



NEW PROGRAM FEASIBILITY REVIEW  
PROPOSAL

STAGE 2  
(with revisions)

Submitted by  
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**Stage 2: New Program Feasibility Review**  
American Sign Language and English Bilingual Early Childhood  
in Deaf Education: Birth to 5

I. Justification for the New Program:

The following describes the contribution of the initiative to the mission of Gallaudet University as well as to other programs at the university level:

- Across the nation, schools serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, ages of 0-5, are reporting a critical shortage of professionals who have the knowledge and skills in an American Sign Language (ASL) (expressive and receptive ASL connected discourse) and English (oracy and emergent literacy) in bilingual early childhood education (LaSasso, C., & Lollis, J., 2003; Strong, M., 1995). Hence, the New Program aims to increase a pool of qualified professionals, especially those from racially or ethnically diverse backgrounds, through our recruitment plan that includes innovative and interactive multi-media platforms (i.e., the internet (vlogs/blogs) and desktop videoconferencing) along with the traditional face-to-face approach.
- Currently, the Department of Education's Teacher Preparation Program does not address the area of Birth to 5 (0-3 & 3-5) in the field of Deaf Education. Those candidates interested in the 0 – 5 aged child can only obtain a licensure in General Education: ECE and/or K-12 Deaf, which does not include a focus on deaf/hard of hearing children ages birth to 5.
- As previously noted in Stage 1: New Program Preliminary Proposal, since 1998, more than 40 schools and 500 K-12 professionals have participated in training for ASL and English Bilingual Professional Development (AEBPD) provided by Center for ASL and English Bilingual Education and Research (CAEBER). However, the training is not designed for the professionals who work with children with ages of 0-5 and instead focuses on K-12 children (Nover, S., Andrews, J., Baker, S., Everhart, V., & Bradford, M., 2002; Nover & Andrews, 1998). Curriculum, materials and professional development for the ASL and English Bilingual training in the 0 – 5 age groups are seriously lacking. Based on the 2011 National ASL/English Bilingual ECE summit survey, a majority of those

respondents have unequivocally agreed that there is an urgent need for such training with this age group. See Appendix A for survey results.

- Despite the recent medical advances in early infant screening and early provision of new auditory technologies (e.g., the cochlear implant), the field of ECE deaf education is stymied because there currently exist no strong ASL/English bilingual education curriculum models and materials for preparing in-service and pre-service ECE professionals in Deaf Education. While, there are an increasing number of families, schools and service agencies who are demanding that their professionals be knowledgeable in this area, there is a critical void in the field (Andrews & Dionne, 2011). This innovative Program will fill this void by providing pre-service and in-service training to those professionals with theories and applications connected to ASL/English early childhood multisensory learning, communication and emergent literacy.
- Historically, there has continued to be only a handful of Deaf and Hard of Hearing candidates who pursue a degree or certificate in Early Childhood Education, especially in the field of Deaf Education. The Gallaudet University's Department of Education aims to recruit diverse Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, especially from Gallaudet University as well as in-service professionals, to the New Program, supporting them to become role models for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, families and professionals. In addition to recruitment of a racially or ethnically diverse base of professionals, a goal of the New Program is to prepare hearing candidates in Deaf Education, Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology to work as a team collaborating with Deaf and Hard of Hearing professionals, and interacting as supportive allies.
- For a Deaf or Hard of Hearing child to become proficient in one or more languages, exposure to good models of each language from birth is crucial. Very few professionals in deaf education understand how to provide children in an educational setting with exposure to good models of more than one language and opportunities to use more than one language appropriately. This program will provide research-based practices and training on how to plan for and use

both ASL and English constructively with Deaf and Hard of Hearing children from birth to age 5 years.

- All programs in the Department of Education reflect the mission of and Gallaudet University's bilingual (American Sign Language and English) and multicultural community. Following the Gallaudet University Conceptual Framework that states all school preparation programs share four key principles: 1) Promotes Bilingual/Bicultural Competence; 2) Engages in Theory-Based Practice; 3) Acts as a Reflective Change Agent; and 4) Promotes the intellectual, linguistic, and social potential of all children with a particular focus on deaf and hard of hearing children and youth, the New Program curriculum prepares our candidates to be immersed in a bilingual, multicultural community, and to teach with theoretical and practical foundations in bilingual education. Communication in all classes is through the use of both American Sign Language (ASL) and English. Graduates of the New Program will be prepared to teach their students and collaborate with the families bilingually, via ASL and English.

II. Evident of External viability of the program (demand):

The following evidences of the demand entail:

1. Evidence of employment prospects of graduates:

- a) As previously noted in Stage 1: New Program Preliminary Proposal, there are currently more than 40 ASL and English bilingual schools for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and 500 professionals who have undertaken training for AEBPD provided by CAEBER. These schools use both state and Council on Exceptional Children (CEC) certification standards shown in Appendix B as guidelines for hiring highly qualified teachers. In addition, graduates will demonstrate the competencies gathered from these schools as well as particular mainstreaming schools that also practice the bilingualism. The proposed Program meets all DC and CEC certification requirements for teachers of Deaf and Hard of hearing children as well as the guidelines specified by the No Child Left Behind act. Over the next few years, the Department plans to submit the program requirements and assessments for review in order to be able

to provide recommendation for appropriate licensure or endorsement.

- b) Moreover, there would be adequate placement and on-the-job opportunities for teacher candidates who have completed programs through the CAEBER networking and other sources.
- c) To date, there is no data about the bilingual schools that have unmet need for employees; however, in July 15, 2005, as part of the Gallaudet Leadership Institute and CAEBER in conjunction with the Early Childhood Education Advisory Focus, a group of ECE professionals gathered at Gallaudet to prioritize areas for the future direction of early childhood education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The group, comprised of seventy-five professionals, parents, academia and agencies, met to identify challenges and opportunities as well as to strengthen collaborative efforts among early childhood education educators. At the meeting, recommendations were developed for future directions for the field in order to improve services to families and young children throughout the United States. During that time, the group recognized the unique educational and language needs of deaf children starting from birth. This has been adopted as the foundation upon which the project, CAEBER's National ASL and English Bilingual Early Childhood Education has been developed. Please see the outcomes of the group's work in Appendix C.

As a result of that meeting, the National ASL/English Bilingual Early Childhood Advisory Focus Group was formed. The purpose of the Advisory Focus Group was to coordinate and collaborate in the compilation of a Bilingual Early Childhood Curriculum for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children which can be used with home-based, center based and community based programs. At this time professionals do not have guidance in the provision of a bilingual education of the very young Deaf/Hard of Hearing child. This work also is in alignment with the National Deaf Agenda ([www.ndep.org](http://www.ndep.org)).

The group has worked for the past three years to address the priority areas that would assist us in creating systematic change for early childhood ASL/English bilingual education as well as the critical need for networking and training for those who are in the field. The priority areas identified were: National Curriculum Development: Cooperative and Collaborative (Networking) Between and Among Professionals; Impact of Technology, Medical and Educational Communities; Training (Leadership and Instructional); Training in the Unique Needs of Diverse Children, Multiple Disabilities, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children, Hearing Children of Deaf Parents (CODA), and Hard of Hearing Children; Public Policy/System Issues/ Advocacy and High Quality Research.

This Focus group included representatives from: California School for the Deaf at Riverside; Maryland School for the Deaf, Frederick; Gallaudet University; Indiana School for the Deaf; Kansas School for the Deaf; Kendall Demonstration Elementary School: The Learning Center for the Deaf; New Mexico School for the Deaf; Texas School for the Deaf; Signs of Literacy Lab; as well as, Dr. Jean Andrews, Researcher and Dr. Jenny Singleton, Researcher. The Focus Group's work ended last December 2010 after the 2010 Summit was held.

- d) The New Program is in compliance with the standards set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (<http://www.naeyc.org>). Gallaudet's pre-service teachers (i.e., teacher candidates), who are pursuing licensure in either "General Education: Early Childhood Education or K-12 Deaf Education who successfully complete a minimum of nine graduate credits may obtain a special education/early childhood endorsement and/or certificate in the area of Birth to 5. [Although nine hours is the minimum for pre-service teachers to acquire this endorsement, they may complete up to the full 21 credit hours if they choose.] This endorsement will qualify Gallaudet's pre-service teachers to work in settings that serve diverse Deaf and Hard of Hearing children from Birth to 5. The New Program broadens the pre-service teachers

employment prospects by expanding their teaching qualifications. [Note: Gallaudet's pre-service teachers will not be required to complete the full 21 credit hours (required of in-service professionals) because the current pre-service program already provides much of the ASL-English bilingual training needed.]

In-service teachers/professionals (e.g., candidates who already hold teacher certification and have, or are seeking, careers related to the care and education of children ages birth through 5) will be required to successfully complete 21 graduate credits in order to obtain a graduate certificate in the area of Birth to 5. The New Program will be desirable to in-service professionals who are seeking additional certifications in order to increase their qualifications and advance in their careers.

2. Evidence or support for the proposed programs by outside groups and organizations (particularly accrediting bodies, etc.).
  - a) The New Program will require directed fieldwork at current sites which could include the Laurent Clerc Center, Indiana School for the Deaf, The Learning Center for Deaf Children in Framingham, MA, Texas School for the Deaf, California School for the Deaf, Riverside, Tacoma Public Schools, WA and other sites across the country. See Appendix D for letters of support from schools.
  - b) The National American Sign Language & English Bilingual Consortium for Early Childhood Education is a non-profit professional organization and a collaborative effort of speech-language pathologists, audiologists, parent-educators, professionals and researchers whose focus is to improve ECE in Deaf Education. The Consortium hosted the first two *National American Sign Language & English Bilingual Early Childhood Education Summits* last April 23 & 24, 2010 and April 8 & 9, 2011 at Gallaudet University, Washington, DC. Both events were a triumphant success. At the 2011 summit, over 130 attendees from across the nation (teachers, professors, instructors, students, interpreters, social-services personnel, community volunteers, advocates, administrators, parents, students and leaders) participated in workshops, socialized, networked, and established new friendships. This first-of-its-kind Summit focused on the research, best

practices and networking. The next summit will be held in Newark, Delaware on March 16-18, 2012. See Appendix D for letters of support from the Board and Appendix E for a brochure describing the organization.

c) Other evidence of need for the program

To our knowledge, here are no current studies or data available of the number of professionals in the field who work with 0 – 5 deaf and hard of hearing children. However, last April 2011, the Early Childhood Education Bilingual Summit has attracted over 130 attendees. Table 1 shows the breakdown of those attendees who serve children from birth to 5 years. We conducted a survey of the attendees to obtain more specific information. Of the 114 attendees 86 (75%) of the 2011 Summit participants took the survey shown in the Appendix A. Results from the survey indicate that they wish to pursue further study in the areas of birth to 5 years old.

**Table 1: 2011 Summit**

**Total = 114 (numbers do not include non-registered attendees (students, volunteers, presenters) including these there were approximately 130 attendees)**

Position Title	Total Number	*Specific age noted	
		0-3	3-5
Administrators/Coordinators/ Directors	25	7	1
University Faculty	19	1	1
Educators (pre-school, pre-K, Kindergarten, Family Educators,	41	9	20
Services (ASL specialist, CI/Bilingual specialist, speech language specialist, speech pathologists, literacy specialists, Consultants)	22	8	3
Students	5		
Other (Interpreters, Advocate)	2		

**\*Specific age noted** = All participants fall under working with 0-8 ages, however some participants noted specific age groups. However, it should not be assumed other participants do not work with the age groups of 0-3 or 3-5.

Based on the summit’s survey, Table 2 shows data based on two selected “Focus” questionnaires and the majority of those respondents have unequivocally agreed that there is an urgent need for such bilingual training and academic support with the age group. For instance, the top three areas that the majority of the professionals selected are: 1) ASL/English Bilingual/Bimodal Strategies for Families/Home (58%); 2) ASL instructional strategies (58%); and 3) Language Planning and Applications in educational settings (46%). Also, the majority of the respondents were interested in obtaining graduate degrees. See Appendix A for survey results.

**Table 2: Percentage of Professionals**

Selected “Focus” Questionnaire	Percentage of Respondents
1. Please check areas you feel would benefit you in your professional development and/or training.	The following areas that respondents are interested in: 58% =ASL/English Bilingual/Bimodal Strategies for Families and Home 58% = ASL instructional strategies. 46% =Language Planning and applications in educational settings 44% =Assessment 40% =Pre-literacy development 38% = Collaborative relationships with families, professionals and community
2. Are you interested in obtaining a degree?	Even though the New Program offers a certificate only, the majority (61 respondents) indicated that they were interested in some type of graduate or postgraduate degrees (the program addresses this by providing courses that can be part of the concentration areas for the Advanced Studies and PhD Programs in the Department of Education.)

3. Evidence of support from other University units

Program Curriculum –Consortium cooperation: Not applicable.  
All required coursework is offered within the Department of Education; however, we may consider pursuing collaborative

efforts with Howard University, George Mason University and Lamar University to share and/or exchange the potential sources of ECE programs. See Appendix D for a letter of support from Lamar University.

### III. Internal Viability of the program

The structure of the Program describes as follows:

#### a) Target candidates

The New Program will be designed for both pre-service teachers and in-service professionals. The 21-credit-hours graduate certificate program in the area of Birth to 5 is designed for in-service professionals: for instance, those who already hold teacher certification and have or are seeking careers as early childhood education professionals, service providers, Deaf mentors, family counselors, speech special education specialists, speech-language pathologists, and audiologists. In addition, the New Program is also designed to serve Gallaudet's pre-service teachers who could complete a minimum of (but not limited to) nine credit hours to obtain an endorsement in the area of Birth to 5 (pending approval). Because the New Program is designed to serve in-service professionals, as well as Gallaudet's pre-service teachers, the program is open to a broader pool of candidates rather than being limited to Gallaudet's Department of Education candidates. See Appendix E for the charts describing the type of target candidates the New Program will serve.

The Department of Education has chosen to offer this program as a certificate program in an effort to provide maximum flexibility to those who plan to complete the program/courses. An applicant who does not want a degree could choose to get a graduate certificate, a PST certificate, or take courses individually. If a student is interested in obtaining a Masters Degree while taking these courses they could apply for the Advance Studies program that the Department currently offers which is a program that allows candidates to design their own course of study which could include some or all of these courses. Additionally these courses could be used in the

completion of an Education Specialist degree (Eds) or as a concentration area in the Doctoral program.

b) Program Outcomes

Shown in Appendix J, the 12 Program Outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, dispositions and performance that the Department of Education faculty members expect the candidates to acquire by the end of the Program. The essential components of the outcome statements reflect the achievements expected of all candidates by the end of their courses in the proposed Program of Study below. Appropriate assessments will be conducted in the courses to provide information regarding candidates' achievements, as well as the effectiveness of the Program.

c) Format of the Program

The varying courses will be offered as a hybrid of Internet, videoconferencing, video streaming, and summer face-to-face classes. For instance, the first two courses (6 credits) will be taught face to face during the summer. The second and third courses will be instructed online during the fall and spring semesters (3 credits each class). The following summer session will offer the last two face-to-face courses (6 credits). The capstone project (3 one credit courses) can be offered anytime throughout the Program and will be supervised by an advisor. See the tentative Program of Study below.

*Note:* Our proposal that the New Program be designed for both pre-service and in-service professionals will help make up the size of the class.

American Sign Language and English Bilingual Early Childhood  
in Deaf Education: Birth to 5

**21 CREDIT HOURS GRADUATE CERTIFICATE/HYBRID PROGRAM**

PREREQUISITES	1 <sup>ST</sup> SUMMER (6 CREDITS)	FALL (ONLINE) (3 CREDITS)	SPRING (ONLINE) (3 CREDITS)	2 <sup>ND</sup> SUMMER (6 CREDITS)
BA/BS Degree 3.00 GPA ASLPI rating of 3.0 or up	EDU A: Foundations of Policy and Legislative perspectives on Bilingualism: implications for ASL/English Bilingual Education for 0-5	EDU C: Early Language Acquisition and Cognitive Development of bilingualism (3 credits)	EDU D: Assessment and Individualized Planning in ASL/English Bilingual-Bimodal Early Childhood (3 credits)	EDU E: Applications in ASL/English Bilingual Early Childhood Education for 0-5 (3 credits)
(TBC)	EDU B: Theoretical Perspectives of ASL/English Bilingual-Bimodal Education for 0-5 (3 credits)			EDU F: A Bilingual Child in The Family (3 credits)

EDU G: Field Experience & Project (3-6 credits) - throughout the academic year

Total 21 credits earned upon graduation

d) Evidence of sufficient qualified faculty:

See below regarding “Resources Required: Personnel Resources”

In response to the evidence of internal viability of the program and documentation of required resources, please see the budget report in Appendix G.

IV. Resources Required

a) Personnel Resources:

- The Department of Education has sixteen full time faculty members. Each faculty member is responsible for a full time workload, 1.0 FTE of three “assignments” including teaching, scholarly activities, and administrative (e.g. program director, chair). Though there may be a need to hire adjuncts to cover one or more courses offered by the department (see budget information in Appendix G), this should not adversely affect the ability of the department to provide quality programs. The workload of the faculty members, secretarial and support staff will be minimally impacted. In terms of qualified personnel, four of the faculty members have a degree in ECE and possess a high level of knowledge in this area as well as high skills in teaching and will be able to teach the courses. This allows for flexibility in scheduling and lower impact on existing programs. Further, several other faculty members who took the training seminars in bilingualism, also have expertise in ASL/English Bilingualism as well with teaching the courses. Vitae of the Department of Education faculty members are attached in Appendix H.
- In response to the evidence of internal viability of the program and documentation of required resources, please see the budget report in Appendix G.
- A faculty member in the Department of Education has been assigned a 10-month position for Recruitment and Retention during the 2011-2012 academic years. This faculty member will implement recruitment plans that include multimedia, materials, as well as attending and campaigning at the national conferences and schools. Our recruitment plan includes innovative and interactive multi-media platforms (i.e., the internet (vlogs/blogs) and desktop videoconferencing) along

with the traditional face-to-face approach. See Appendix I for the 2011-2012 Recruitment and Retention Plan.

This Program will be community-based and attract professionals from various ethnic groups representing all Americans in various socio-economic classes. Attending and campaigning at National Organizations of Color such as National Black Deaf Advocates, National Asian Deaf Congress, Sacred Circle (Native Indians) and National Council of Hispano Deaf and Hard of Hearing and other diverse organizations are considered to be one of the top priorities. To this end, Gallaudet University (GU) will be hosting Triennial National Deaf People of Color Conference held on the GU campus in June 2013, in which will be an exciting opportunity to elicit support for this New Program.

b) Financial Resources

Current resources used in the Department of Education will not be significantly impacted. See Appendix G for budget information and Appendix I for the Promotion and Marketing project for Department of Education: Early Childhood Education.

c) Facility Resources

- Other resources include The Center on American Sign Language and English Bilingual Education and Research that is currently housed under the Office of Dean and the Graduate School and Professional Programs that also has rich curricula and materials designed for training in-service and pre-service professionals. See a letter for support in Appendix D.
- With this knowledge and application, candidates can further research on ASL/English Bilingualism, especially for children with ages of 0-5 through a variety of sources, some which are listed below:
  - Visual Language (VL-2): There are several studies focusing on brain study, early learning and language development done by well-noted researchers, for instance, Dr. Laura Ann Petitto, Dr. Peter Hauser and others. See a letter of support in Appendix D.

- Sign of Literacy: There is a rich data that through appropriate protocol, the candidates and ECE professionals may have the opportunity to use the source for their study. See a letter of support in Appendix D.

V. Interdisciplinary program support (if applicable)

Not Applicable

## References

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