Program Request - Abbreviated Template
Utah Valley University
BS in Chemistry Education
08/28/2012

Section I: Request

Utah Valley University requests the restructuring of the current BS in Chemistry/Physics Education program, effective fall 2013. The restructure entails removing the physics portion of the program, to make it solely a BS in Chemistry Education program. This request accompanies a request from the Department of Physics for a new BS in Physics Education program. The proposed change will allow students to focus on either physics or chemistry teaching more exclusively. No new instructional resources or additional classes are required for the proposed changes.

Section II: Need

Utah Valley University currently has a BS degree in Chemistry/Physics Education, but degree recipients are not allowed to teach AP physics or chemistry. Division of the degree into separate degrees of Chemistry Education and Physics Education will qualify graduates to teach AP courses. In addition, although some students have enjoyed being trained in depth in both physics and chemistry, several have had a marked preference for one discipline over the other. In northern Utah, Utah State, The University of Utah and Weber State have chemistry education programs that are separate from the physics education portion and very similar to the proposed chemistry program at UVU. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment among high school teachers is expected to grow by 7 percent and “many schools report having difficulty filling teaching positions for certain positions . . . . especially chemistry and physics.”1 The growth of middle school teachers is expected to grow by 17 percent.2 Currently, 85% of chemistry teachers in Utah have not completed the correct certification to teach in the classes requiring certification.3 The Utah Valley University BS in Chemistry Education program will fill that requirement.

Section III: Institutional Impact

The Utah T.H. Bell Teaching Incentive Loan Program is a program the awards incentives to teachers who teach in subjects that are facing a current shortage. The index of critically reports the chemistry score at 3.6, which puts chemistry education near the top of the subjects in which there is a shortage of teachers. Because of increased emphasis on science and technology education and the relatively low unemployment number among chemists and science teachers, a greater student enrollment in the chemistry teaching program is expected. However, an incremental increase in cost is not expected since the courses taken overlap with professional chemistry major requirements. The greater number of students will only serve to increase teaching efficiency in the already existing courses.

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1 http://www.bls.gov/oh/education-training-and-library/high-school-teachers.htm#tab-6
2 http://www.bls.gov/oh/education-training-and-library/middle-school-teachers.htm#tab-6
3 Personal correspondence with Sarah Young, State of Utah, Department of Education
Section IV: Finances

All of the required courses exist currently; thus, no new courses or sections will be required to support the Chemistry Education program. Funding to support the existing courses is already in place; no new funds are required.