

Annual Academic Department and Program Report Academic Year 2014-15

N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center

Submitted by

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I. Narrative Description of the Status of the Discipline(s) from a National Perspective (including emerging issues and trends)

Providing high quality early childhood education and securing access to affordable high quality care for children birth to age five continue as high visibility issues presently across the country and in South Carolina. An increasing body of research from multiple sectors of the academic community on brain development is also provoking new thinking on issues like school readiness, the importance of social and emotional development, and the role of play in the development of creativity and critical thinking.

II. Program

a. Mission statement

- Demonstrate and explore best practices in early childhood curriculum and provide opportunities for research, observation and practicum purposes.
- Provide quality childcare and early education for children ages two through kindergarten.
- Model and engage in child advocacy in the Charleston community.

b. Strategies and tactics in the College's strategic plan your department or program would place as highest priorities

STRATEGY 3: DEVELOP AND RETAIN A HIGHLY QUALIFIED AND DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF.

1. For all ranks and titles, improve salaries for faculty and staff to national competitive levels; recognize and reward annual performance by faculty and staff in both annual raises and special awards; and where applicable, improve benefits packages for faculty and staff.
4. Enhance resources needed to recruit, hire, nurture, and retain minority faculty and staff.

- 6. Enhance funding for staff development programs.
- 11. Expand availability of the College’s Early Childhood Development Center, providing a more family-friendly campus to aid in recruitment and retention of high-quality faculty and staff.

STRATEGY 7: PROVIDE UP-TO-DATE FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENHANCE ACADEMIC, CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS.

- 3. Promote, wherever possible, future growth of College infrastructure through sustainable design, materials, and processes.

STRATEGY 8: COLLABORATE WITH LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO LEVERAGE HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A STRONGER SOUTH CAROLINA.

- 5. Establish additional relationships with PK-12 schools exemplified by established partnerships with area schools and districts through sustainable design, materials, and processes.

c. Program goals and their relationship to the College’s strategic plan

Our program provides support to the EHHP and the campus and general communities-at-large that connects to the College’s strategic plan in both direct and indirect ways. Our mission and goals focus on consistent program excellence grounded in current research, furthered by professional development, and shared through service and advocacy at the local, state, and national level.

CofC Strategic Plan Goals	ECDC
1. Provide students a highly personalized education based on a liberal arts and sciences core and enhanced by opportunities for experiential learning	ECDC employs between 30-40 undergraduate and graduate students and hosts between 400-800 students annually for academic, practicum, and/or research activities.
2. Develop or enhance nationally recognized undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in areas that take advantage of our history, culture and location in Charleston and contribute to the well-being of the	ECDC is nationally accredited and also certified outdoor classroom program. As a demonstration program, we provide CofC students, parents, and members of the greater community with the opportunity to see and experience

region	excellence in practice. Our curriculum is contextualized to our neighborhood, campus, and community.
3. Provide students the global and interdisciplinary perspectives necessary to address the social, economic, environmental, ethical, scientific, and political issues of the 21 st century.	Our population reflects the socio-cultural and linguistic diversity of the CofC campus and surrounding community. Our curriculum and activities are responsive to the needs and interests of children, staff, and those with whom we work on campus and in the greater community.
4. Establish and promote a vibrant campus-life atmosphere dedicated to education of the whole person through integration of curricular and co-curricular or extracurricular activities.	ECDC has been a full participant in campus life for 40 years, celebrating that anniversary during the 2014-2015 year. We offer many ways that CofC students can engage with the program through employment, volunteer work, and service-learning activity. We provide the limited number of CofC employee/student parents we are able to serve with much needed affordable child care of the highest quality.
5. Achieve financial security by creating a new financial model for the College of Charleston	ECDC consistently makes efficient use of its resources, promotes and models sustainable practices, and actively engages in efforts to seek supplemental funding through various sources to keep our costs low while maintaining the highest possible standards.

d. Student Learning Outcomes of the program

“At ECDC, we believe the purpose of early childhood education is to help children acquire skills and dispositions needed to become life-long self-directed learners and citizens. We believe that in an increasingly global environment, we learn these things in a community that celebrates both the things we share in common and the differences that make us each unique and interesting human beings. We believe that every child has special needs, so all children are accepted and welcomed at ECDC and fully included in all dimensions of our program.”

Our program places the highest priority on development of “executive functioning” skills, the dispositions and abilities currently determined by research in the cognitive psychology, education, and health sciences literature to be the best predictors of long-term social, academic, and life success. These skills include self-regulation, focus, persistence, curiosity, problem solving and conflict-resolution, critical thinking, and language and literacy skills.

III. Narrative Summary and Analysis of Departmental or Program Accomplishments

- a. Please discuss any of the following that apply to your department or program over the last year, making reference to any data provided at <http://ir.cofc.edu/aadeptdata/> or data that you supply in the Supporting Data section as appropriate. What are your strengths, and where would you like to develop?

- Curricular offerings unusual for your program(s):

Unlike most preschools, we do not use commercially-produced curriculum products at ECDC. We model an idiosyncratic interpretation of the *writing workshop* used in public schools, and an “emergent” and long-term project-based curriculum that is based on current research and responds to the particular needs, strengths, and interests of the children in each group. We address state standards by balancing and documenting child-initiated and teacher directed activity.

- Instructional contributions to other units, programs, and initiatives, including the Honors and First Year Experience programs, undergraduate and graduate programs outside your department program, the REACH program, etc.:

Students from both the Honors and First Year Experience programs participated in practicum activities with their professors at ECDC. We did not have a REACH intern in 2014, but we do regularly participate as an internship site when a good match can be found.

- Distance education or hybrid course offerings:

Our website is an on-going resource for other programs locally, across the country, and internationally. In 2014-2015 we engaged in long-distance consulting efforts with programs in the local area, South Carolina upstate, North Carolina, and the Pan-American School in Brazil.

- Departmental or program contributions to inter-disciplinarity, internationalization/globalization, personalized education and high impact student experiences (such as research and creative activities, civic engagement, study away, internships, peer education and service learning) during review year:

ECDC hosted students from 19 course sections in three departments and the Honors and First-Year programs, and over 800 observation hours in 2014-2015 as well as a visiting scholar from China, one faculty research project, and a grant project collaboration with the Office of Sustainability and Boeing. Changes in departmental or program enrollments. We also hosted pre-conference visitations for participants in the *Association for Constructivist Teaching* and we sponsored two workshop sessions conducted by the *NatureExplore* (Arbor Foundation/Dimensions Research Group) for participants at the 2015 *Early Childhood Summit*.

- Departmental or program workload productivity – N/A
- Summary of student and/or graduate accomplishments – N/A

- b. Please provide a brief narrative summary of the curricular assessment activities undertaken by your unit this year, along with actions taken in earlier years that have led to improvement and plans for improvement.

Our program is preparing for re-accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in 2015-2016. We began preparing classroom and program folio documentation of curriculum activities and child assessment artifacts, and collecting survey data from parents, campus constituents, and staff. This process provides an in-depth assessment and evaluation of curriculum quality, child and family outcomes, and staff productivity, relative to rigorous standards and criteria that represent the highest credential available.

- c. Please discuss the diversity among your faculty, including efforts made in recruitment (if applicable) to increase the presence of under-represented groups.

ECDC strives to be a community that reflects the University's diversity goals. Our child population this year included:

- 53 enrolled children (47 families)
- 28% minority representation
- 9% bilingual children (5 languages other than English)
- 7% children with special needs

Our staff is not as diverse, with only a 14% minority representation (including males, which in the early childhood field are considered a distinct minority)

Our efforts to address are primarily attending student orientation and association meetings, and word-of-mouth recruiting.

- d. Please provide a summary analysis of research and professional development productivity in your department or program, referring to the Supporting Data section as appropriate. What are your strengths and challenges?

The program director is an Associate Professor, actively teaching as an adjunct in the MAT Early Childhood graduate program, and our four Master Teachers (MT) acquire between 15 and 20 contact hours per year of professional development, primarily from conference attendance and/or presentations. The Director and two MT presented at the *Association for Constructivist Teaching* conference in December and then again at the *CofC Early Childhood Summit* in June; one teacher attended the MEPI (Montessori) conference; two teachers attended the *U.S. Coalition on Play* conference at Clemson, and the director presented a keynote and workshop session at the University of Wisconsin, also attending the NAEYC conference in Dallas. Five graduate assistants applied for and were awarded PD grants to attend the ACT conference. Two ECDC graduate assistants prepared curriculum documentation for an EDEE 613 course assignment that was used as the basis for one of these presentations.

One faculty member each from the Psychology Department and TEDU conducted research at ECDC during 2014-2015, with 4 graduate students acting as co-researchers.

The director had two entries accepted for publication in the *Sage Encyclopedia of ECE* and continued as a manuscript reviewer for the *Early Education and Development* peer-reviewed journal.

The director and a team of four faculty from EHHP and Psychology also conducted a three-part film/discussion series for the general community that was part of the 40th Anniversary year celebration.

We also wrote and received a \$2500 grant from the Coastal Community Foundation for support of children with special needs enrolled in our program.

Our strengths in this area are a lead team committed to engaging in scholarship and collaboration with others. Our challenges are budgetary, but we feel we make good use of creative solutions to fund PD activities.

- e. Please provide a summary of departmental or program service and outreach contributions to the school, College, community (of a professional nature), or profession. What are your strengths and challenges?

Our strengths in this area are a result of institutional credibility and the reputation of the EHHP and the ECDC. Many teachers and administrators from other programs visit ECDC to observe and/or consult with us on varying dimensions of early childhood education, sometimes resulting in longer-term collaborations. In 2014-2015 we assisted the First Steps organization with writing, securing, and implementing a \$1.3 million grant to expand Early Head Start classrooms in Charleston County. We also participated in the planning for the first *Cradle to Career Summit*. Dr. Jaruszewicz was elected to a three year term on the governing board of the *National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers*, and chairs the Advocacy and Research Committee for that organization. We provided mentoring for teachers and program directors from the Green World School, Island School, and the Reggio Day School (Columbia), and a new early childhood community program being developed by two CofC graduates.

Because of our long-standing collaborations and interactions with the Office of Sustainability and the Grounds Departments, we are becoming known as a leader in the area of outdoor education and nature play. We are currently the only program in South Carolina that is certified through the *NatureExplore* program as an outdoor classroom. We worked with Memminger Elementary and four private early childhood programs this year to further their interest and efforts in this area. The OS secured a grant from Boeing through the *Farm to Schools* initiative that provided for a new 'teaching' garden at ECDC that will be used in 2015-2016 for professional development with area teachers and STEM/STEAM Institute participants.

The program director also serves on the planning committee for the annual *CofC Early Childhood Summit*.

- f. Has your department or program conducted professional development opportunities for faculty? If yes, what are examples of those opportunities?

Yes, we sponsored a three-part film/discussion series on the Value of Play that was attended by faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and members of the community.

Dr. Jaruszewicz is also a certified trainer for the Department of Social Services and conducted PD workshops and seminars for both the Master Teacher group and the student staff at ECDC.

- g. What success have you had in meeting program, departmental, school or College goals? What obstacles prevent you from reaching specific program, departmental, school or College goals? In what way can Academic Affairs support your efforts?

Our goals don't change that much from one year to the next – we remain committed to providing the highest model of excellence possible, significant outreach and advocacy in the community, and maintenance of productive scholarship efforts. Within each of these three areas, the focus of particular projects or initiatives may change, but on the whole we believe our program operates at a high level of consistency with the goals of the university and our parent School, the EHHP.

Our challenges focus primarily on meeting the need for desired access to our program, articulated in the C of C Strategic Plan as Strategy 3 Tactic 11. The waiting list continues to hover around 350 children, while our enrollment is typically @ 55 children.

- h. What curricular development or other major changes in the program(s) are planned for the next three years? Briefly, what resources are required to implement these?

We applied for and were approved a tuition increase over the next three years that will generate additional funds we plan to use to achieve salary parity for our Master Teachers with the public schools in our area. This will accomplish three of our strategic plan priorities - Strategy 3, items 1,4,and 6.

We will complete our re-accreditation year in 2015-2016 and respond appropriately with curriculum adaptations and modifications if needs are identified.

We will continue our efforts to support “greening” the curriculum, both ours and those of other schools interested in working with us to do so, and to seek resources from area organizations committed to outdoor education.

No additional resources are needed at this time.

Supporting Data

There is no need to include in your submitted report any data we have provided to you. Such data are listed below for completeness. You need take no action if all these data are available on current College websites.

Date requested for this section of the report are not applicable to the ECDC program except for the following three items:

I. Faculty Productivity in and Support of Research and Professional Development

Publications pending:

- Jaruszewicz, C. (2016) Typical Development. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Contemporary Early Childhood Education* – accepted for publication
- Jaruszewicz, C. (2016) Learning Materials. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Contemporary Early Childhood Education* – accepted for publication

Editorial activities

- Two manuscript reviews for *Early Education and Development* – Dr. Jaruszewicz

Presentations:

- Jaruszewicz, C. (August, 2014). “The Great Exploration:” How digging a hole on the playground became the 4/5K curriculum for two months. Madison Public Schools 4K Summer Institute, Madison, Wisconsin, August 20, 2014.
- Jaruszewicz, C. (August, 2014) Planning and documenting play and project work to promote executive functioning and learning. Keynote delivered at Madison Public Schools 4K Summer Institute, Madison, WI. August 20, 2014.
- Jaruszewicz, C., White, M. & Hart, J. (December 4, 2014). Loose Parts: Re-imagining Outdoor Play Spaces from a Constructivist Perspective. Association for Constructivist Teaching Annual Conference, Charleston, SC.
- White, M. & Hart, J. (June 18, 2015) Loose Parts: Re-imagining Outdoor Play Spaces from a Constructivist Perspective. 4th Annual College of Charleston Early Childhood Summit, June 18-19, 2015.

Panel discussions:

- Jaruszewicz, C. (December 4, 2014). Co-chaired community panel discussions with Katie Houser at *Association for Constructivist Teaching Annual Conference* on developing community partnerships.
- Jaruszewicz, C., Adams, R., Kolak, A., Janes, P. Principe, G., Three-part film/discussion/panel series titled “Play’s the thing....” October 22, 2014 “Why Play?”; January 21, 2015 “Play and Executive Function”; April 15, 2015 “Re-connecting children with the natural world.”

Conferences attended:

- Stephanie Johnston Attended MEPI conference in Litchfield, SC.
- Phyllis Gates attended U.S. Coalition on Play Annual Conference at Clemson University and CofC Early Childhood Summit at Memminger Elementary.
- Jane Hart attended and presented at the Association for Constructivist Teaching Annual Conference and the CofC Early Childhood Summit at Memminger Elementary.
- Mary White. attended the U.S. Coalition on Play Annual Conference at Clemson and presented at the CofC Early Childhood Summit at Memminger Elementary.

Grants:

- Candace Jaruszewicz received a \$2500 Grant from Coastal Community Foundation to support two ECDC children with Down Syndrome
- Candace Jaruszewicz participated on the writing team that secured \$1.3 million Early Head Start grant for the First Steps program and serves on the transition team overseeing fidelity of implementation.Grants Received from Research and Development or URCA
- Four Graduate Assistants at ECDC applied for and received internal professional development grants from the Graduate School to attend the *Association for Constructivist Teaching Annual Conference*.

Honors/awards:

- Mary White, Master Teacher was the featured teacher in May 2015 issue of *Teaching Young Children*, an international journal published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- Graduate Assistant Christina Caputo was awarded the “Rookie Teacher of the Year” for Charleston County School District

Consulting:

- Candace Jaruszewicz spent a week at the Pan-American School of Brazil in Salvador in November doing an evaluation and assessment of their twelve early childhood classrooms.