

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

March 4, 2015

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(1)(C) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants probationary approval to Mitchell College for the period March 4, 2015, to September 30, 2016, with a report due and on-site visit required no later than spring 2016 that addresses the issue of faculty resources as required under the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standard 5, *Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development*, for the purpose of certifying graduates from Mitchell College in the following area:

<u>Program</u>	<u>Grades</u>	<u>Certification</u>	<u>Program Type</u>
Early Childhood	Nursery-Grade 3	Initial	Undergraduate

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____ this fourth day of March, Two Thousand Fifteen.

Signed: _____
Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education
FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Interim Commissioner of Education
DATE: March 4, 2015
SUBJECT: Recommendation for Probationary Approval: Mitchell College Early Childhood Education Program

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

Mitchell College, founded in 1938, is a coeducational, residential institution of higher education that grants both associate and baccalaureate degrees. Serving mostly students from the greater New London, Connecticut, area, students also come to Mitchell College from 24 other states, the District of Columbia and four other countries. Current enrollment statistics show a student body consisting of 778 students, with 85 percent (661) of these students being of full-time status. Students of color account for 34 percent of the student body, and the student body male to female ratio is 52 percent male students to 48 percent female students. The average class size for Mitchell College is 15 students per class and the student to faculty ratio is 16 students to 1 faculty member. Mitchell College is currently accredited by the New England Association of School and Colleges (NEASC).

Mitchell College is approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) to offer just one educator preparation program at the baccalaureate, initial preparation level, which is the #113 early childhood education (Nursery-Grade 3) certification. Currently, Mitchell College does not meet NCATE standard 5, *Faculty Qualifications, Performance and Development* (Attachment A), due to insufficient numbers of full-time, highly qualified faculty members. Additionally, Department certification regulations mandate specific areas of candidate training through coursework and clinical experiences to ensure that candidates recommended for the #113 certification are prepared adequately to serve as early childhood educators in Connecticut schools. Mitchell no longer has a sufficient number of full-time faculty members to ensure that candidates receive the training and clinical supervision required by regulation. This report presents Mitchell College's program approval history, an overview of current faculty numbers, and a rationale for the Department's recommendation of probationary approval for the Mitchell College early childhood education program.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

In order to hire sufficient faculty numbers and develop the performance-based assessment system required by NCATE standards, Mitchell College twice requested of the SBE a one-year extension for its continuing approval visit, mandated through regulation on a five-year visit cycle (Attachment B). The SBE granted both extensions, first moving the

Mitchell College approval deadline from September 30, 2006, to January 31, 2007, and then again to September 30, 2008. In order to meet the September 30, 2008, approval deadline, Mitchell College hosted the required continuing approval visit during fall 2007. Based on visiting team findings, Mitchell was placed on probationary approval by the SBE for the period October 1, 2008, to September 30, 2009, for failed standards and a critical Area for Improvement (AFI), and was required to host a focused visit no later than spring 2009. Specifically, the visiting team determined that Mitchell met four of the six NCATE standards (3, 4, 5 and 6), but failed to meet the requirements of standard 1, *Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions*, and standard 2, *Assessment System and Unit Evaluation*. At the time of the visit, Mitchell College did not have a fully-developed and implemented assessment system or the candidate performance data required by NCATE standards 1 and 2. The AFI was identified under standard 3, *Field Experiences and Clinical Practice*, due to Mitchell not having defined and implemented criteria for the selection of cooperating teachers for the program's major practicum experience.

During spring 2009, Mitchell hosted the required focused visit and based on this visit, the SBE voted on July 1, 2009, to move Mitchell College from probationary approval to full approval through September 30, 2012, due to Mitchell having done significant work since the 2007 visit relative to developing and implementing an assessment system. Specifically, two new full-time faculty members had been hired, and at the point of the 2009 visit, all required assessment system components were in place and the required candidate data was being collected, analyzed and used for program evaluation purposes (NCATE standards 1 and 2). Additionally, Mitchell had developed, and was implementing, specific criteria for the selection of cooperating teachers for the program's major practicum experience (NCATE standard 3).

During spring 2012, Mitchell College conducted its regularly scheduled, full continuing approval visit. Based on visit findings, the SBE granted Mitchell College full continuing approval through September 30, 2017, due to Mitchell having met all six NCATE standards.

At the point of the 2012 continuing approval visit, the Mitchell early childhood education program had four full-time faculty members. However, since the spring 2012 visit, Mitchell has been involved in strategic planning and reorganization efforts, resulting in the loss of all but one full-time faculty member for the program, which does not meet NCATE standard 5, *Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development*, requirements regarding sufficient number of highly qualified, full-time faculty. Additionally, Department certification regulations mandate specific areas of candidate training through coursework and clinical experiences to ensure that candidates recommended for the #113 certification are prepared adequately to serve as early childhood educators in Connecticut schools. Due to faculty losses since 2012, the Mitchell early childhood education program no longer has a sufficient number of full-time faculty members to ensure that candidates receive the training and clinical supervision required by regulation.

Due to concerns regarding inadequate full-time faculty numbers, Department leaders met with the Mitchell College President, Ms. Janet Steinmayer, Dr. Patricia Phillips, the one remaining early childhood education program faculty member, and Dr. Catherine Wright,

Chair of the Mitchell Behavioral Sciences Department, on November 12, 2014. During the meeting, Ms. Steinmayer, hired as Mitchell's new President on July 1, 2014, expressed her commitment to the Mitchell College early childhood education program and articulated her plans to bring on new, full-time faculty members for the program. Since the November 2014 meeting, Ms. Steinmayer has hired one additional, highly qualified, full-time faculty member and is now in the process of hiring another full-time faculty member. Additionally, Ms. Steinmayer indicated that as the program grows and enrollment numbers begin to approximate pre-strategic planning enrollment numbers—program enrollment has declined from approximately 15 candidates per year to seven—she will hire an additional full-time faculty member.

The new, full-time faculty member hire is a step in the right direction for Mitchell in terms of meeting NCATE standard 5 and training requirements relative to the #113 early childhood certification. However, in addition to two full-time faculty members, the program is still depending upon a small number (n=2) of adjunct faculty members to ensure that candidates are receiving the training required by NCATE standards and the #113 early childhood certification regulations.

RECOMMENDATION/JUSTIFICATION

Due to insufficient numbers of highly qualified, full-time faculty members, I recommend that the Mitchell College educator preparation program in early childhood education be granted probationary approval for the period March 4, 2015, to September 30, 2016. The probationary approval will remain until Mitchell can hire at least one more full-time faculty member with appropriate qualifications to ensure that program candidates are trained to serve in Connecticut under the #113 early childhood certification in accordance with NCATE standards and certification regulations.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

If granted probationary approval by the Board of Education for the period March 4, 2015, to September 30, 2016, Mitchell College will submit a report to the Department and host an on-site visit no later than spring 2016 in order for a visiting team to evaluate faculty numbers and qualifications. In support of Mitchell's hiring efforts, the Department is working closely with Mitchell around clarifying training requirements described by certification regulations and NCATE standard 5 related to the preparation of highly qualified educators who will serve as early childhood educators for Connecticut schools under the #113 certification. Additionally, on January 14, 2015, the Department organized and facilitated a symposium dedicated to educating and informing Connecticut institutions with currently approved #113 early childhood programs and institutions considering seeking approval for a #113 early childhood program, about NCATE standard and certification regulation requirements for the #113 certification, which the two full-time faculty members of Mitchell's early childhood education program attended.

Pending results of Mitchell College's efforts to fully comply with the requirements of NCATE standard 5 and #113 early childhood certification regulations, a report and recommendation will be presented to the SBE for its consideration.

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Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification

Reviewed by: Nancy L. Pugliese
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**National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
Professional Standards for the Accreditation of
Schools, Colleges and Departments of Education**

Standard 1 – Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

- Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Skills for Teacher Candidates
- Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills for Teacher Candidates
- Student Learning for Teacher Candidates
- Knowledge and Skills for Other School Professionals
- Student Learning for Other School Professionals
- Professional Dispositions for All Candidates

Standard 2 – Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on the applicant qualifications, the candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

- Assessment System
- Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation
- Use of Data for Program Improvement

Standard 3 – Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

- Collaboration between Unit and School Partners
- Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice
- Candidates' Development and Demonstration of Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions to Help All Students Learn

Standard 4 – Diversity

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates and diverse students in P-12 schools.

- Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences
- Experiences Working with Diverse Faculty
- Experiences Working with Diverse Candidates
- Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

Standard 5 – Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance; they also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

- Qualified Faculty
- Modeling Best Professional Practices in Teaching
- Modeling Best Professional Practices in Scholarship
- Modeling Best Professional Practices in Service Collaboration
- Unit Evaluation of Professional Education Faculty Performance
- Unit Facilitation of Professional Development

Standard 6 – Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

- Unit Leadership and Authority
- Unit Budget
- Personnel
- Unit Facilities

**Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies
for Educator Preparation Program Approval
Section 10-145d-9(g)**

Board action

After reviewing the recommendation of the Review Committee, the Commissioner shall make one or more recommendations to the Board. Based on the Commissioner's recommendation, the Board shall take one of the following actions.

(1) For programs requesting continuing approval:

- (A) Grant full program approval for five years, or for a period of time to bring the program into alignment with the five year approval cycle. The Board may require that an interim report be submitted to the Department, on a date set by the Board, prior to the end of the approval period.
- (B) Grant provisional approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if substantial non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully MET. The Board may require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (C) Grant probationary approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if significant and far-reaching non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully MET. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (D) Deny approval.

(2) For new programs in institutions which have current approved programs:

- (A) Grant full program approval for a period of time to bring the new program into the five year approval cycle of all other programs offered by the institution. The Board may require that a written report be submitted to the Department, on a date set by the Board, prior to the end of the approval period.

- (B) Grant provisional approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if substantial non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully MET. The Board may require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (C) Grant probationary approval not to exceed three years, if significant and far-reaching non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully MET. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (D) Deny approval.

(3) For new programs starting in institutions without other approved programs:

- (A) Grant program approval for two years. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, after two semester of operation a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in implementing the new program. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (B) Following the on-site visit after two years of operation, grant full program approval for three years. The Board may require that a written report be submitted to the Department, on a date set by the Board, prior to the end of the approval period.
- (C) Following the on-site visit after two years of operation, grant provisional approval for a time period not to exceed three years, if substantial non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully MET. The Board may require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (D) Following the on-site visit after two years of operation, grant probationary approval for up to three years, if significant and far-reaching non-compliance with current standards is identified. The institution shall submit to the Review Committee, on a date set by the Board, a written report which addresses the professional education unit's progress in meeting the standards which were not fully MET. The Board shall require an on-site visit in addition to this report.
- (E) Deny approval.