

Ninth Annual  
**INTERSECTING INTERESTS**

Wisconsin's Early Childhood Higher Education Forum

November 11, 2005

9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Sheraton Madison Hotel

**UW-System: PK-16 and UW-Madison Waisman Center State Improvement Grant:**

**Early Childhood Special Education Collaborative Online Master's Program**

**Principal Investigator:** Ann Hains (UW-Milwaukee)

**Project Evaluator:** Simone Conceição (UW-Milwaukee)

**2005 Online Course Faculty:** Ellen Browning (Edgewood College), Simone DeVore (UW-Whitewater), Patricia Caro (UW-Stevens Point), Gay Ward (UW-River Falls), Lenore Wineberg (UW-Oshkosh), and Yaoying Xu (UW-Milwaukee)

**2005 Online Collaborative Partners:** Susan Finkel (UW-Oshkosh), Mary McLean (UW-Milwaukee), Patricia Ragan (UW-Green Bay), Ann Riall (UW-Whitewater), LingLing Tsao (UW-Oshkosh)

**Project Description**

The state of Wisconsin adopted new Administrative Rules, referred to as PI 34, which govern teacher education programs and licenses. As part of the new rules, the three-stage professional development process included the Initial Educator, Professional Educator, and Master Educator. The primary goal of this project is to improve access to higher education, to diversify the workforce, and to meet the needs of non-traditional learners. Because access and availability to advanced coursework is difficult for Professional Educators in early childhood special education (ECSE) and other fields, 12 faculty are proposing the development of a UW-System online master's program by using existing and new courses. The first step was to offer four existing courses online during the Summer and Fall 2005 semesters:

Edgewood College	ED 672: Development & Facilitation of Communication in Children & Adolescents (Browning)
UW-Milwaukee	EXCEDUC 630: Survey of Early Intervention: Young Children with Special Needs & their Families (Xu)
UW-Stevens Point	EDUCATION 790: Alternate Assessment (Caro)
UW-Whitewater	SPECED 376/576: Medical Aspects of Disabilities (DeVore)

An additional online course will be offered in Spring 06:

UW-River Falls	Developmental Learning Experiences of Young Children (Ward)
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To date, the ECSE faculty have worked to collaboratively plan, develop, design, and evaluate, but individually teach the courses. In order to attract participation of under represented populations and improve the diversity of leadership in the field, faculty used the textbook, *Online Learning and Social Exclusion* by Alan Clarke (2002) for online course development. Multiple measures were used to evaluate the courses: WebSTAR survey (developed by Dr. Penny Garcia, UW-Oshkosh), a learning styles inventory, and a vision, auditory, and kinesthetic survey.

A secondary goal of this project is to create articulated, connected and competency-based systems of professional development guided by the implementation of PI 34, which support ongoing professional development and mentoring. The “career lattice” instead of the “career ladder” is the approach for increasing the number of professionals who are culturally and linguistically diverse. This project targets graduate students; however, partnership with the Wisconsin Technical College System for articulation of students and professional development for WTCS faculty is an important activity for recruitment of future leaders.

**Ultimate goal:** Positive outcomes for ALL young children and their families through high quality early childhood education and care provided by well-trained professionals.

## **Year 2 Priorities**

1. Expand online graduate course offerings
  - a. Core courses (e.g., research/methods, research seminars, etc.)
  - b. Interdisciplinary courses (e.g., from other “related services” fields such as nursing, social work, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, psychology, child and family studies, adult education, administrative leadership)
2. Develop online master’s in ECSE proposal for UW-System program approval
  - a. Identify collaborating UW campuses
  - b. Consult with campus governance and administration groups and UW-System
  - c. Examine infrastructure and support systems

## **Issues:**

1. Course and program approval (from campus to State of WI Board of Regents)
2. Infrastructure and logistics
  - a. Credit transfer
  - b. Tuition/fees
  - c. Enrollment and course load for students
  - d. Faculty coordination of course load and rotation
3. Resources/supports