

[College of Education]
2021 IHP Proposal Template Guidance
Proposals for 2021-22 TTF Searches

Proposal number	P21-COE-1
College/School/Division	College of Education
Cluster/Node (if applicable)	
Department/Program	SPECS/Special Education
Requested TTF Specialty	Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education
Requested TTF Rank	Associate

This proposal should not exceed four pages in length. Brevity is appreciated and bullet points are welcome.

Proposal Description

One- or two-sentence summary of the proposal, for potential public-facing IHP website use.

The Special Education program seeks to identify a faculty scholar in the area of early intervention and early childhood special education to address infant mental health and school readiness in young children birth – 5 years to add to our #3 nationally ranked program in special education.

Proposal Rationale

The Office of the Provost and IHP advisory groups will refer to relevant institutional metrics (<https://provost.uoregon.edu/institutional-metrics>) as part of the IHP decision-making process. Using appropriate information and metrics, describe the need for a TTF hire in this area with respect to each of the following:

- 1. Describe the rationale for the position, including how the proposal aligns with the strategic vision and needs of the unit and college/school.**
(Please limit this response to fewer than 500 words.)

One in two children with developmental delay will develop a mental health or emotional-behavioral problem that puts them at risk for peer rejection, exclusion from typical school and community settings, and teacher and caregiver burnout. Although the risk for mental health problems in this population is not fully understood, there are likely a range of factors including brain development differences, environmental factors (e.g., poverty, community violence), and family factors (e.g., parenting stress). To that end, children with early developmental delay often start kindergarten without the basic “readiness skills” that help them be effective learners. Without basic school readiness skills, these children may fall further behind their peers in academic and social development. This vicious cycle of early risk and continued disadvantage strains the special education and social service systems making “free and appropriate public education” in the “least restrictive environment” more of a goal than a reality. More research is needed in early detection of mental health problems (screening, assessment), social-emotional development, and prevention and early intervention programs to target young children, their caregivers, and early childhood providers in natural environments, such as homes, daycares, and preschools.

The Special Education and Clinical Sciences department seeks an established scholar to bring an interdisciplinary focus to our work in early intervention and early childhood special education. We can accelerate our scientific gains and discoveries by leveraging the excellent work happening in prevention science and psychology to help bridge the gap between research and practice. To that end, we propose an enhanced partnership with Early Childhood CARES, an outreach center within the College of Education, that has a \$18 million annual contract to serve 1700 children (birth – 5 years) in Lane County who are eligible for services. A research to practice partnership of this magnitude could yield significant scientific discoveries in early detection of risk and prevention of

[College of Education]
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mental health problems in our population of vulnerable children in Lane County and could be used as a model program for other counties within Oregon (and other states within the U.S.) that have the same federal mandates to serve young children with early developmental delay.

- **Optimizing developmental outcomes is national goal:** “Ready to learn” has been a national goal for preschool children in the U.S. for several years. With recent brain development research and growing awareness of the achievement gap between young children with and without stimulating and supportive environments, developing effective interventions for young children with disabilities is critical.
- **Early Childhood Special Education is a strength of the UO COE:** The COE at UO has a long-standing reputation as a national leader in the preparation of personnel in special education. We have significant strengths in preschool but lack a strong focus on infants and toddlers, brain development, and mental health and social-emotional learning.
- **Early Childhood CARES:** The opportunity to more fully partner with EC CARES is unique to UO and the College of Education and gives us a significant advantage for developing, testing, and disseminating state of the science assessment, prevention, and intervention programs.

2. Indicate how the proposed search will do one or more of the following, as appropriate:
(Please address only applicable items, and limit each response to fewer than 300 words.)

- **Help catalyze excellence in new areas of research or creative activity, maintain or strengthen established premier areas of research or creative activity, or draw together multiple areas of research or creative excellence.**
Early intervention as a discipline is focused on early detection, screening and assessment, and early learning programs that are ripe for interdisciplinary collaboration and new discoveries. The SPECS department alone has faculty from special education, psychology, neuroscience, and prevention science backgrounds. We seek a senior colleague in the area of infant mental health and brain development to help us foster new collaborations and cutting edge training for our master’s level students training to become teachers and our PhD students training to become the next generation of leaders. This scholar would also help leverage research collaborations across campus and contribute to exciting new initiatives in early childhood. SPED has a strong doctoral program but in order to maintain and grow our strengths in early intervention new investments must be made. There are tremendous untapped opportunities to partner with Early Childhood CARES as well as interest from Early Childhood CARES co-directors, LaWanda Potter and Kim Giansante. A more integrated research to practice partnership could enhance graduate student training, improve the lives of young children served in our community, and provide valuable opportunities for research and innovation.
- **Grow and/or maintain areas of demonstrated prospective/future undergraduate student interest.**
The SPED/EI program is growing its distance education option, which has increased cohort size by 22% in its second year. Distance education can be a more accessible option for serving Oregonian students across the state and can help us recruit international students, who may be drawn to our top ranked program. There is an interest in early intervention and special education training across Asia, for example, and a small investment in our program may open doors for remote international student enrollment. Our doctoral program has a

[College of Education]
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strong record of international student enrollment, averaging approximately 10-15% of PhD students each year. The early intervention program, based on history and global need, could lead international master's student enrollments for the College of Education.

- **Grow and/or maintain successful graduate programs, where there is faculty capacity for building areas of excellence and/or new programs of particular institutional need.**

The Early Intervention master's program is currently directed by non-tenure track faculty and strategic tenure track hires in the department can provide strong intellectual leadership and opportunities for growth and development in order to meet the needs of our pre-service teachers. Through targeted investments in field-leading TTF, we hope to attract and expand our master's program as well as continue to contribute to our strengths in doctoral training.

3. Respond to the prompts below with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

(Please limit this response to fewer than 500 words.)

- i. To facilitate **inclusive searches**, UO requires robust active recruitment work before launching each TTF search.
 - a. Field Availability Estimate (FAE) data (<https://ir.uoregon.edu/FAE>), provide a demographic breakdown of recent domestic (US) terminal degrees awarded by field and subfield. Specify the 1-2 fields from the FAE data that most closely align with your proposed position.

The Discipline-Specific Field is Special Education, which reports 81% female, 22% total minorities. We have seen recent success in the SPECS department with recruiting four faculty of color over the past 5 years and active recruitment strategies would again be utilized to continue to diversify our faculty.
 - b. Describe how you will approach recruitment for this position, noting how you will mitigate potential challenges that may arise based on the FAE data.

In addition to traditional postings, we will engage in targeted and active recruitment with institutions serving racially and ethnically diverse students (e.g., HBCUs), specific geographical regions, and active recruitment with colleagues. We have had success with these approaches.
 - c. Approved searches will be required to request that candidates submit a diversity, equity, inclusion statement in their application materials. Please describe specifically what will be critical for your unit to ascertain from these statements.

We train special education teachers to understand individual differences, promote equity in the classroom and community, and promote inclusive practices. Our vision is to train leaders in the field in an environment that encourages inclusion, critical thinking, freedom of inquiry, and social justice. Thus, it is essential for statements to include concrete actions on how to foster learning environments that promote these values across settings.
- ii. The provost expects units to **support student success, access, and experience** by eliminating opportunity gaps and creating a culture of **inclusive teaching**. Explain how you will design the hiring process to identify potential colleagues who will contribute to this mission.

[College of Education]
2021 IHP Proposal Template Guidance

Proposals for 2021-22 TTF Searches

The Special Education program competes nationally for doctoral leadership training grants to prepare scholars to become leaders and innovators in the field. These grants provide opportunities to enhance our curriculum by identifying training needs and faculty assets and build an environment where evidence-based practices become alive in the classroom. The Special Education program was recently awarded two new doctoral leadership grants that focus on: 1) preparing special education leaders in evidence based practices, autism spectrum disorder and diversity in preK-12 settings, and 2) preparing innovative leaders in education to work with English Learners in K-12 settings. These examples highlight our department's commitment to developing novel and innovative curriculum, training, and mentorship for our students in high need topical areas.

The Special Education program competes nationally for master's training grants that demonstrate innovation in training programs in high need areas. Two current grants focus on interdisciplinary training for students in special education and communication disorders. Project PANGAEA provides trainees with additional course work and practicum experiences to assess strengths and needs, set developmentally appropriate goals, and implement interventions focused on core developmental challenges associated with autism. Project INICIO is training 42 Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) students. The program includes the SPED licensure and master's program and the Communication Disorders master's program.

- iii. Discuss how your unit would **support the new TTF hire** to ensure they are successful.

Past hires were successful with grant writing and research due to mentorship from senior faculty and the research center infrastructure in the COE. Our model is to include new TTF in research training, with clear mentorship aligned to their areas of interest and expertise. Grant writing support is provided through our research institutes, with senior faculty providing input and feedback on grant applications. New faculty are included on grants to facilitate their entry to independence. Beyond grant writing, we workshops to support new TTF in teaching, research, and service, with additional mentorship available in the COE.

A new faculty member in infant mental health and school readiness would also have natural research collaboration opportunities in several units outside of the COE, including Psychology, the Center for Translational Neuroscience, and the Lewis Center for Neuroimaging.

4. **If there are other significant factors, describe them briefly below.**

(Please limit this response to fewer than 200 words.) This position will be partially - 30% to 50% depending on the incumbent – funded by an existing endowed professorship.