



Master of Science in Child Life

Presentation to Academic & Student Affairs Committee
Board of Trustees

March 6, 2025





Overview & Features of Program

A degree in Child Life prepares graduates to support the emotional, developmental, and psychosocial needs of children and adults, as well as their families, who are facing medical or traumatic experiences. It focuses on psychosocial development, family-centered care, therapeutic play, and coping strategies. Graduates often pursue careers as Certified Child Life Specialists (CCLS) in hospitals, clinics, or community programs, where they advocate for and serve patients and their families in the healthcare system.





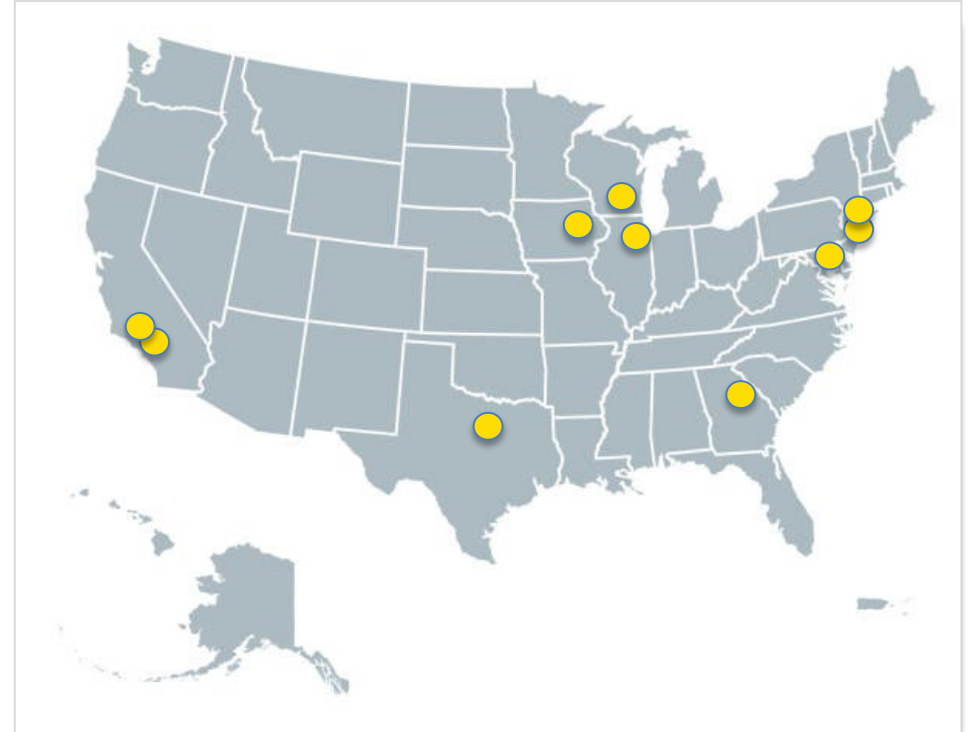
Overview & Features of Program

Tech's MS Degree in Child Life will be the only program of its type at a public institution in Tennessee, with currently only ten graduate child life programs in the U.S. that are endorsed by the Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP), of which only one is in the southeast region.

Degree requirements

- 36 credit hours of online coursework
- 7 credit hours of in-person experiential learning (for those students planning to take the Child Life Certification Exam)

Locations of current ACLP-endorsed graduate programs in Child Life





Need for Program

Feasibility Study showed...

- A high demand for graduate students in the competitive Child Life field
- A shortage of online graduate programs in Child Life
- A strong interest of our students and alumni in a graduate program

Letters of Support from ...

- Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt
- St. Jude Children's Hospital
- LeBonheur Children's Hospital
- East Tennessee Children's Hospital
- Vanderbilt University
- University of Alabama
- Texas Woman's University

Excerpts from Letters of Support...

“Establishing a Master of Science program in Child Life is well-timed, desperately needed, and ideally suited at Tennessee Technological University.” (*Peabody College, Vanderbilt University*)

“I am writing with excitement to help encourage the growth of a new Master's Degree program at Tennessee Tech University. I have been able to see firsthand the need for more students to be advised and supported through Masters Degree programs in order to be successful in the field of child life.” (*St. Jude Children's Research Hospital*)

“I can see how this program will only strengthen our regional and national professional infrastructure. Child life has become an incredibly competitive field, and although not currently required, most internship sites (our affiliated children's hospital included) have moved to prioritizing master's level candidates for clinical training placements.” (*Peabody College, Vanderbilt University*)





Targeted Student Population

Primary Audiences

- Bachelor's prepared individuals seeking child life preparation to pursue certification
- Bachelor's prepared Certified Child Life Specialists seeking career advancement





Enrollment Projections

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Enrollment (# of FTE Students) | 5 | 8 | 10 | 13 | 15 |
| Student Attrition | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| # of Graduates | - | - | 2 | 4 | 6 |

Instructional Cost & Revenue Projections

- One current full-time Certified Child Life Specialist faculty will serve as the program director
- Addition of one new full-time Certified Child Life Specialist faculty will be needed to implement this program
- 13 new courses will be developed for this program
- Expenses shown below include faculty salary and benefits (for the one additional faculty member), equipment and materials, & accreditation support costs

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Expenses | \$10,950 | \$128,952 | \$129,496 | \$133,496 | \$137,502 |
| Tuition/Fees | \$72,060 | \$112,442 | \$152,962 | \$172,546 | \$242,110 |



