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To: Undergraduate Program Council

Fr: Laura Landry Meyer, Jean Gerard, Stephanie Blessing

RE: Child Life Minor

Thank you for the detailed feedback. HDFS faculty have given this feedback due consideration. Based on a discussion, we welcome the opportunity to offer the following.

The development of the minor is based on student demand/interest, identification of a child life specialist to teach a child life course after a HDFS faculty member who was a child life specialist retired, workforce demand, change in licensure at the state level for undergraduates to qualify, and alignment with HDFS strategic focus on trauma informed care. Over the years, HDFS faculty have worked individually with students to create ‘cognate’ or grouping of courses that fulfill requirements specified by the Child Life Council. There are several HDFS alumni who have taken the Child Life exam and are now practicing Child Life Specialists. The Child Life Minor is not meant to be a direct path to the Child Life Specialist designation, but a formal grouping of courses to assist students who wish to pursue the Child Life Specialist designation.

It is important to note that the proposed list of required minor courses are not a one-on-one match with the Child Life Specialist designation. For instance, there is a minimum 600 hour child life clinical internship supervised by a certified child life specialist that is excluded. This minor was created to identify a collection of courses to enhance the ability of BGSU students to pursue child life specialist designation.

Other exclusions for this minor include an ethics course and a research methods course. The minor is intended to supplement a major (per Child Life Council – bachelor’s degree can be in any field of study). Major course requirements often embed ethics and research. We believe that the majority of students who pursue child life specialist will have these courses embedded as major requirements for their bachelor’s degree. Rather than add additional credits, a decision was made to exclude.

The feedback about including a family systems course was well received. All HDFS courses are taught using a family context. HD is the human development ‘side’ focusing on individuals, birth through death. FS is family studies ‘side’ focusing on family context. We neglected to specify a family course. There are several HDFS courses that could satisfy a family systems course. HDFS is open to a future amendment to the Child Life Minor to identify the best family course to integrate. At present, HDFS believes there are several HDFS family courses without prerequisites that students could enroll presently to obtain this Child Life Specialist requirement.

As noted during the last meeting and in feedback received about an overlap with psychology courses. HDFS faculty concur that there is some overlap in content on the HD ‘side’ (individual development). Specifically, there is potential overlap between HDFS 2210: Child Development with PSYC 3030: Psychology of Child Development and HDFS 2280: Adolescent Development with PSYC 3040: Psychology of Adolescent Development. A comparison of the course catalog descriptions are below.

***HDFS 2210: Child Development****: Fall, Spring, Summer. The course addresses cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of children from conception through the middle years. Developmental theory and methodology will be addressed as children growing up in diverse families, communities, and cultural contexts are examined. Approved for distance education.*

***PSYC 3030: Psychology of Child Development****. Major concepts, theories and principles of child development. Coverage is from conception until adolescence. Prerequisite: PSYC 1010.*

***HDFS 2280: Preadolescent and Adolescent in Family and Community****: Fall, Spring, Summer. Development and socialization of preadolescents and adolescents.  Focus on biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional factors associated with youth competencies and maladjustment within an ecological framework. A review of research relevant to policy, programming, and intervention. Approved for distance education.*

***PSYC 3040: Psychology of Adolescent Development****. On demand. Major concepts, theories and principles of adolescent development. Prerequisite: PSCY 1010.*

Currently, HDFS advocate for the inclusion of the HDFS courses as they are taught in family context, are offered in an online format, and require no prerequisites adding credits to the minor. HDFS is open to a future amendment to the Child Life Minor to identify options of PSYC 3030 and PSYC 3040 to be included. It should be noted that students can still pursue child life designation with the PSCY courses without officially declaring the Child Life Minor.

In summary, the Child Life Minor supports a student-selected major, maintains a minor at 23 credit hours, and offers a formal collection of courses that correspond to the Child Life Specialist designation.