

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

- Recommendation
- Decision
- Discussion/Direction
- Information

DATE: 27 February 2024

FROM: Undergraduate Studies Committee

SUBJECT: Major Program Modification - Bachelor of Arts in Educational Studies and Educational Studies Advanced Entry

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) Terms of Reference, USC has the responsibility “to examine proposals for new undergraduate degree programs and major changes to existing programs and to recommend their approval, as appropriate, to the Academic Council”.

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:

That pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Educational Studies and Educational Studies Advanced Entry program, to add a specialization in Special Education and modify course contact hours and mode of delivery options for courses.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

The Faculty is proposing to:

- Extend contact hours for all EDST course tutorials to 1.5 hours (from 1.0 hours).
- Add in-class and hybrid modes of delivery as options to EDST tutorials.
- Add a specialization in Special Education, including creating four new courses:
 1. EDST 2700U – Foundations of Special Education
 2. EDST 3700U – Models of Inclusion
 3. EDST 3710U – Understanding the Diversity of Educational Needs
 4. EDST 4700U – Technology and Assistive Tools for Special Education

Prior to Fall 2023, the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Educational Studies existed solely as an advanced entry program, providing a bridge for college graduates to apply their education towards completing a university degree. This year, the program launched a four-year undergraduate option, which highlighted several areas for improvement and growth.

Extending the tutorial length will provide flexibility for instructors to design high-quality learning activities with fewer scheduling constraints.

Moreover, following the success of four hybrid pilot courses, the addition of CLS and HYB codes to all EDST courses will provide flexibility for the program to offer select in-person and/or hybrid options in future years.

While issues related to accessibility and inclusion are addressed in our existing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion specialization, we have observed a need for a more focused series of courses that explore these issues exclusively through the lens of special education.

- Certifications in special education are highly sought after by educators. For students planning to enter the BEd program (through either the Concurrent or Consecutive pathway), a specialization in this area will add strength to their future job search.
 - For students planning to pursue careers in alternative educational contexts (e.g., instructional design, training, etc.), this specialization will be equally attractive given the importance of accessibility and inclusion in all aspects of the workplace.
- Furthermore, this specialization (and the courses developed to support it) will add breadth and depth to the Educational Studies program and add important variety to our course offerings.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

No additional human or physical resources required. Existing hyflex classrooms will be utilized for in-person courses.

TRANSITION PLAN:

The proposed changes will begin in Fall 2024

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:

- ✓ FEd Curriculum Committee: 11 December 2023
- ✓ Faculty Council: 18 December 2023
- ✓ Undergraduate Studies Committee (Recommendation): 16 January 2024
- Academic Council (Approval): 27 February 2024

Extensive consultation occurred with students and instructors of the EDST program, formally through course evaluations and informally through student surveys and conversations. Additionally, the new specialization was developed by volunteers on the specialization development committee. The members of this committee have professional and/or research backgrounds in the field of special education and developed an initial set of course descriptions and learning outcomes prior to further consultation with the faculty, staff, and administration of the BA program.

NEXT STEPS:

Pending the approval of Academic Council, this change will be included in the 2024-2025 Academic Calendar.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- [Major Program Modification Proposal – Educational Studies](#)
- [Major Program Modification Proposal – Educational Studies Advanced Entry](#)
- [EDST 2700U – New Course Proposal](#)
- [EDST 3700U – New Course Proposal](#)
- [EDST 3710U - New Course Proposal](#)
- [EDST 4700U – New Course proposal](#)
- Course Changes:

- [EDST 1130U](#), [EDST 1312U](#), [EDST 3000U](#), [EDST 3160U](#), [EDST 3170U](#),
[EDST 3440U](#), [EDST 3460U](#)
- 2023_BA Contact Hours Changes*
- 2023_EDST MPM - UG Method of Delivery*

*These files are available for download and review under the 'Files' menu within the Major Program Modification Proposal links above