

**Program Report for the Advanced Preparation of
Middle Level Educators at the Master's 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 Georgia

Date submitted _____

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Program documented in this report:

Name of institution's program: Middle School Education

Grade levels for which candidates are being prepared¹ : grades 4-8

Degree or award level¹ : Master's of Education

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-5 Middle Grades Education (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 master's in middle grades education.**

¹ 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 teaching and fulfill other 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.

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.

To receive a master's of education degree in middle school education (grades 4-8), the University of Georgia requires program completers to focus on two areas of specialization chosen from among four content areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Program completers must successfully complete coursework related to major educational issues, the nature of the learner, and the psychology of learning; the characteristics, programmatic aspects, and problems of middle grades education; subject matter and content in two different areas of specialization; and research in middle grades education. Program completers do not receive certification as a result of finishing the master's program.

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 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). Candidates are accepted into the program for admission in fall, spring, and summer. Approximately 66 candidates have been accepted into the middle school education master's program from fall 2001 through fall 2005.

Program completers take 36 hours of coursework. Figure 1 is the advisement sheet (program of study) for the master's of education degree 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 master's program does not require field and clinical experiences because program completers do not receive certification as a result of finishing the program. However, almost every M.Ed. candidate enters the master's program with prior experience working with young adolescents in middle grades schools (e.g., as certified or preservice teachers) or in other educational environments (e.g., summer camps, after school programs). The number of hours is variable. In addition, program completers have several opportunities to become involved in middle grades schools and in working with young adolescents during their coursework (see Figure 1). Most courses in Areas B (middle school education), C (content area specializations), and D (research in middle school education) require activities in classrooms, schools, and other learning environments (e.g., service learning projects in EDMS 7060; study abroad program in EDMS 7150; action research projects in EDMS 7500; Action Research; case studies of young adolescents in EDMS 7050; and similar activities in

content area specialization courses in ELAN: language and literacy, EMAT: mathematics education, ESCI: science education, ESOC: social studies education, and READ: reading education. In addition, program completers plan, and sometimes carry out, a research project related to middle school education in their research course in Area D, research in middle school education (e.g., EDMS 6990, ERSH 6200). The number of hours required in the field varies by course, ranging from as few as 2-5 (e.g., case study of young adolescent in EDMS 7050) to as many as 100+ (e.g., service learning project in EDMS 7060). In the final reflection paper required in the exit portfolio, M.Ed. candidates must describe the connections between their learning 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 master's program are summarized in attached Table C-2, EDMS Data Points at Assessment Points –Master's. Candidates' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, professional skills, and dispositions are assessed at two transition points: (a) application and admission, and (b) matriculation and exit. At each transition point, candidates are assessed on their content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, professional skills, 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 the exit portfolio. Candidates 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 relationship² 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 master's program embodies the conceptual framework by preparing the kind of professionals that the unit values.

The middle school education master's program is intended to extend and blend the theoretical and practical understanding of M.Ed. candidates. They are encouraged to become more familiar with research and to develop their skills as action researchers. Program completers have both a deep knowledge of the subject matter they are expected to teach and the pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are required to make subject matter developmentally accessible, meaningful, and useful for students. They are reflective professionals who think and act in ways that demonstrate their commitment to their own learning and 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 such evidence.

² 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 candidates being prepared to work in diverse communities, which means candidates 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 in Areas B, C, and D, candidates 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 master's 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.³

Each of the data points for the middle school education master's program in Table C-2, EDMS Data Points at Assessment Points – Master's, reflects an assessment of candidates at a particular transition 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, Grade Point Average in Course of Study At Least 3.0, Completion of Required Courses and Course Hours Within Six Years of Matriculation, and Approval of Application for Graduation by Graduate School.

Assessments in the middle school education master's program, but not all other unit programs, include Analysis of Transcripts and Previous Experience, Periodic Review of Progress, Approval of Program of Study by Department, Approval for Graduation by Advisor, and *Pass Rating* on EDMS Exit Portfolio.

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.⁴
3. Chart on program faculty expertise and experience.⁴

³ 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.

⁴ NCATE will provide links to tables to be completed (see Attachments A & B).

(response limited to 6 pages, not including attachments)