

Other departments offer or have created courses to address student interests. Yet, formal course work in the School of Education is unavailable to undergraduate students who are not enrolled in any of the School's professional preparation programs. Undergraduates, who may be considering teaching, but remain unsure of their career goals, including those eyeing TFA, have few structured opportunities to observe and work in school classrooms or investigate current educational issues. Students who may not be interested in teaching but who are interested in educational issues also have few options to pursue their interest. Educating future civic leaders about persistent educational problems such as the achievement gap and the alarming dropout rate is arguably as critical as producing future educational leaders.

This proposed Undergraduate Minor in Education (UME) will serve as a valuable opportunity to address student interests in education in a program of studies that includes courses in the School of Education as well as courses within the College of Arts and Sciences with prior approval.

Students may apply for the UME at any point in their undergraduate career and will be required to complete a five-course sequence. The Undergraduate Minor in Education program (UME) will be organized and administered in the School of Education. The program must conform to the mission, goals, and requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences. Eligible students will comply with "minor standards" already in place for UNC-CH undergraduates.

Goal Statement

The five-course minor is intended to provide opportunities for undergraduates to

- Investigate current schooling, community, and policy directions including charter schools and vouchers, school reform models, and private initiatives;
- Develop the capacity to think critically about current educational issues and participate knowledgeably and productively in public debates about these issues;

- Observe and work in schools and other educational settings (e.g., museums and community-based programs, non-profits, and governmental organizations);
- Make connections with other disciplines as possible and integrate perspectives from a student's major with the courses taken in the Education Minor.

Proposed Curriculum Organization and Course Options

Curriculum requirements include the completion of five courses, the typical number for other UNC-CH academic minors. The following section includes the current School of Education (EDUC) courses for the minor. (Appendix A provides possible courses to be developed for the minor in the future).

Core: (3 courses from among the following)

- EDUC 250: Risk and Resiliency
- EDUC 403: School, Families, and Culture
- EDUC 421/422: Community Organizations and Children I and II
- EDUC 521: History and Culture of the High School
- EDUC 522: Schools, Cultures and Communities
- EDUC 532: Effective Teaching: Understanding Students
- EDUC 533: Effective Teaching: Diversity
- EDUC 535: Teachers and Schools
- EDUC XXX: Schools, Societies, and Schooling: Foundations for Contemporary Education Policy and Practice (Course under development, awaiting approval and permanent number. Will be offered Spring 2012)
- EDUC XXX: What We Can Learn About Learning: Current Psychological Research on Educational Controversies, Fads, and Emphases (Course under development, awaiting approval and permanent number. Will be offered Fall 2012)

1 Course outside SOE/Allied: Can be courses from a student's major or other approved course from within the College of Arts and Sciences. A list of courses within the CAS that focus on schooling, community, and educational policy are being reviewed and contacts with appropriate department chairs are underway. This list of courses, together with letters of support, will be submitted to the Administrative Boards for approval prior to Spring 2012. Courses from a student's major or outside of the list of approved courses will be considered on a case by case basis.

Capstone: (1 course) (This course will be developed during 2011-2012 in order to accommodate any undergraduates admitted to the minor in Fall 2012. The course could be taken as an independent study).

- A culminating course that brings together the experiences from the minor courses in a final project and reflective experience. This could potentially include service or internship experiences in the community. This course should include an

integration of a student's study within their major with studies in the Education minor.

Experiential Components of the Minor

The study of education as theory and practice as well as understanding educational contexts, research and policy requires experience within educational settings. As such, many of the courses suggested for the minor have one or more specific experiential components as part of the course work. Such components include, but are not limited to:

- On-site school experiences
- Undergraduate research in educational settings
- Service learning as applicable in educational settings
- Technology and media engagement and advancement about and within schools
- Courses of contemporary focus and interest applied to school settings

It should be noted that staff and faculty within the School of Education have extensive experience in placing students within local schools and educational settings. Currently, we place students from five different SOE programs in schools in at least six different school districts.

Student Application and Admission

Students may apply for the UME at any point in their undergraduate career and will be required to complete a five-course sequence. Eligible students will comply with "minor standards" already in place for UNC undergraduates. These are:

- More than half of the credit hours and courses taken to satisfy the minor must be counted exclusively in the minor.
- At least nine hours of the four-or five-course minor must be completed at UNC-CH.
- Some courses in the minor may be counted as General Education courses if allowable by the unit or department.
- A minimum of 12 hours of C (not C-) grades or better.
- All courses in the minor department or curriculum must be taken for a regular letter grade.

An application process will be established that will require a statement of interest and purpose and an academic plan. An application process ensures student commitment in completing the minor.

Charge and Committee

Chancellor Holden Thorp and Dean G. Williamson McDiarmid have charged a committee of School of Education faculty and student representatives to tender a proposal for an Undergraduate Minor in Education. This proposal is a culmination of a period of investigation, meeting, and deliberation by committee members.

Members of the committee submitting this proposal are Cheryl Mason Bolick, Jocelyn Glazier, Laura Gutmann (graduate student representative), Gerry Unks, Lynda Stone (Chair), Nina Brashears, Lucy Berrier, and George Ramsay (three undergraduate student representatives). Dean Bill McDiarmid and Assistant Dean Deborah Eaker-Rich are *ex officio* members of the committee. Thanks to Jill Fitzgerald for feedback on an earlier draft of the proposal.

Appendix A


Proposed New EDUC Courses to be developed for the minor:ⁱ

- “*Families, Communities, Nations, and Beyond,*” a course in which students consider education broadly. This is one course in which materials can well be connected to research in the social, behavioral, health and medical sciences as they relate to education. Topics include interdependent governmental structures and economies, globalization and neo-liberalism, needs of underrepresented and under resourced populations, trends in development and sustainability, services on global and local scales, and comparative studies as these relate to educational contexts.
- “*Literacies for Contemporary Life,*” a course in which students take up the extended question of what it means to be literate today. Topics include theories of new literacies, overviews of diverse media, educational needs for today and the future. Students might develop literacy proposals and projects for pre-collegiate students.
- “*Educational Policy Today,*” a course that provides an overview of the various policy domains that effect education and schooling. Student investigation including information gathering and interaction with policy makers might culminate in a specific policy proposal.
- “*Educational and Schooling Reform, Past and Present,*” a course that takes up the ever-present issue of reform, its failures and possible successes with particular emphasis on school structures and institutions. For example, one emphasis might be alternative education sites and reform results such as NGOs and Charter Schools.
- “*Working with Youth,*” a service learning experience in which students take their scholarly interests into the world. With a seminar for sharing experiences, this might be the capstone course of the Undergraduate Minor Program.

ⁱ Where possible, new EDUC courses will be submitted so that they might also meet general education requirements.



TO: The Administrative Boards of the General College and the College of Arts and Sciences

From: Bill McDiarmid, Dean 

RE: Support for the Undergraduate Minor Proposal

DATE: September 14, 2011

More than a year ago, Chancellor Thorp suggested that the School of Education develop a minor in Education to offer to undergraduates. The faculty in the School took up the idea with enthusiasm. They are aware that many students who do not plan to apply to the School are very interested in educational issues and concerned with improving educational opportunities for disadvantaged students. In addition, Teach for America (TFA) has become the number one employer of graduates of the CAS.

The minor provides access to course work in the School previously reserved for SOE students only. Many of these courses provide structured opportunities to observe and work in school classrooms or investigate current educational issues. Whether or not undergraduates eventually choose careers as educators, we believe that future civic leaders and citizens will benefit from learning more about persistent educational problems such as the achievement gap and the alarming dropout rate.

In short, we in the School are excited at the prospect of this new minor. We look forward to working with colleagues in CAS to provide avenues through which our undergraduates can learn more about issues of educational policy and practice. We hope that the Administrative Review Boards approve the program so we can welcome students into the minor in the fall of 2012.