

**Program Report for the Advanced Preparation of  
Middle Level Educators at the Doctoral Level**  
National Middle School Association (NMSA)

**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION**

**C O V E R   S H E E T**

**Institution:** The University of Georgia

**State:** GA

**Date submitted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Preparer:** Gayle Andrews

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**Program documented in this report:**

**Name of institution's program:** Middle School Education

**Grade levels for which candidates are being prepared<sup>1</sup>:** grades 4-8

**Degree or award level<sup>1</sup>:** Doctor of Philosophy

**Is this program offered at more than one site?**  Yes      No

List the sites at which the program is offered \_\_\_\_\_

**Title of the state license for which candidates are prepared**

T-7 Middle Grades 4-8

**Program report status:**

**Initial review**

**Rejoinder**

**Response to national recognition with conditions**

**State licensure requirement for national recognition:**

NCATE requires 80% of the program completers who have taken the test to pass the applicable state licensure test for the content field, if the state has a testing requirement. Test information and data must be reported in Section III. Does your state require such a test?

Yes      No

**\*Students are not required to obtain certification when they get a doctorate in middle grades education.**

<sup>1</sup> This will be a dropdown list of possible grade levels and degrees/awards that could be selected; multiple selections can be made.

## GENERAL DIRECTIONS

The following directions are designed to assist institutions as they complete this web-based program report. To complete the report, institutions must provide data from 6-8 key assessments related to SPA standards to answer the following questions:

- Have candidates mastered the necessary knowledge for the subjects they will teach or the jobs they will perform?
- Do candidates meet state licensure requirements?
- Do candidates understand teaching and learning and can they plan their professional education responsibilities?
- Can candidates apply their knowledge in classrooms and schools?
- Are candidates effective in promoting student learning?

To that end, the program report form includes the following sections:

- I. Contextual Information** – provides the opportunity for institutions to present general information to help reviewers understand the program
- II. Assessments and Related Data** - provides the opportunity for institutions to submit 6-8 assessments, scoring guides or criteria, and assessment data as evidence that standards are being met.
- III. Standards Assessment Chart** - provides the opportunity for institutions to indicate which of the assessments are being used to determine if candidates meet program standards.
- IV. Evidence for Meeting Standards** – provides the opportunity for institutions to discuss the assessments and assessment data in terms of standards.
- V. Use of Assessment Results to Improve Candidate and Program Performance** – provides the opportunity for institutions to indicate how faculty is using the data from assessments to improve candidate performance and the program, as it relates to content knowledge; pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and effects on student learning.

Page limits are specified for each of the narrative responses required in Sections IV and V of the report, with each page approximately equivalent to one text page of single-spaced, 12-point type. Each attachment required in Sections I and II of the report should be kept to a maximum of five text pages. Although attachments longer than five pages will be accepted electronically, NCATE staff will require institutions to revise reports submitted with lengthy attachments.

Except for the required attachments, institutional responses can be entered directly onto the web-based form or written in a standardized word processing format (e.g., Word or Word Perfect) and later cut and pasted into the web-based form. The respondent will be able to save the responses as a draft and return to the web-based form later to complete. When the report has been completed, the institution will mark it as finished and submit it for review.

Specific directions are included at the beginning of each section.

## SECTION I—CONTEXT

### Provide the following contextual information:

1. Description of any state or institutional policies that may influence the application of NMSA standards.
  2. Description of the field and clinical experiences required for the program, including the number of hours for early field experiences and the number of hours/weeks for student teaching or internships.
  3. Description of the criteria for admission, retention, and exit from the program, including required GPAs and minimum grade requirements for the content courses accepted by the program.
  4. Description of the relationship<sup>2</sup> of the program to the unit's conceptual framework.
  5. Indication of whether the program has a unique set of program assessments and their relationship of the program's assessments to the unit's assessment system.<sup>3</sup>
1. Description of any state or institutional policies that may influence the application of NMSA standards.

To receive a doctor of philosophy degree in middle school education (grades 4-8), the University of Georgia requires program completers to successfully complete coursework and to conduct and disseminate original educational research. The coursework includes, at minimum, six courses focused on research methodology; three courses focused on educational foundations (e.g., learning and cognition, adolescent development, anthropology, history, philosophy, psychology, and sociology); three courses within an area of concentration, which typically include coursework related to language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies; three courses focused on middle grades education; several hours of doctoral research seminar; and dissertation and other research hours, which can include EDMS 9600: Educational Research in Middle School Education and EDMS 9630: Critique of Educational Literature in Middle School Education. The program of study is not simply a list of courses to be completed but a comprehensive set of experiences that the student designs with the support of the major professor and advisory committee. The dissertation is expected to be a unique contribution to the scholarly literature. Program completers do not receive certification as a result of finishing the doctoral program, but the program is designed for teachers who have a minimum of three years of teaching experience with young adolescents and a previous post-baccalaureate degree.

The middle school education program at the University of Georgia is administered by the College of Education. The program is housed in the Department of Elementary and Social

<sup>2</sup> This response should describe the program's conceptual framework and indicate how it reflects the unit's conceptual framework.

<sup>3</sup> This response should clarify how the key assessments used in the program are derived from or informed by the assessment system that the unit will address under NCATE Standard 2.

Studies Education and is supported by other departments inside and outside of the college (e.g., Departments of Language and Literacy Education, Mathematics and Science Education, Educational Psychology and Instructional Technology, Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations, Geology, History). Doctoral students are accepted into the program for admission in fall, spring, and summer. Approximately 10 doctoral students have been accepted into the middle school education doctoral program from fall 2001 through fall 2005.

Program completers generally take at least 16 courses, not counting seminar and dissertation hours. Combined with a master's degree, program completers must have a minimum of 80 hours of graduate coursework. The actual number of courses varies given committee input. All Ph.D. students must complete 30 consecutive hours to satisfy the University's residency requirement. Figure 1, Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Middle School Education Advanced Educator Preparation Program, is the advisement sheet (program of study) for the doctor of philosophy in middle school education. Table C-1 indicates the relationship between coursework and program standards (i.e., the Middle School Education standards of the National Middle School Association).

2. Description of the field and clinical experiences required for the program, including the number of hours for early field experiences and the number of hours/weeks for student teaching or internships.

The doctoral program does not require field and clinical experiences because program completers do not receive certification as a result of finishing the program. However, every doctoral student enters the Ph.D. program with at least three years of prior experience working with young adolescents in middle grades schools. The number of hours of experience with young adolescents prior to entry into the program is variable, of course, but the requirement for three years of middle grades teaching experience typically represents over 4,000 hours of experience.

In addition, program completers have several opportunities to become involved in middle grades schools and in working with young adolescents during their coursework and research initiatives. For example, most course options within "Issues and Perspectives in Middle School Education" (minimum of three courses) require investigation and activities in middle grades classrooms, schools, and other learning environments (e.g., research proposal focused on young adolescents or middle school philosophy and organization in EDMS 9030: Young Adolescents and Schools; case studies in EDMS 9090: Socio-Cultural Issues in Early Adolescence). Within their areas of concentration (minimum of three courses), Ph.D. students often investigate best practices within teaching fields (language arts, reading, social studies, mathematics, or science) in middle grades classrooms. In addition, doctoral students engage in action research projects based in classrooms in EDMS 7500: Action Research and service-learning projects that connect school and community in EDMS 7060: Academic Community Learning. Finally, in completing their dissertations, all Ph.D. students design, conduct, and disseminate original educational research related to middle grades education. For the most part, those dissertations require collecting data on middle grades education issues in schools from middle grades educators and/or young adolescents themselves.

The number of hours required in the field varies by course and research project, ranging from as few as 5-10 (e.g., case study of young adolescent in EDMS 9090) to as many as 100+ (e.g., service learning project in EDMS 7060, dissertation research). In their oral defense of their written comprehensive exams and in their oral defense of their dissertations, doctoral students reflect on the connections between their own learning and professional growth and their activities in the field working with young adolescents and educators in middle grades schools.

3. Description of the criteria for admission, retention, and exit from the program, including required GPAs and minimum grade requirements for the content courses accepted by the program.

The criteria for admission, retention, and exit from the Middle School Education doctoral program are summarized in attached Table C-2, EDMS Data Points at Assessment Points – Doctoral. Doctoral students' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, professional skills, and dispositions are assessed at three transition points: (a) application and admission, (b) from matriculation to candidacy, and (c) from candidacy to exit. At each transition point, doctoral students are assessed on their content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, professional skills, focus on student learning, and dispositions. Data points at each transition point are listed in Table C-2; criteria are embedded in the different data points listed in the table. Examples of measures used include grade point averages, scores on standardized tests, letters of recommendations, and ratings on comprehensive written and oral exams. Doctoral students must maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout the program, and must receive a grade of "C" or above in all required courses.

4. Description of the relationship<sup>4</sup> of the program to the unit's conceptual framework.

According to the conceptual framework of the College of Education at the University of Georgia, "The College of Education prepares exemplary, reflective professionals to serve a diverse global community; it achieves that end through teaching, scholarship, outreach, and partnership at the local, national, and international levels." The evidence in this report shows that the middle school education doctoral program embodies the conceptual framework by preparing the kind of professionals that the unit values.

The middle school education doctoral program is intended to extend and blend the theoretical and practical understanding of doctoral students. They are encouraged to deepen their knowledge of young adolescents, middle grades schooling, and their subject matter and to develop the pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are required to make subject matter developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and useful for students. They also are expected to develop and enhance their skills as researchers. Graduates of the doctoral program are reflective professionals who think and act in ways that demonstrate their commitment to their own learning and to the learning of their students. They develop habits of mind that compel them to assess the effects of their actions on student learning and to reconstruct their work on the basis of that evidence. Moreover, program completers are committed to middle grades education that is developmentally responsive, academically excellent, and socially equitable.

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<sup>4</sup> This response should describe the program's conceptual framework and indicate how it reflects the unit's conceptual framework.

The unit's conceptual framework and the middle school program's Belief Statements About Diversity (see Figure 2) also emphasize the importance of doctoral students being prepared to work in diverse communities, which means doctoral students must be disposed to act in ways that demonstrate the belief that all students can learn, even those students who have historically not been served well in schools. As part of their courses focused on issues and perspectives in middle school education, areas of emphasis, and research, doctoral students engage in field experiences and research in settings with diverse populations. They develop the belief that all students can learn because they are placed in situations where they see such learning occur and where they can see that they themselves can have a positive effect on the learning of students with a variety of backgrounds and characteristics. The middle school education doctoral program, then, supports the College of Education's conceptual framework by preparing exemplary and reflective professionals who appreciate the diversity of young adolescents and educators and who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to support the learning of all their students.

5. Indication of whether the program has a unique set of program assessments and their relationship of the program's assessments to the unit's assessment system.<sup>5</sup>

Each of the data points for the middle school education doctoral program in Table C-2, EDMS Data Points at Assessment Points – Doctoral, reflects an assessment of doctoral students at a particular transition point (or assessment point). The assessments common to all advanced programs in the unit include Satisfactory Undergraduate Grade Point Average, Bachelor's Degree From Accredited Institution, Satisfactory Graduate Grade Point Average, Satisfactory Standardized Test Score, Letters of Recommendation, Screening of Application Materials by Graduate Coordinator, Admittance Decision by Graduate School, Competency in Written and Spoken English, Approval of Courses Each Term by Advisor, Grade of C or Above in Each Course, Approval of Program of Study by Graduate School, Completion of Required Courses, Completion of Diversity Requirement, Completion of Research Skills Requirement, Completion of Residency Requirement, Completion of Required Course Hours, Completion of Required Courses and Course Hours and Other Requirements for Candidacy Within Six Years of Matriculation, Grade Point Average in Course of Study At Least 3.0, *Pass* Rating on Written Comprehensive Examination, and Approval of Application for Graduation by Graduate School. Additional assessments common to all Ph.D. programs in the unit include Graduate Degree from Accredited Institution.

Additional assessments common to all unit Ph.D. programs include Approval of Advisory Committee by Graduate School, *Pass* Rating on Oral Comprehensive Examination, Approval of Prospectus by Advisory Committee, Admission to Candidacy, Approval of Dissertation for Oral Defense by Advisory Committee, Successful Defense of Dissertation, Successful Defense of Dissertation within Five Years of Admission to Candidacy, Suggested Changes to Dissertation Made and Approved by Major Professor, and Approval of Electronic Copy of Dissertation by Graduate School.

Additional assessments used in all advanced programs in middle school education but not used in all other unit programs include Sufficient Years of Teaching Experience, Analysis of

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<sup>5</sup> This response should clarify how the key assessments used in the program are derived from or informed by the assessment system that the unit will address under NCATE Standard 2.

Transcripts and Previous Experience, Periodic Review of Progress, and Leadership Position in School District, Faculty Position in Higher Education Institution, or Position in Other Government or Private Educational Agency Acquired.

Additional assessments used in the Ph.D. programs in middle school education but not used in all other unit Ph.D. programs include Letter of Intent, Curriculum Vitae, Writing Sample, Interview, Screening of Application Materials by Graduate Admissions Committee, Positive Vote of Graduate Admissions Committee, Positive Vote of Graduate Faculty, Approval of Advisory Committee by Department, and Approval of Program of Study by Department.

**Attach the following contextual information:**

1. A program of study that outlines the courses and experiences required for candidates to complete the program. The program of study must include course titles. (This information may be provided as an attachment from the college catalog or as a student advisement sheet.)
2. Chart with the number of candidates and completers.<sup>6</sup>
3. Chart on program faculty expertise and experience.<sup>4</sup>

(response limited to 6 pages, not including attachments)

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<sup>6</sup> NCATE will provide links to tables to be completed (see Attachments A & B).

**SECTION II— ASSESSMENTS AND RELATED DATA<sup>7</sup>**

In this section, list the 6-8 assessments that are being submitted as evidence for meeting the NMSA standards. All programs must provide a minimum of six assessments. For each assessment, indicate the type or form of the assessment and when it is administered in the program. For each assessment listed, you will be prompted to attach the following:

1. The assessment, including the instructions to candidates about the assigned task;
2. Scoring guides or criteria used to score candidate responses on the assessment; and
3. A table with the aggregated results of the assessment providing, where possible, data for each of the most recent three years. Data should be organized according to the categories used in the scoring guide/criteria. Provide the percentage of candidates achieving at each category.

In the three columns for attachments, click in the box for each attachment to be included with the report. Each attachment should be no longer than five pages. In the three columns for attachments, click in the box for each attachment to be included with the report. When you click in the box on the web-based program report, you will be prompted to attach the appropriate document. The three attachments related to each assessment must be included for the program report to be complete. The report will not be reviewed until it is complete.

	Name of Assessment <sup>8</sup>	Type or Form of Assessment <sup>9</sup>	When the Assessment Is Administered <sup>10</sup>	Attachments		
				Assessment	Scoring Guides/Criteria	Data Table
1	Content Knowledge: Graduate Record Examination	Standardized Content Knowledge Assessment	Application and Admission	Not applicable	GRE: Minimum score of 1000 total (at least 450 on verbal, 450 quantitative)	Table D.1
2	Content Knowledge: Undergraduate GPA GPA in Previous Graduate Coursework	Individual Candidate Course Grades	Application and Admission	Not applicable	Course Grades A=4.00 B=3.00	Table D.2

<sup>7</sup> NCATE will provide a link to a sample response for this requirement.

<sup>8</sup> Identify assessment by title used in the program; refer to Section IV for further information on appropriate assessment to include.

<sup>9</sup> Identify the type of assessment (e.g., essay, case study, project, comprehensive exam, reflection, state licensure test, portfolio).

<sup>10</sup> Indicate the point in the program when the assessment is administered (e.g., admission to the program, admission to clinical experiences, required courses [specify course title and number], or completion of the program).

Name of Assessment <sup>8</sup>	Type or Form of Assessment <sup>9</sup>	When the Assessment Is Administered <sup>10</sup>	Attachments			
			Assessment	Scoring Guides/Criteria	Data Table	
				C=2.00 D=1.00 F=0.00  Minimum 3.00 undergraduate GPA required Minimum 3.50 graduate GPA required		
3	Professional Responsibilities: Ratings by Referees of Ph.D. Candidates' Ability to Fulfill Professional Responsibilities	Performance Evaluation Instrument	Application and Admission	Figure 3	Figure 3	Table D.3
4	Effective Practice: Doctoral Dissertation and Oral Defense and Final Examination	Performance Evaluation Instrument	Exit	Figure 4	No more than one dissenting vote allowed for written dissertation and for oral defense and final examination	Table D.4
5	Supportive Learning Environment: Candidates' Grades in Middle School Education Courses	Individual Candidate Course Grades	From Matriculation to Candidacy	Not applicable	Course Grades A=4.00 B=3.00 C=2.00 D=1.00 F=0.00	Table D.5
6	NMSA Standard 7: Professional Roles	Performance	Application and	Figure 5	Majority vote of	Table

	Name of Assessment <sup>8</sup>	Type or Form of Assessment <sup>9</sup>	When the Assessment Is Administered <sup>10</sup>	Attachments		
				Assessment	Scoring Guides/Criteria	Data Table
	Ratings of Doctoral Candidates by Admissions Committee and Graduate Faculty	Evaluation Instrument	Admission		graduate faculty required for recommendation for admission to the Graduate School	D.6
7	NMSA Standard 1: Young Adolescent Development Candidates' Grades in EDMS 9030	Individual Candidate Course Grades	From Matriculation to Candidacy	Not applicable	Course Grades A=4.00 B=3.00 C=2.00 D=1.00 F=0.00	Table D.7
8	NMSA Standard 4: Curriculum and Assessment NMSA Standard 6: Instruction and Assessment NMSA Standard 7: Professional Roles Candidates' Grades in Research, Evaluation, and Assessment Courses	Individual Candidate Course Grades	From Matriculation to Candidacy	Not applicable	Course Grades A=4.00 B=3.00 C=2.00 D=1.00 F=0.00	Table D.8

## SECTION III—STANDARDS ASSESSMENT CHART

For each NMSA standard on the chart below, identify the assessment(s) in Section II that address each standard. One assessment may apply to multiple NMSA standards. In Section IV you will describe these assessments in greater detail and summarize and analyze candidate results to document that a majority of your candidates are meeting NMSA standards. To save space, the details of the NMSA standards are not identified here, but are available by clicking on the link to the full set of standards below. The full set of standards provides more specific information about what should be assessed.

<b>NMSA STANDARD<sup>11</sup></b> <b>(Advanced Preparation at the Doctoral Level)</b>	<b>Content Knowledge</b>	<b>Professional KSD<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>Effect on Student Learning<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>APPLICABLE ASSESSMENTS FROM SECTION II</b>								
<b>Programmatic Standards</b>												
<b>1. Middle Level Courses and Experiences.</b> Institutions preparing middle level teachers have courses and field experiences that specifically and directly address middle level education.	Not Applicable			Information is provided in Section I, Context.								
<b>2. Qualified Middle Level Faculty.</b> Institutions preparing middle level teachers employ faculty members who have middle level experience and expertise.	Not Applicable			Information is provided in Section I, Context.								
<b>Performance-based Standards</b>												
<b>1. Young Adolescent Development.</b> Middle level doctoral candidates analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to young adolescent development, and they apply the knowledge gained in their practice.	—	—	—	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_#1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">X#5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#8</td> </tr> </table>	_#1	_#2	_#3	_#4	X#5	_#6	X#7	_#8
_#1	_#2	_#3	_#4									
X#5	_#6	X#7	_#8									
<b>2. Adult Development and Learning.</b> Middle level doctoral candidates analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to adult development and learning, and they apply the knowledge gained in their practice.	—	—	—	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_#1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">X#5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#8</td> </tr> </table>	_#1	_#2	X#3	X#4	X#5	X#6	X#7	_#8
_#1	_#2	X#3	X#4									
X#5	X#6	X#7	_#8									
<b>3. Middle Level Philosophy and Organization.</b> Middle level doctoral candidates analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the major concepts, principles, theories, and research underlying the philosophical foundations and organizational components of highly effective middle level schools, and	—	—	—	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">_#1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">X#5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X#7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_#8</td> </tr> </table>	_#1	_#2	X#3	X#4	X#5	X#6	X#7	_#8
_#1	_#2	X#3	X#4									
X#5	X#6	X#7	_#8									

<sup>11</sup> NCATE will provide a link to the full set of SPA standards, including indicators/elements/dimensions and supporting explanations.

<sup>12</sup> KSD = knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

<sup>13</sup> Student learning refers to students in middle level classrooms and includes creating environments that support learning.

<p align="center"><b>NMSA STANDARD<sup>11</sup></b>  <b>(Advanced Preparation at the Doctoral Level)</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Content Knowledge</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Professional KSD<sup>12</sup></b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Effect on Student Learning<sup>13</sup></b></p>	<p align="center"><b>APPLICABLE ASSESSMENTS FROM SECTION II</b></p>
<p>they apply the knowledge gained in their practice.</p>				
<p><b>4. Middle Level Curriculum and Assessment.</b> Middle doctoral candidates analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to middle level curriculum and assessment, and they apply that knowledge in their practice.</p>	—	—	—	<p align="center">_#1    _#2    X#3    X#4  X#5    _#6    X#7    X#8</p>
<p><b>5. Middle Level Teaching Fields.</b> Middle level doctoral candidates analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research related to their teaching field(s) and/or specialization area(s), and they apply the knowledge gained in their practice.</p>	—	—	—	<p align="center">X#1    X#2    X#3    _#4  X#5    _#6    X#7    X#8</p>
<p><b>6. Middle Level Instruction and Assessment.</b> Middle level doctoral candidates analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to effective instruction and assessment, and they employ a variety of effective strategies to meet the varying abilities, interests, and learning styles of all young adolescents and adult learners.</p>	—	—	—	<p align="center">_#1    _#2    X#3    X#4  X#5    _#6    X#7    X#8</p>
<p><b>7. Middle Level Professional Roles.</b> Middle level doctoral candidates analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and conduct research related to middle level education, and they apply the knowledge gained in their practice.</p>	—	—	—	<p align="center">_#1    _#2    X#3    X#4  X#5    X#6    X#7    X#8</p>

## SECTION IV—EVIDENCE FOR MEETING STANDARDS

**DIRECTIONS:** Information on the 6-8 key assessments listed in Section II and their findings must be reported in this section. The assessments must be those that all candidates in the program are required to complete and should be used by the program to determine candidate proficiencies as expected in the program standards. Standards and assessments have been organized into the following three areas that are addressed in NCATE's unit standard 1:

1. Content knowledge<sup>14</sup>
2. Pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions<sup>13</sup>
3. Effects on student learning

For each assessment, the evidence for meeting standards should include the following information:

1. A brief description of the assessment and its use in the program;
2. The alignment of the assessment with the specific SPA standards addressed by the assessment, as they are identified in Section III;
3. A brief summary of the data findings attached in Section II;
4. An interpretation of how that data provides evidence for meeting standards.

The response to each assessment is limited to the equivalent of two text pages.

**#1 (Required)-CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: Assessment of content knowledge in middle level education.**<sup>15</sup> NMSA standards addressed in this entry could include but are not limited to 1, 2, 3, and 4. Examples of assessments include comprehensive examinations, GPAs,<sup>16</sup> content major,<sup>17</sup> and portfolio tasks.<sup>18</sup>

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. Applicants to the Middle School Education Doctoral program must submit standardized test scores as part of their application materials. Those scores must be less than 5 years old. Students seeking to enter the Ph.D. advanced program must submit scores from the Graduate

<sup>14</sup> In some disciplines, content knowledge may include or be inextricable from professional knowledge. If this is the case, assessments that combine content and professional knowledge may be considered "content knowledge" assessments for the purpose of this report.

<sup>15</sup> NCATE will provide a link to a sample response for this requirement.

<sup>16</sup> If grades are used as the assessment or included in the assessment, provide information on the criteria for those grades and describe how they align with the specialty standards.

<sup>17</sup> If completion of a content major is used as the assessment or included in the assessment, describe how the program of study aligns with the SPA standards.

<sup>18</sup> A portfolio is a collection of candidate work. The information to be reported here requires an assessment of candidates' content knowledge as revealed in the work product contained in a portfolio. If the portfolio contains pieces that are interdependent and the portfolio is evaluated by faculty as one assessment using a scoring guide, then the portfolio could be counted as one assessment. Often the assessment addresses an independent product within the portfolio rather than the complete portfolio. In the latter case the assessment and scoring guide for the independent product should be presented.

Record Examination (GRE). An applicant with a score below the established minimum in Section 2 (1000 total score, no less than 450 verbal, 450 quantitative) may be admitted to the Ph.D. program if the applicant's other qualifications (undergraduate and graduate grade point averages, ratings by referees, etc.) would justify waiving the minimum score requirement.

2. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) addresses Standard 5: Middle Level Teaching Fields of the NMSA-NCATE standards. NMSA Standard 5 states that middle level doctoral students "analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research related to their teaching fields(s) and/or specialization area(s), and they apply the knowledge gained in practice." The GRE assesses the candidates' depth and breadth of content knowledge in both verbal and quantitative fields, all of which are applicable in the four areas of content specialization most commonly chosen by Middle School Education doctoral candidates: language arts/reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

3. Data are available for all students who entered the Ph.D. program from fall 2001 through fall 2005. Mean test scores were calculated by doctoral students' semester of program entry. In some semesters, only 1 applicant submitted a score on the GRE. In each of those instances, the test score of the applicant is reported as the program mean of that semester. Table D.1 provides data on doctoral students' GRE scores.

The mean GRE scores of Ph.D. students from fall 2001 through fall 2005 ranged from 450 to 600 on the verbal subtest and from 520 to 650 on the quantitative subtest. In all but two semesters, the mean total score was greater than 1100.

The mean GRE scores of Ph.D. program students indicate that they entered the program prepared to achieve the desired program content learning outcomes included in NMSA-NCATE Standard 5: Middle Level Teaching Fields. Program students therefore have the content background necessary for their work in the Ph.D. program.

As suggested above, when a waiver of a test score minimum requirement has been granted (though none occurred in the period encompassed by this report, 2001-2005), the applicant has had other qualifications that indicate she or he has the necessary content background for the Ph.D. program. In general, program faculty have considered granting a waiver of the minimum requirement for an individual candidate if the admission of that candidate would increase the number of candidates enrolled in the program from traditionally underrepresented groups. Given that the research on bias associated with standardized tests used in the admissions process is not definitive. Faculty members are trying to ensure that all applicants receive full and fair consideration for admission.

(response limited to 2 pages)

**#2 (Required) CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: Assessment of content knowledge in middle level education.**<sup>19</sup> NMSA standards addressed in this entry could include but are not limited to

<sup>19</sup> NCATE will provide a link to a sample response for this requirement.

1, 2, 3, and 4. Examples of assessments include comprehensive examinations, GPAs,<sup>20</sup> and portfolio tasks.<sup>21</sup>

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. This assessment comprises doctoral students' grade point averages in their undergraduate program and in previous graduate coursework, which may include coursework at the master's or education specialist's levels.

2. The doctoral students' undergraduate GPA and GPA in previous graduate coursework address NMSA Standard 4: Middle Level Curriculum and Assessment, NMSA Standard 5: Middle Level Teaching Fields, and NMSA Standard 6: Middle Level Instruction and Assessment.

The doctoral students' undergraduate GPA and GPA in previous graduate coursework address the following specific elements within three NMSA standards:

--**NMSA Standard 4: Middle Level Curriculum and Assessment, Knowledge:** Middle level doctoral students (1.) understand that middle level curriculum should be relevant, inviting, challenging, integrative, and exploratory; (2.) select and adapt curriculum, instruction, resources, technology, and assessments that maximize students' learning; (4.) possess a comprehensive depth and breadth of content knowledge; (7.) understand their roles and responsibilities in the total school curriculum; (9.) know how to assess and select curriculum materials that are academically challenging, culturally sensitive, technologically sound, and personally motivating for all young adolescent learners; and (11.) know essential theories and roles of assessment and their applications to middle level teaching and learning.

--**NMSA Standard 5: Middle Level Teaching Fields, Knowledge:** Middle level doctoral students (1.) possess an understanding of the major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research related to one or more teaching fields and/or specialization areas; (3.) are knowledgeable about the major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research related to teaching and assessment strategies that are especially effective in their teaching fields and specialization areas; (4.) know how to use the major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research to integrate state-of-the-art technologies and literacy skills in one or more teaching fields and/or specialization areas.

--**NMSA Standard 6: Middle Level Instruction and Assessment, Knowledge:** Middle level doctoral students (1.) understand the principles of instruction and assessment and theories and research bases that support them; (3.) know that teaching higher order thinking skills is an integral part of instruction and assessment; (5.) know how to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching/learning strategies; (10.) understand and analyze the multiple roles of assessment in the instructional process; (12.) understand how assessment strategies should be used in various learning environments and for specific achievement goals.

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<sup>20</sup> If grades are used as the assessment or included in the assessment, provide information on the criteria for those grades and describe how they align with the specialty standards

<sup>21</sup> A portfolio is a collection of candidate work. The information to be reported here requires an assessment of candidates' content knowledge as revealed in the work product contained in a portfolio. If the portfolio contains pieces that are interdependent and the portfolio is evaluated by faculty as one assessment using a scoring guide, then the portfolio could be counted as one assessment. Often the assessment addresses an independent product within the portfolio rather than the complete portfolio. In the latter case the assessment and scoring guide for the independent product should be presented.

3. Data are presented in Table D2 for doctoral students who entered the Middle School Education program between fall 2001 and fall 2005. These doctoral students came from accredited institutions across Georgia, the United States, and the rest of the world. In all instances, their performance in their baccalaureate programs and previous graduate coursework were available as or translated into a grade point average. The established minimum undergraduate grade point average is 3.00, and the established minimum graduate grade point average is 3.50. An applicant may, however, be admitted to the doctoral program with a GPA less than 3.00 in his or her undergraduate program or less than 3.50 in his or her previous graduate coursework if the applicant's other qualifications, including the quality of the institution where the baccalaureate and/or graduate coursework was completed, are of a level that would justify waiving the minimum GPA requirements.

Mean GPAs were calculated by doctoral students' semester of program entry. In some semesters, no student or only one student was admitted to the Ph.D. program. In each semester in which only one student was admitted, the GPA of the individual student is reported as the program mean for that semester.

The mean undergraduate GPA of students in the Ph.D. program from fall 2001 through fall 2005 ranged from 3.03 to 3.94. The mean GPA in previous graduate coursework ranged from 3.80 to 4.00.

The mean undergraduate GPA and GPA in previous graduate coursework of doctoral students in Middle School Education indicate that they entered the program prepared to meet the NMSA standards described above. Program students therefore have the content knowledge necessary for their work in the doctoral program. In addition, the GPAs may be interpreted as indicating that the doctoral students possess the skills and dispositions expected in advanced preparation programs.

(response limited to 2 pages)

### **#3 (Required) PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND DISPOSITIONS:**

**Assessment that demonstrates candidates can effectively fulfill identified professional responsibilities in middle level education.**<sup>22</sup> NMSA standards that could be addressed in this assessment include but are not limited to 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Examples of assessments include the evaluation of candidates' abilities to develop individualized educational plans, needs assessments, or intervention plans.

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. This assessment comprises ratings of doctoral students' professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions from referees. Each applicant to the Middle School Education Ph.D. program must submit three reference forms. The forms are available to all graduate programs at the University of Georgia (see Figure 3). Some referees submit a letter in lieu of completing the form, but most referees submit the form, which includes sections on the referee's knowledge of the applicant; the referee's evaluation of the applicant's knowledge, skills, and potential on a

<sup>22</sup> NCATE will provide a link to a sample response for this requirement.

series of items; the referee's overall recommendation about the applicant on a general item; and additional comments about the applicant. The section asking referees to evaluate the applicant's knowledge, skills, and potential on a series of items, section 2 of the form, is used for this assessment.

The section asks referees to rate the applicant on a series of items in response to this prompt: "In comparison with other students in the same field who have the same amount of experience and training, I rate the person as follows." The series of items include the following: knowledge in subject of proposed study, ability to grasp new concepts, originality and intellectual creativity, mathematical and logical thought, written expression, oral expression, laboratory skills (if applicable), perseverance toward goals, potential as a teacher (if applicable), potential in research (if applicable).

2. This assessment, referees' ratings of applicant in section two of the standard reference form, relates to several NMSA standards. Referees are asked to consider the applicant's potential for success in a doctoral program in middle level education, rating the applicant's knowledge in the subject of proposed study, which includes young adolescent development (NMSA Standard 1), adult development and learning (NMSA Standard 2), middle level philosophy and organization (NMSA Standard 3), and middle level teaching fields (NMSA Standard 5). Referees' ratings of applicants' ability to grasp new concepts (all NMSA standards), originality and intellectual creativity (all NMSA standards), mathematical and logical thought (NMSA Standards 2, 4, 5, and 6), written and oral expression (NMSA Standards 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7), laboratory skills (NMSA Standard 5), perseverance toward goals (NMSA Standard 7), potential as a teacher (all NMSA standards), and potential in research (NMSA Standard 7 in particular, though teachers serve as researchers within all the NMSA standards as they seek to enhance their professional knowledge and skills.)

3. Data are available for doctoral students who entered the Ph.D. program from fall 2001 through fall 2005 in Table D3: Ratings of Referees of Ph.D. Students' Ability to Fulfill Professional Responsibilities. Almost 94% of referees rated Ph.D. students in the top 10% in their knowledge in the subject of proposed study. Approximately 93% rated Ph.D. students in the top 10% in their ability to grasp new concepts. In the category of "Originality and intellectual creativity," 90% of referees rated candidates in the top 10%, and almost 97% rated candidates in the top 20%. In "Mathematical and logical thought," 73.33% rated Ph.D. students in the top 5%, and 6.67% rated candidates in the top 10%. In "Written expression," 70% of referees rated Ph.D. students in the top 5% and 20% rated students in the top 10%. Referees rated Ph.D. students highly in oral expression, with 83.33% rating candidates in the top 5% and 10% rating candidates in the top 10%. Over half of the referees (56.67%) indicated that they were unable to rate "laboratory skills." For those referees who did rate Ph.D. students' laboratory skills, approximately 43% placed students in the top 5% relative to others with similar experience and educational levels. Apparently, many referees interpreted laboratory skills as having to do with science and so did not find the category applicable to a large number of applicants. Approximately 93% of referees rated Ph.D. students in the top 5% in "Perseverance toward goals." Similarly, approximately 90% of referees placed Ph.D. students in the top 10% in "Potential as a teacher." Finally, in the category "Potential as a researcher," approximately 77% of referees placed Ph.D. students in the top 5% in comparison to others in the same field and with similar experience and education.

The patterns that emerge from the data on referees' ratings of Ph.D. students in middle school education indicate that applicants accepted into the doctoral program are prepared to achieve the desired program learning outcomes and to fulfill their professional responsibilities. The data depict particular strengths in knowledge in subject of proposed study (NMSA Standards 1, 2, 3, and 5); ability to grasp new concepts (all NMSA standards); originality and intellectual creativity (all NMSA standards); written and oral expression (NMSA Standards 2, 4, 5, and 6); perseverance toward goals (all NMSA standards, particularly #7); and potential as teachers (all NMSA standards).

(response limited to 2 pages)

#### **#4 (Required) PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND DISPOSITIONS:**

**Assessment that demonstrates candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions are applied effectively in practice.**<sup>23</sup> NMSA standards that could be addressed in this

assessment include but are not limited to 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The assessment instrument used in the internship or other clinical experiences should be submitted.

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. This assessment comprises the votes of doctoral candidates' advisory committee members on the written dissertation and the oral defense and final examination. In order to complete the Ph.D. program in middle school education, candidates must submit a written dissertation, and they must defend that dissertation during a final examination that is open to all members of the university community. Separate votes are taken on the written dissertation and on the oral defense and final examination. In order to have the dissertation approved and to pass the oral defense and final examination, the candidate must receive no more than one dissenting vote from a member of the advisory committee.

2. This assessment of doctoral candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions by their advisory committees—as reflected in the votes on the written dissertation, oral defense, and final examination—addresses all NMSA standards for doctoral students. For example, although the content of the dissertation obviously varies from candidate to candidate, the review of literature typically addresses NMSA Standards 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The methods chapter generally addresses, at least, NMSA Standards 2 and 7, though it may address other NMSA standards depending on the nature of the study being described. The dissertation chapters describing results and implications address all NMSA standards.

3. Data are provided in Table D4 for all Ph.D. candidates who entered the program from fall 2001 through fall 2005. Data are presented by semester of program entry. There were other doctoral candidates who completed the program between fall 2001 and fall 2005. However, because these candidates' semesters of entry were prior to fall 2001, their performance data are not included here. The database was created in order to track candidates from application

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<sup>23</sup> NCATE will provide a link to a sample response for this requirement.

through exit and follow-up; fall 2001 was selected as the first semester for recording data on applicants because it was the first academic year following the previous NMSA-NCATE review.

Votes on the written dissertation are presented as the percent of advisory committee members who (a) approved the dissertation, (b) approved the dissertation with suggested changes, or (c) did not approve the dissertation. Votes on the oral defenses and final examinations are presented as the percent of advisory committee members who (a) passed the candidate or (b) failed the candidate.

One candidate in the middle school education Ph.D. program, who entered the program in fall 2001, reached the dissertation and defense stage; all members of the advisory committee approved the written dissertation with suggested changes and passed the candidate on the oral defense and final examination.

The votes of advisory committees on the written dissertation and the oral defense and final examination indicate that candidates in the middle school Ph.D. program have met the NMSA standards for doctoral students. These candidates have the advanced content knowledge; professional and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and ability to influence student learning that are expected of doctoral program completers.

(response limited to 2 pages)

**#5 (Required)-EFFECTS ON STUDENT LEARNING:<sup>24</sup> Assessment that demonstrates candidate provision of supportive learning environments for student learning.** NMSA standards that could be addressed in this assessment include but are not limited to 4 and 5. Examples of assessments include those based on portfolio tasks, case studies, follow-up studies, and employer surveys.

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. This assessment comprises doctoral students' grade point averages in doctoral-level coursework in the middle school education program. Middle school Ph.D. students must take at least three 9000-level middle school education courses, selected from five available courses: EDMS 9030: Young Adolescents and Schools; EDMS 9080: Theory and Practice in Middle Grades Curriculum; EDMS 9090: Socio-Cultural Issues in Early Adolescence; EDMS 9120: Comparative and International Perspectives in Middle Grades Education; and EDMS 9150: School Reform and Young Adolescents. The middle school faculty are committed to offering at least one of the EDMS 9000-level courses each academic year, so that doctoral students can count on opportunities to take the three required EDMS doctoral courses.

In the EDMS 9000 courses, doctoral students analyze and research how to provide supportive learning environments for young adolescents (all EDMS 9000 courses); investigating everything from integrated curriculum in theory and practice (EDMS 9080) to models of high-performing middle grades schools in other countries (EDMS 9120) and efforts to improve middle grades schools in the United States and across the world (EDMS 9150). In these courses, in addition to intensive review of the literature, doctoral students engage in projects requiring work in school settings, including interviewing practitioners regarding curriculum choices in EDMS 9080,

<sup>24</sup> Effects on student learning include the creation of environments that support student learning.

examining the impact on student learning of social and cultural contextual factors in EDMS 9090, and proposing research on young adolescent development in EDMS 9030. These doctoral-level courses focused on young adolescents and middle grades education provide a strong foundation for middle school doctoral students' original research on young adolescents and middle grades education.

2. The EDMS doctoral coursework – EDMS 9030, EDMS 9080, EDMS 9090, EDMS 9120, and EDMS 9150 – address all NMSA standards for doctoral students. The course syllabi are available at <http://www.coe.uga.edu/esse> and provide more detail on the content of each course.

Since virtually every doctoral student takes EDMS 9030, the 9000-level course that has been offered most frequently during the time period addressed in this report, EDMS 9030 will serve as an example of the NMSA standards addressed in the middle school doctoral-level courses.

**EDMS 9030: Young Adolescents and Schools** addresses

--NMSA Standard 1: Young Adolescent Development (e.g., comprehensively understand the research underpinning of the major concepts, principles, and theories of young adolescent development—intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral—and their interrelationships, Knowledge standard #1)

--NMSA Standard 2: Adult Development and Learning (e.g., value the need for continuous improvement based on research-based decision-making, Disposition Standard #1)

--NMSA Standard 3: Middle Level Philosophy and Organization (e.g., professional knowledge about historical and contemporary models of schooling for young adolescents and the advantages and disadvantages of these models, Knowledge standard # 2)

--NMSA Standard 4: Middle Level Curriculum and Assessment (e.g., realize the importance of connecting curriculum and assessments to the needs, interests, and experiences of all young adolescents, Disposition Standard #4)

--NMSA Standard 5: Middle Level Teaching Fields (e.g., value the importance of staying current in the major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research in their teaching fields and/or specialization areas, Disposition Standard #1)

--NMSA Standard 6: Middle Level Instruction and Assessment (e.g., know a wide variety of teaching, learning, and assessment strategies that are developmentally responsive and culturally sensitive, Knowledge Standard #2)

--NMSA Standard 7: Middle Level Professional Roles (e.g., have a comprehensive knowledge of middle level scholarly research, Knowledge Standard #1; share the results of their research with colleagues and other audiences, Performance Standard #3)

**EDMS 9080: Theory and Practice in Middle Grades Curriculum** focuses on curriculum as both cause and effect of effective middle grades education (NMSA Standard 4, Knowledge standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11; all Disposition standards; Performance standards 1, 2, 3, and 8). EDMS 9080 also provides opportunities for doctoral students to consider their own teaching fields in light of middle grades curriculum theory and practice (NMSA Standard 5, all Knowledge standards; all Disposition standards; and Performance standards 2, 3, 4, and 5) and to investigate the inextricable connections between and among curriculum, instruction, and assessment and the combined impact of curriculum, instruction, and assessment on student learning (NMSA Standards 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7).

**EDMS 9090: Socio-Cultural Issues in Early Adolescence** concentrates on the interactions between students' varying and diverse backgrounds and student learning (NMSA Standards 1, 4, 5, and 6). EDMS 9090 also focuses on community and school contextual factors that impact

learning environments, family and community support for schools and schooling, and student learning more generally (NMSA Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7).

**EDMS 9120: Comparative and International Perspectives in Middle Grades Education**

allows doctoral students to explore middle grades education from different and distinct viewpoints (NMSA Standards 3, 4, 5, 6). With its attention to using comparison and contrast to generate suggestions for improving middle grades education, EDMS 9120 also addresses all NMSA Standards as doctoral students scrutinize what works best in middle grades schools around the world and the implications of those best practices for supporting young adolescents' learning and development.

**EDMS 9150: School Reform and Young Adolescents** examines both the history of efforts to improve schooling for young adolescents (all NMSA standards) and the links between the historical antecedents and ongoing efforts to developing high-performing middle grades schools that are academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable (all NMSA standards).

3. Data are presented in Table D5 for Ph.D. students who entered the middle school education program between fall 2001 and fall 2005. The grade point average in the EDMS 9000 courses is reported as a GPA across students by student semester of program entry. For all doctoral students (not just completers), the GPA was 4.00 in every semester of program entry.

The grades in EDMS 9000 courses indicate that Ph.D. students have achieved all desired program learning outcomes.

(response limited to 2 pages)

**#6 (Required): Additional assessment that addresses NMSA standards.** Examples of assessments include evaluations of field experiences, case studies, portfolio tasks, and follow-up studies.

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. This assessment consists of the admissions votes regarding applicants to the middle school education doctoral program. The graduate admissions committee and graduate faculty vote on the admissions of all applicants to the Ph.D. program.

As part of the admissions process, all doctoral applicants submit a letter of intent, curriculum vitae, a writing sample, scores on the Graduate Record Examination, transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate coursework, and at least three reference forms and/or letters. Applicants whose records meet program criteria are invited for an interview with the admissions committee. Most interviews are conducted face to face, but some are done by telephone. Telephone interviews are generally limited to those applicants who reside overseas. The interview is the point at which the admissions committee votes on the applicants and submits its recommendation to the graduate faculty. A majority vote from the graduate faculty is required for an applicant to be recommended to the graduate school for admission to the middle school Ph.D. program. Although the interview is just one part of the process and receives no specific weight in the overall judgment, the interview allows a direct assessment by the admissions committee of a candidate's knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Because of the

number of doctoral students who work as graduate teaching assistants in the undergraduate middle school initial certification program, the interview is especially important.

2. This assessment of doctoral students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions by the admissions committee and the graduate faculty, as reflected in their admissions votes, addresses all NMSA standards, though it relates most directly to NMSA Standard 7: Professional Roles, particularly Dispositions standards 1 and 2.

3. Data on the votes of the admissions committee and graduate faculty are presented for all Ph.D. students who entered the program from fall 2001 through fall 2005. Data are reported as the percent of candidates with unanimous positive votes and the percent of candidates with at least one negative vote by semester of program entry. From 1 to 3 applicants were admitted to the Ph.D. program in each of the 7 semesters in that time frame.

All 10 applicants admitted to the middle school Ph.D. program received unanimous positive votes from the admissions committee and unanimous positive votes from the graduate faculty.

Results of votes of the admissions committee and graduate faculty indicate that candidates in the middle school Ph.D. program enter the program prepared to achieve the desired program learning outcomes. These candidates have the content knowledge; the professional and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and the ability to influence student learning that are needed in order to fulfill their professional roles.

(response limited to 2 pages)

**#7 (Optional): Additional assessment that addresses NMSA standards.** Examples of assessments include evaluations of field experiences, case studies, portfolio tasks, and follow-up studies.

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. This assessment consists of doctoral students' grades in EDMS 9030: Young Adolescents and Schools. EDMS 9030 is one of the five doctoral level courses from which Ph.D. students must choose three courses. This course is offered most frequently, and every doctoral student in the program has taken the course within the timeframe addressed by this report.

2. Doctoral students' grades in EDMS 9030 address all NMSA standards, but particularly NMSA Standard 1: Young Adolescent Development. In the course, doctoral students examine the literature related to young adolescent development (NMSA Standard 1), middle level philosophy and organization (NMSA Standard 3), middle level curriculum, instruction, and assessment (NMSA Standards 4, 5, and 6), and middle level educators as change agents (NMSA Standards 2 and 7). Because it provides an overview of young adolescent development and the middle school concept as outlined in *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents* (NMSA, 2003), *Research and Resources in Support of This We Believe* (Anfara, Andrews, Hough, Mertens, Mizelle, & White, 2003), and *Turning Points 2000: Educating Adolescents in*

*the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Jackson and Davis, 2000), EDMS 9030 addresses every NMSA standard for doctoral students.

The syllabus for EDMS 9030 is available at <http://www.coe.uga.edu/esse> EDMS 9030 students also develop research and presentation proposals tied to their own interests within young adolescent development and/or middle grades schooling (all NMSA standards), providing Ph.D. students with the opportunity to pursue their choice of topics relevant to their respective learning needs and interests with regard to middle grades education.

3. Data on doctoral students' grades in EDMS 9030 appear in Table D7. For every semester in which Ph.D. students entered the program since fall 2001, the GPA in EDMS 9030 was 4.00. Doctoral students' grades in EDMS 9030 indicate that they have achieved all desired program learning outcomes, particularly those related to young adolescent development.

(response limited to 2 pages)

**#8 (Optional): Additional assessment that addresses NMSA standards.** Examples of assessments include evaluations of field experiences, case studies, portfolio tasks, and follow-up studies.

Provide assessment information as outlined in the directions for Section IV.

1. This assessment consists of doctoral students' grades in courses related to research, evaluation, and assessment. Doctoral students are required to take at least six courses related to research, evaluation, and assessment, though many take more than six. All students take at least two courses focused on quantitative research methodology and at least two courses focused on qualitative research methodology, plus a minimum of two additional courses focused on research methodology. The two quantitative courses typically include ERSB 8310: Applied Analysis of Variance Methods in Education and ERSB 8320: Applied Correlation and Regression Methods in Education, or two courses for which ERSB 8310 and ERSB 8320 are prerequisites. The two qualitative courses typically include ERSB/QUAL 8400: Qualitative Research Traditions and ERSB/QUAL 8410: Designing Qualitative Research or two courses for which ERSB 8400 and 8410 are prerequisites.
2. The doctoral students' proficiency in research, evaluation, and assessment is a particularly important indicator of their ability in the area of effect on student learning, whether such learning is that of young adolescents in schools (NMSA Standards 1, 4, 6, and 7) or preservice and experienced teachers during their professional development (NMSA Standards 2 and 7). In the courses whose grades constitute this assessment, doctoral students learn to monitor student learning continuously, to assess and analyze student learning on the basis of carefully gathered data, and to make adjustments to instruction and study the consequences of those adjustments in a scholarly manner—all of which lead to the candidates having a positive effect on the learning of all students.
3. Data are presented in Table D8 for all doctoral students who entered the program between fall 2001 and fall 2005. The assessment consists of the grades in research, evaluation, and assessment courses, reported as a GPA across students by student semester of program

entry. Doctoral students take a minimum of six courses in research, evaluation, and assessment.

For the semesters in which Ph.D. students entered the program since fall 2001, the GPAs ranged from 3.83 to 4.00. The doctoral students' grades in research, evaluation, and assessment courses indicate that Ph.D. students have achieved the desired program learning outcomes.

(response limited to 2 pages)

## SECTION V—USE OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO IMPROVE CANDIDATE AND PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Evidence must be presented in this section that assessment results have been analyzed and have been or will be used to improve candidate performance and strengthen the program. This description should not link improvements to individual assessments but, rather, it should summarize principal findings from the evidence, the faculty's interpretation of those findings, and changes made in (or planned for) the program as a result. Describe the steps program faculty has taken to use information from assessments for improvement of both candidate performance and the program. This information should be organized around (1) content knowledge, (2) professional knowledge, skill, and dispositions, and (3) effects on student learning and on creating environments that support learning.

The middle school education faculty members are justifiably proud of the national reputation the middle school advanced programs have developed. The department's graduate elementary education graduate program as a whole, which includes the middle school graduate program, is perennially ranked among the five best in the country by *U.S. News and World Reports*. The faculty are not, however, complacent about this national reputation for excellence. The performance of individual doctoral students and the quality of the doctoral program continue to improve as a result of the assessment system, which includes but is not limited to the assessments described above.

The advanced programs have, for example, been improved by the incorporation of National Middle School Association standards into courses and experiences. In addition, the valuable data generated from the assessment system have been organized more systematically into a database that includes candidate demographic and tracking information, standardized test scores (i.e., GRE scores), grade point averages, grades in specific courses, ratings from referees, dissertation and examination outcomes, and other data categories.

Most of the assessments above, which are examples of assessments used in the Ph.D. program, are part of program admission or program exit. The faculty hope to refine or develop additional assessments for transition points between entry and exit and after program exit. For example, the graduate faculty instituted a new checkpoint assessment in spring 2005 such that every doctoral student is evaluated once a year, by all department faculty, regarding his/her progress toward successfully completing the degree. The department's graduate coordinator tracks the responses regarding each student and advises major professors if any concerns have been raised about their students. The major professors, then, have the responsibility to follow up with any faculty member who has indicated a concern about a doctoral student (see Figure 6).

The department graduate faculty decided to add this new annual checkpoint to enhance communication among faculty members regarding doctoral students and to ensure that all doctoral students and part-time students in particular have the support they need to successfully complete their respective programs. Part-time students typically spend much less time on campus and in contact with professors, and so have fewer opportunities to let the faculty know if they are struggling or, conversely, fewer opportunities for faculty to notice a struggle. Much like the support for individual students that an effective middle school teaching team provides, the checkpoint allows faculty to communicate about individual students across

courses and then collaborate to bolster the resources and supports for those students who need more scaffolding to complete the Ph.D. program successfully.

The following are the principal findings from the assessments described in Section IV, the faculty interpretation of the findings, and the changes made in or planned for the middle school program.

(1) Content Knowledge: The GRE scores and doctoral students' grade point averages in undergraduate and previous graduate coursework demonstrate that Ph.D. students have the content knowledge expected of doctoral students who enter and complete a middle school doctoral program. The GRE scores are more than 100 points above established minimum levels. For example, the mean total GRE scores of Ph.D. students were more than 100 points above the minimum all but two semesters of program entry from fall 2001 to fall 2005. Similarly, doctoral students' grade point averages in undergraduate and previous graduate coursework have been above the established minimum, with GPAs in undergraduate coursework ranging from 3.03 to 3.94 and GPAs in previous graduate coursework ranging from 3.80 to 4.00, significantly above the 3.50 established minimum.

The evidence regarding Ph.D. students' content knowledge does not seem to call for any particular program changes. However, in recent years, doctoral students have been encouraged even more than in the past to take courses outside of the College of Education. For example, Ph.D. students have taken courses in the Departments of History, Linguistics, Psychology, Sociology, and Statistics and in the Women's Studies program. This coursework has further enhanced the content knowledge of doctoral students.

(2) Professional Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions: The ratings by referees of all doctoral students, the ratings by the admissions committee and the graduate faculty of applicants admitted to the doctoral program, and the ratings by advisory committees of candidate performance on the doctoral dissertation and in the oral defense and final examination all demonstrate the middle school doctoral students have the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of middle grades educators.

Referees rate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of all doctoral applicants at program entry. In Assessment 2 above, the recommendations of the referees were used to evaluate candidates' ability to fulfill professional responsibilities. It is clear from public school and other education professionals who serve as referees, most of whom highly recommend the accepted applicants, that doctoral students enter the program with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the program is able to further develop.

The professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions of doctoral candidates are assessed by the admissions committee and the graduate faculty at program entry and by each candidate's advisory committee at program exit. The various votes that candidates receive from program faculty are positive indicators that the candidates have the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of reflective professionals in middle grades education.

Although the data from these assessments do not seem to call for program changes, there have been efforts to improve the experiences and learning of all advanced candidates, but particularly doctoral students. During two semesters (fall 2004 and spring 2005) of the doctoral research seminar (EDEC/EDMS 8990), with the guidance of one of the middle school program faculty and using service-learning as a framework for action, the department's doctoral students

themselves were involved in redesigning the doctoral research seminar. The basic idea for that redesign was approved by the faculty in spring 2005, and elements of the plan are being implemented during the 2005-2006 academic year. For example, the doctoral students requested a seminar focused specifically on professional writing; the first such seminar was offered during fall 2005. The doctoral students requested an orientation seminar for new doctoral students, and the department's graduate coordinator taught the orientation seminar during fall 2005 and is offering the orientation seminar again during spring 2006. The doctoral students also requested special topics seminars, and the department is seeking resources to offer the first special topics seminar in 2006-2007.

The department faculty members are considering adding a multicultural education exit survey to the assessment system for the doctoral program as a way of collecting more data on doctoral candidates' dispositions. Currently the Multicultural Education Exit Survey is administered to all M.Ed. and Ed.S. candidates, but is not required for Ph.D. candidates.

(3) Effects on Student Learning and on Creating Environments that Support Learning:

The performance by doctoral students in the middle school program on their courses in research, evaluation, and assessment; the ratings by the admissions committee and the graduate faculty of applicants admitted to doctoral programs; the ratings of the advisory committees of candidate performance on the doctoral dissertation, oral defense, and final examination; and doctoral students' course grades in all their middle school education coursework demonstrate that middle school Ph.D. students have the ability to influence middle grades students' learning and to create environments that support learning.

Doctoral students' proficiency in research, evaluation, and assessment is an important indicator of their ability in the area of effect on student learning. In the courses whose grades constitute this assessment, doctoral students learn to monitor student learning continuously, to assess and analyze student learning on the basis of carefully gathered data, and to make adjustments in instruction and study the consequences of those adjustments in a scholarly manner—all of which lead to the candidates' having a positive effect on the learning of all students. The Ph.D. completers take more than six research, evaluation, and assessment courses, with a mean GPA across candidates ranging from 3.83 to 4.00.

Doctoral students' ability to influence student learning and to create environments that support learning is also assessed by the admissions committee and the graduate faculty at program entry and by each candidate's advisory committee at program exit. Like their performance in research, evaluation, and assessment courses, the various votes that the doctoral students receive from program faculty are positive indicators that the Ph.D. students have the ability to influence young adolescents' learning and to create environments that support learning that is expected of reflective professionals in middle grades education.

In their core EDMS coursework (EDMS 9030, EDMS 9080, EDMS 9090, EDMS 9120, and EDMS 9150), all Ph.D. students maintained a 4.00 grade point average. These courses focus on how middle level professionals can positively affect student learning by creating environments that support learning by recognizing young adolescents as unique and contributing members of the learning community.

One of the strengths of the Ph.D. program in middle school education is the extent to which programs of study may be developed to reflect individual doctoral students' needs and areas of

research interest. That flexibility is balanced by the requirement for research courses, middle school courses, and a targeted area of concentration. The EDMS courses provide doctoral students with a strong foundation in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of professional middle grades educators who can effectively support student learning and create supportive learning environments.

Although the data from these assessments do not seem to call for program changes, the middle school program faculty are considering adding, in addition to the multicultural exit survey mentioned above, another exit survey modeled on the exit survey currently used with middle school initial certification students. Such a survey could provide valuable data on Ph.D. candidates' perceptions of their own learning in all the areas addressed by the NMSA standards, and would likely provide rich fodder for further enhancements to an already strong program.

(response limited to 3 pages)

## ATTACHMENT A Candidate Information

**Directions:** Provide three years of data on candidates enrolled in the program and completing the program, beginning with the most recent academic year for which numbers have been tabulated. Please report the data separately for the levels/tracks (e.g., baccalaureate, post-baccalaureate, alternate routes, master’s, doctorate) being addressed in this report.

<b>Program: Middle School Education: Doctor of Philosophy</b>		
<b>Academic Year</b>	<b># of Candidates Enrolled in the Program</b>	<b># of Program Completers<sup>25</sup></b>
2005-2006	3	0
2004-2005	2	0
2003-2004	1	0
2002-2003	1	0
2001-2002	4	1

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<sup>25</sup> NCATE uses the Title II definition for *program completers*. Program completers are persons who have met all the requirements of the doctoral program. Program completers include all those who are documented as having met such requirements. Documentation may take the form of a degree, institutional certificate, program credential, transcript, or other written proof of having met the program’s requirements.

## ATTACHMENT B Faculty Information

**Directions:** Complete following information for each faculty member responsible for professional coursework, clinical supervision, or administration in this program.

Faculty Member Name	Highest Degree, Field, & University <sup>26</sup>	Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member <sup>27</sup>	Faculty Rank <sup>28</sup>	Tenure Track (Yes/No)	Scholarship, <sup>29</sup> Leadership in Professional Associations, and Service: <sup>30</sup> List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years <sup>31</sup>	Teaching or other professional experience in the middle grades <sup>32</sup>
Gayle Andrews	PhD., Social Foundations of Education, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Middle School Program Coordinator	Assistant Professor	Yes	<b>Scholarship:</b> Co-author and co-editor of 4 books on middle grades research and schooling 1. <i>Encyclopedia of Middle Grades Education</i> , co-editor, 2005, Information Age 2. <i>Making the Most of Middle School</i> , co-author, 2004, Teachers College Press 3. <i>Research &amp; Resources in Support</i>	Yes

<sup>26</sup> e.g., PhD in Curriculum & Instruction, University of Nebraska

<sup>27</sup> e.g., faculty, clinical supervisor, department chair

<sup>28</sup> e.g., professor, associate professor, assistant professor, adjunct professor, instructor, administrator

<sup>29</sup> *Scholarship* is defined by NCATE as systematic inquiry into the areas related to teaching, learning, and the education of teachers and other school personnel.

Scholarship includes traditional research and publication as well as the rigorous and systematic study of pedagogy, and the application of current research findings in new settings. Scholarship further presupposes submission of one's work for professional review and evaluation.

<sup>30</sup> *Service* includes faculty contributions to college or university activities, schools, communities, and professional associations in ways that are consistent with the institution and unit's mission.

<sup>31</sup> e.g., officer of a state or national association, article published in a specific journal, and an evaluation of a local school program

<sup>32</sup> Briefly describe the nature of recent experience (e.g. clinical supervision, inservice training, teaching in a PDS) indicating the discipline and grade level of the assignment(s). List current P-12 licensure or certification(s) held, if any.

					<p><i>of This We Believe</i>, co-author, 2003, National Middle School Association</p> <p>4. <i>Leaders for a Movement: Professional Preparation of Middle Level Teachers and Administrators</i>, co-editor, 2003, Information Age.</p> <p><b>Leadership in Professional Associations:</b></p> <p>Research Advisory Board, National Middle School Association</p> <p>Board of Directors, Executive Council, Chair of Research Committee, National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform</p> <p>Leadership Council, Middle Level Education Research Special Interest Group (MLER-SIG), American Educational Research Association</p> <p><b>Service:</b></p> <p>Presentation proposal reviewer, MLER-SIG, NMSA</p> <p>Journal reviewer: <i>Research in Middle Level Education</i></p> <p>Professional development for teachers from 7 districts in northeast Georgia</p>	
Denise Muth Glynn	Ph.D., Reading	Middle School	Professor	Yes	Muth, K. D., & Glynn, S. M. (2002). Middle school literacy. In B. J.	Yes

	Education	Faculty			<p>Guzzetti (Ed.), <i>Literacy in America: An encyclopedia of history, theory, and practice</i> (pp. 348-351). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc. (383-398). New York: Plenum.</p> <p>Ference, R. A., &amp; Muth, K. D. (2004). Helping middle school females form healthy self-perceptions through team sports and exercise. <i>Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal, 13</i>, 28-35.</p> <p>Pate, P. E., &amp; Muth, K. D. (2003). Perspectives on the middle school movement: Snapshots from the past. <i>Middle School Journal, 35</i>, 15-22.(1993).</p> <p>Muth, K. D., Weaver, D., Bickmore, D., &amp; Glynn, S. M. (November, 2005). Boys go to school, too. Paper presented at the meeting of the National Middle School Association, Philadelphia.</p>	
Katherine F. Thompson	Ph.D., Middle Grades Education, The	Instructor, Clinical supervisor	Public Service Associate	No	<p><b>Scholarship:</b> Thompson, K.F. &amp; Homestead, E. (2004). Middle school curriculum, instruction, and assessment through the 1970s, 1980s, and</p>	Yes

	University of Georgia				<p>1990s. <i>Middle School Journal</i>, 35(5), 56-60.</p> <p>Pate, P.E., &amp; Thompson, K.F. (2003). Effective professional development: What is it? In V.A. Anfara &amp; P.G. Andrews (Eds.), <i>Handbook of research in middle level education, Leaders for a movement: Professional preparation and development of middle level teachers and administrators</i> (pp. 123-143). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.</p> <p><b>Service:</b> Co-Direct the League of Professional Schools, a university-public school collaboration in Georgia P-12 schools</p>	
Audra Parker	Ph.D., Elementary Education, University of Georgia	Instructor	Temporary Assistant Professor	No	<p>NMSA (2002)and AERA Presentations (2003)  AERA Reviewer (2003, 2005)</p>	Yes