

**Comprehensive Program Review Self-Study
M.Ed. Middle Grades Education**

**Columbus State University
October 2005**

Executive Summary for the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education

Major Findings of the Program's Quality and Productivity

Program Quality: Very Strong

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards and the Georgia 2000 Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all initial and advanced Middle Grades Education programs.

Overall, the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education program is strong and prepares highly qualified middle grades (grades 4-8) teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. In content courses (mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, or reading), middle grades education courses, professional courses, and program-related field applications, candidates have multiple opportunities to demonstrate excellence in teaching, scholarship, and professionalism. Creating opportunities for candidates to demonstrate excellence in these three areas is consistent with the College of Education (COE) Conceptual Framework and is reflected in the program outcomes of the middle grades education program.

Program Productivity: Very Strong

Enrollment in the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education program increased by 100% since Fall 2001 (from 29 students in Fall 2001 to 58 students in Fall 2004) and ranks first in average enrollment (i.e., 47.5 students per year) among the ten M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education. Courses are offered on a one- or two-year cycle, and enrollment in required courses is good. This helps to contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the department. The program has a diverse group of majors (on average 64% female and 30% minority) from a wide range of age groups. The majority of the graduates of the program are employed in schools in the CSU Partner School Network.

The number of M.Ed. Middle Grades degrees conferred by CSU from 2001-2002 to 2003-2004 was 10 per year. In 2004-2005, the number of degrees conferred increased by 160% (26 degrees conferred). Productivity is comparable to the number of degrees conferred by other USG state universities of similar size and mission.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Quality

Though the program quality is very strong, we continue to look for ways to make improvements.

The Middle Grades Program Advisory Committee (PAC) will oversee the following efforts to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to teacher candidates.

- Align coursework with the new Georgia Performance Standards (2005-2006).

- Establish and coordinate class rotation schedules so that students may plan program duration and completion.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity

The program quality is very strong and the number of degrees conferred each year is adequate. As previously mentioned, CSU will continue to work to improve the current M.Ed. program in middle grades education by responding to new initiatives (e.g., Georgia Performance Standards), improving the curriculum, providing better support and resources for students, and intensifying recruitment efforts. By enhancing the quality of the program, we hope to attract more potential students.

Conclusion about the Program’s Viability at CSU

The M.Ed. Middle Grades Education program at CSU is a viable one. As indicated by the evaluation of the NCATE/PSC Board of Examiners in February 2005, the quality of the program is very strong. All NCATE/PSC standards were judged to be met for all initial and advanced programs.

The viability of the program is also ensured by the collaborative relationship that exists between the College of Education, College of Science, College of Arts and Letters, and P-12 teachers. Representatives from each of these groups work together to make improvements to the middle grades education programs at CSU and to impact middle level education in our region. The M.Ed. program in middle grades education is a valuable resource for teachers in our region who want to grow professionally and gain expertise in middle level education.

Graduates of the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education program are also a valuable resource for our undergraduate program. A substantial number of program graduates teach in systems served by CSU, especially Muscogee County. Our graduate programs in middle grades education have helped to create a cadre of leaders within our Partner School Network. Graduates often serve CSU as pre-student teaching cooperating teachers and cooperating teachers for student teaching. They are an invaluable asset in assisting with the development of our undergraduates.

Program Improvement Plan

In response to the findings of the Comprehensive Program Review, the faculty members and administrators of the M.Ed. in Middle Grades Education propose the strategies outlined below to improve the quality, productivity and viability of the program. These strategies will be facilitated by the Middle Grades Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

<i>Departmental Plans and Priorities</i>	<i>CPR Indicator</i>	<i>Projected Timeline</i>
1. Refine the College of Education Recruitment Plan to focus on specific methods for recruiting Middle Grades graduate students from diverse backgrounds	Productivity Viability	2006-2007
2. Explore various funding sources to provide scholarships for students seeking advanced degrees in Middle Grades Education	Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing

3. Coordinate class rotation schedules so that students can more efficiently estimate program duration and completion	Productivity Viability	2006-2007
4. Align appropriate graduate courses with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) to make the individual courses as well as the program highly attractive to prospective graduate students who will be implementing the GPS.	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-2007

The Interim Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs have reviewed the plan and will commit financial and personnel resources to accomplish priorities 1, 3, and 4 for program improvement. Resources from external funding will be necessary to support priority 2. The Program Coordinator will communicate additional resource requests as needed to the appropriate administrator within the College of Education at Columbus State University.

Summary Recommendation and Supporting Rationale

Recommendation: *Maintain the Program at the Current Level*

The program quality is very strong and the number of degrees conferred each year is adequate. Teachers initially certified at the secondary and early childhood levels who teach in grades 4-8 often take courses to add a middle grades endorsement to their certificates. Many elect to complete their master’s degree in middle grades education rather than their initial field. With an increased interest in teaching reading, many candidates elect to complete the reading endorsement as part of their master’s program. With the new certification requirements for special education, it is anticipated that individuals in a special education setting in grades 4-8 will find the middle grades program attractive.

M.Ed. Middle Grades Education Program

I. Overview

The M.Ed. program in Middle Grades Education prepares highly qualified teachers who possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to promote high levels of learning for all grade 4-8 students. In content courses (mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, or reading), middle grades education courses, professional courses, and program- related field applications, candidates have multiple opportunities to demonstrate excellence in teaching, scholarship, and professionalism. Creating opportunities for candidates to demonstrate excellence in these three areas is consistent with the College of Education (COE) Conceptual Framework and is reflected in the program outcomes of the middle grades education program outlined below.

The successful program graduate demonstrates growing competence in:

1. skills and knowledge associated with selected content teaching fields (scholarship);
2. planning effective instruction (teaching);
3. implementation of effective instruction (teaching);
4. evaluation and assessment of individual students and programs (teaching);
5. application of research to program development and improvement in student achievement (scholarship);
6. skills associated with the selection and use of appropriate media to foster achievement for all students (teaching)
7. development and utilization of professional networks (professionalism).

The goals of the M.Ed. program in Middle Grades Education reflect the belief that candidates should display *proficiency* before they enter advanced study and should develop and demonstrate *expertise* (M.Ed.) and *leadership* (Ed.S) as they complete their programs. For this reason, program goals are similar for candidates in initial and advanced programs, with the difference lying in the expected level of performance.

Excellence in teaching, scholarship, and professionalism is embodied in the NBPTS propositions and the National Middle School Association (NMSA) Standards for Master Level Candidates, which constitute the basis for candidate instruction, mentoring, and assessment. At the master's level, the middle grades education program uses the Graduate Model of Accomplished Practice (GMAP), an assessment instrument aligned with the NBPTS Standards, to instruct, mentor, and assess candidates as they proceed through the program.

II. Summary Findings of the Program's Overall Quality

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards and the Georgia 2000 Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all initial and advanced programs. Following is a summary of the findings taken from the BOE final report.

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

Candidates in the Middle Grades Education (MGE) advanced programs (M.Ed. and Ed.S.) demonstrate content area mastery and are professionally and pedagogically prepared. The advanced programs are correlated with NBPTS Core Propositions. Advanced candidates complete professional core classes at an advanced level and concentrations in selected areas. Coursework at both advanced levels includes preparation in educational research.

Areas for improvement: None

Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit maintains a comprehensive assessment system for the initial and advanced levels to ensure the systematic collection of data, providing opportunities for the unit to analyze, evaluate, and improve the quality of programs, unit operations, and candidate performance. The assessment systems reflect the conceptual framework and are aligned with INTASC and NBPTS standards as well as specialty professional associations. The unit utilizes information technologies to effectively collect and aggregate data for candidate, program, and unit improvement. Documents and interviews verify the appropriate use of assessment results for program changes.

Areas for improvement: None

Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

All of the unit's programs which prepare candidates to become teachers or fill other roles as members of the education profession include field work/clinical practice as an integral part. Use of the MAP Evaluation Instrument and the Dispositions Evaluations which connects with the Conceptual Framework supports the work of the unit and provides scaffolding so that candidates acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed by those who are in professional education roles. Candidates are also surrounded by experienced, caring, competent professionals representing both the University and P-12 partners. Innovations such as the use of information technology for scheduling and tracking candidate progress in a very flexible and comprehensive database, the STEADY new teacher mentoring program, and the

refinement of the Partner School Network enhance to quality of the program and its graduates. MGE candidates at the advanced levels complete field based projects in their own classroom and school settings.

Areas for improvement: None

Standard 4: Diversity

The unit has clearly defined its candidate dispositions related to diversity, and these dispositions are assessed throughout required coursework in the initial and advanced programs. Three of the 32 unit faculty represent diversity. The diversity of candidates in unit programs roughly mirrors that of the university and service area as a whole. Because of the racial and ethnic diversity in the university's service area, initial and advanced candidates also work with a broadly diverse population of P-12 students.

Areas for Improvement: The college has not been successful in recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty.

Rationale: Even though efforts have been made to recruit additional minority faculty, currently there are three minority faculty in the unit. While this constitutes a slight improvement from 1998, a significant impact has not been made to ensure that candidates have the opportunity to work with diverse faculty.

Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Unit faculty has extensive academic backgrounds. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the full-time faculty, and seventeen percent (17%) of the part-time faculty hold terminal degrees while the remaining faculty either are working to complete doctoral studies or have master's degrees. Unit faculty are effective teachers who model best teaching practices in their areas of specialty. Most faculty have been engaged in scholarly activities and service activities to the local, state, regional, national, and international communities. All full-time tenured and non-tenured faculty are systematically and annually evaluated by their department chair, personnel committee, unit dean, and throughout the university input system. The faculty serve on committees and boards at the university and in the local community. They are also involved in local, state, and national professional associations. The unit has an expectation of professional growth/development of both full-time and part-time faculty, and faculty concur with the expectation by attending workshops and conferences, reading journals, and conducting research.

Areas for Improvement: Part-time faculty are not systematically evaluated.

Rationale: There is no systematic process for evaluating part-time faculty across the unit.

Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the responsibility for authority for the delivery of the preparation of all professional educators. Systems and processes are in place to ensure that all constituencies are represented in the design, delivery and assessment of unit programs. Facilities, personnel and budget are adequate to meet the needs of candidates, faculty and programs. The unit does not require part-time faculty who teach or supervise student teachers to attend an orientation/training session on the conceptual framework or the use of the disposition or MAP rubrics.

Areas for Improvement: Not all part-time faculty are adequately trained on assessments used to evaluate candidates.

Rationale: The unit cannot ensure that part-time faculty have the requisite knowledge and skills to effectively assess candidates.

Standard 8: Meets Program Content Standards Specified in Rule 505-3, Sections 10-59

MGE advanced program outcomes are correlated with the National Middle School Association Standards and with NBPTS Core Propositions for Master Level Programs. Program outcomes are also correlated with the Graduate Model of Accomplished Practice (GMAP) and with the Graduate Dispositions Assessment.

Areas for improvement: None

III. Summary Findings of the Program's Overall Productivity

Enrollment in the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education (MGE) program has increased consistently over the past four years. Among the programs offered in the Department of Teacher Education, the MGE program ranks second in average student enrollment. Required courses are offered on a regular basis, and enrollment in those courses is adequate. This helps to contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the department. The majority of students in the program are female and minorities are well represented (on average, 32% are minorities).

III A. Enrollment of Students in the Program

The enrollment pattern for the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education program is shown in Table 3.1. A significant number of students are part-time and have work and family responsibilities in addition to their academic studies. Enrollment over the past four years has increased fairly consistently with an average yearly enrollment of 47 students.

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Full-Time	8	9	15	11
Part-Time	21	41	38	47
<i>Total</i>	29	50	53	58

**Table 3.1 Number of Declared Majors in M.Ed. Middle Grades Education
Fall Semester**

Table 3.2 shows the total enrollment in all M.Ed. programs housed exclusively in the Department of Teacher Education at CSU. Among the programs listed in the table, the Middle Grades Education program ranks first in average student enrollment.

Program	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	Avg. Over Four Years
Middle Grades Education	29	50	53	58	47
Early Childhood Ed	26	25	24	22	25
Health and Phys Ed	10	13	11	11	11
Special Ed- BD	15	15	18	16	17
Special Ed- MR	10	17	8	8	11
Special Ed- LD	22	33	28	31	29
Secondary Math	12	13	21	20	17
Secondary English	9	24	33	27	23
Secondary Science- Biol	13	22	20	17	18
Secondary Social Science	7	19	22	15	16

Table 3.2 Number of Declared Majors in M.Ed. Programs – Fall Semester

A Program Advisory Committee (PAC) oversees the M.Ed. program in Middle Grades Education and works to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered. Currently, we are aligning coursework with the new Georgia Performance Standards in an effort to help prepare teachers to teach with the new standards. By responding to current initiatives and mandates through annual program review and course development, we hope to continue to prepare middle grades pre-service teachers to assume professional teaching responsibilities.

IIIB. Annual Degree Productivity of the Program

As indicated in Table 3.3, the number of M.Ed. degrees conferred each year in Middle Grades Education remained consistent from 2001 to 2004 and more than doubled in 2005, bringing the four year average to 14.

Program	2001	2002	2003	2004	Avg. Over 4 Years
Middle Grades Education	10	10	10	26	14
Early Childhood Ed	7	12	9	11	10
Health and Phys Ed	2	1	3	6	3
Special Ed- BD	6	7	5	8	7
Special Ed- MR	2	3	3	1	2
Special Ed- LD	3	10	8	13	9
Secondary Math	5	5	1	4	4
Secondary English	1	7	3	6	4
Secondary Science	4	1	4	6	4
Secondary Social Science	1	1	4	5	3

Table 3.3 Number of Degrees Awarded in MGE M.Ed. Programs- Fiscal Year

III C. Program Completion Efficiency & Graduation Rate

Table 3.4 shows the graduation rates for all M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education at CSU.

Program	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Early Childhood Education	46%	36%	46%	50%
Health & Physical Education	10%	23%	55%	55%
Middle Grades Education	34%	20%	19%	45%
Secondary English	78%	13%	18%	59%
Secondary Mathematics	42%	8%	19%	15%
Secondary Science	8%	18%	30%	59%
Secondary Social Science	14%	21%	23%	13%
Special Education – Behavioral Disorders	47%	33%	44%	19%
Special Education – Learning Disabilities	45%	24%	46%	23%
Special Education – Mental Retardation	30%	18%	13%	38%

Table 3.4- M.Ed. Graduation Rates

Graduation rates tend to fluctuate as students complete their programs of study at different rates.

III D. Efficiency & Clarity of the Program's Course Requirements

The M.Ed. Program in Middle Grades Education requires a professional core (7 credits), 10 semester hours of course work related to the general middle level education studies [curriculum, reading, and research], a content area concentration (15 credits) and 4 hours of graduate electives. The program is highly individualized to meet the professional goals of each degree candidate.

M.Ed. Program of Study

Course Requirements

Total Hours Required: 36

Area 1: Professional Core

Required Hours: 7

EDUF 6115 Educational Psychology	3 Hours
EDUF 6215 Research Methods	3 Hours
EDCI 6795 Collaboration	1 Hour

Area 2: Middle Grades Core

Required Hours: 10

EDCI 6158 Trends/Issues in Middle Grades/Secondary Ed.	2 Hours
EDCI 6255 Teacher Inquiry and Investigation	2 Hours
EDRG 6116 Integrating Literacy Strategies in the Middle Grades	3 Hours
EDMG 6155 Psychology of the Early Adolescent Learner	3 Hours

Area 3: Concentration

Required Hours: 15

Select nine semester hours in one area and six semester hours in a second area of graduate elective courses in the content areas of:

Language Arts:

EDMG 6115 Oral Language in the Middle Grades	3 Hours
EDMG 6117 Improved Teaching of English Language Arts in Grades 4-8	3 Hours
EDCI 6118 Teaching Composition in Grades 4-12	3 Hours
and/or ENGL (5000 level or above)	

Social Studies:

EDCI 6159 Integrating Multicultural/Global Studies throughout the Curriculum	3 Hours
HIST/POLS/ECON (5000 level or above)	

Mathematics:

EDMG 6125 Teaching Mathematics in the Middle Grades	3 Hours
EDMG 6126 Content Underpinnings for Middle School Mathematics	3 hours
MATH (5000 level or above)	

Science:

EDMG 6135 Teaching Concepts of Physical Science in the Middle Grades	3 Hours
EDMG 6136 Teaching Concepts of Life Science in the Middle Grades	3 Hours
EDCI 6235 Space Science Methods, Grds 4-12	3 Hours
and/or BIOL/CHEM/GEOL/PHYS (5000 level or above)	

Reading:

EDRG 6148 Psychology of Reading	2 Hours
EDRG 6245 Assessment and Classroom Instruction	3 Hours
EDRG 6756 Classroom Literacy Seminar	1 Hour
EDRG 6116 Integrating Literacy Strategies in the Middle Grades	3 Hours
(Completion of these courses satisfies requirements for PSC Reading Endorsement.)	

Area 4: Electives

Required Hours: 4

Total Hours Required: 36

These requirements are communicated online and through the CSU Catalog. At the beginning of each semester, a Graduate Orientation is held for all new graduate students. At this orientation, program requirements are clearly communicated, and the program coordinator works with each student to develop a tentative program of study. Subsequently, the program coordinator communicates with graduate students each semester by e-mail, phone, or face-to-face meetings to update degree progress sheets and advise on course selection.

III E. Frequency and Sequencing of Course Offerings Required for Program Completion

As shown in Table 3.6, courses required in the M.Ed Program in Middle Grades Education program are offered on a regular basis. Most students complete the program in an average of six terms, with most taking more coursework during the summer term than during Fall and Spring when most are engaged in full time teaching. Content course are offered in the Colleges of Education, Arts and Letters, and Science. Candidates elect course content to fit their professional needs.

	Number of Sections Per Semester												
	F 01	Sp 02	Su 02	F 02	Sp 03	Su 03	F 03	Sp 04	Su 04	F 04	Sp 05	Su 05	F 05
EDUF 6115	5	1	3	3	4	2	4	3	3	2	2	2	2
EDUF 6116	1	5	5	6	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	3	2
EDUF 6795										1	1	1	1
EDCI 6158	1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1
EDCI 6255		1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
EDMG 6155		1			1			1			1		
EDRG 6116	1			1			1			1			1

Table 3.6 Frequency of Course Offerings

III F. Enrollment in the Program's Required Courses

Table 3.7 shows the average enrollment per section for required courses in the M.Ed. Middle Grades program. All education students must take EDUF 6116, 6115, and 6795 so average enrollments and numbers of sections in these courses are higher. EDMG 6155 and EDRG 6116 are required for all middle grades majors as well as a capstone research series- EDCI 6157 and 6255.

Average Enrollment Per Section													
	F 01	Sp 02	Su 02	F 02	Sp 03	Su 03	F 03	Sp 04	Su 04	F 04	Sp 05	Su 05	F 05
EDUF 6115	8.4	26	13	13	13.5	15.5	11.5	10	15.3	22.5	18.5	14	19.5
EDUF 6116	25	8.8	12.2	7	13	16	13.5	19	18	25.5	14.7	17	21
EDUF 6795										35	12	16	65
EDCI 6158	13		16	25		15	26		29	28		26	24
EDCI 6255		11	7		22	12	17	21	18	9	26	12	16
EDSE 6795				7	3		5	4		6	1		2
EDMG 6155		22			24			30			25		
EDRG 6116	25			25			16			19			18

Table 3.7 Average Enrollment in the Program's Required Courses

By offering the required courses on a rotation cycle, students are able to plan their schedules to balance academic studies with family and professional responsibilities. Content area courses in the College of Education, College of Science, and College of Arts and Letters are offered in a timely manner with sufficient choices for candidates to complete programs usually within 2.5 years.

III G. Diversity of the Program's Majors and Graduates

Table 3.8 shows the gender and ethnic origin of students in the BSEd Middle Grades program. Diversity is evident in terms of both gender and ethnicity in the program. For each academic year, at least 20% of M.Ed. MGE candidates were male. Approximately 40% of M.Ed. MGE candidates were from non-white ethnic groups

Gender	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Female	24	36	37	42
Male	5	14	16	16
Ethnicity				
Asian	0	0	0	0
Black	11	15	12	19
White	18	35	37	38
Multi-Racial	0	0	1	0
Hispanic	0	0	2	1
American Indian	0	0	1	0

Table 3.8 Ethnic and gender diversity among M.Ed. MGE majors

Gender	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Female	7	10	8	18
Male	3	0	2	8
Ethnicity				
Asian				
Black	3	4	2	8
White	7	6	8	18

Table 3.9 Ethnic and gender diversity among MGE graduates

Students in the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education program are from diverse age groups. The majority of students are between 31 and 50 years of age. Table 3.10 shows the age composition of M.Ed. students in the MGE program since 2001.

Age	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Under 21	0	0	0	0
21-25	8	7	9	9
26-30	4	8	10	10
31-40	6	17	18	22
41-50	11	12	12	10
51-60	0	6	4	7
<i>Total</i>	29	50	53	58
<i>Average</i>	35.3	37.1	35.9	36.7

Table 3.10: Age diversity among M.Ed. MGE majors

III H. Cost-Effectiveness of Instructional Delivery in the Program's Home Department

As shown below in Table 3.11, the budget for the Department of Teacher Education represented approximately 13% of the total instructional costs for Columbus State University (CSU) from 2001 to 2004. During this time period, over \$1,000,000 of the department budget came from grant funds that, for the most part, supported the work of the Centers of Excellence. In 2004-2005, the department budget represented 8% of the total instructional costs at CSU. Considering that, in Fall 2004, 1340 (19%) of the 7224 students enrolled at CSU were majoring in a program offered through the Department of Teacher Education, instructional delivery in the department is very cost-effective.

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Instructional Costs	\$23,311,457.76	\$23,963,598.65	\$23,784,544.59	\$25,240,030.43
Total Credit Hours	116,543	133,777	148,797	155,654
Cost per Credit	\$200.02	\$179.13	\$159.85	\$162.15

Table 3.11 Total Instructional Costs at CSU

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Department Budget*	\$3,116,951	\$3,176,287	\$3,143,501	\$2,032,092
Cost Per Major <i>(Pro-Rated Expenditures/Number of Declared Majors)</i>	\$9,258	\$7,330	\$6,415	\$4,064
Credit Hours Taught Fall and Spring Semesters	2,363	3,076	3,205	3,652
Cost per Credit Hour Fall and Spring Semesters	\$501	\$392	\$373	\$189

* Note: Centers of Excellence units (ETTC, CRMC, Child Care R&R and Oxbow Meadows removed from academic departments in FY 2005).

Table 3.11 Instructional Costs for Department of Teacher Education and Middle Grades Education Programs

III I. Program’s Responsiveness to State Needs and Employer Demand for Program Graduates

Graduates of the M.Ed. Middle Grades Education program have enhanced and increased their expertise to teach in grade 4-8 classrooms. They have demonstrated in-depth knowledge in selected content field(s) as well as the principle of teaching and learning for a pre-adolescent (ages 9-14) student population. Data collected and analyzed for the annual program report reflects a grade point average of over 3.5 for both content and pedagogy courses.

According to data collected and analyzed from a Partner School Network survey, a substantial number of program graduates teach in systems served by CSU, especially Muscogee County. In response to the No Child Left Behind definitions for “highly qualified” teachers in grades 4-8, consideration is being given to restructuring the program to respond to new staffing configurations at these grade levels. In most middle schools, teachers are placed in one academic area, with an additional assignment of one section of a reading class. Grade 4 or 5 teachers are likely to teach a morning block of reading/language arts with afternoon instruction in the other content fields. To prepare MGE candidates for this staffing shift, the Middle Grades PAC will consider the submission of a new curriculum plan that would offer a concentration in reading. Consideration will also be given to reactivating an Ed.S. Program that would culminate in certification as a reading specialist. The PAC will convene in January 2006 and initiate the curriculum change process in Fall 2006 to be effective Fall 2007.

III J. Position of the Program’s Annual Degree Productivity among Comparable USG Programs

As indicated in Table 3.13, among the USG state universities that offer a M.Ed. Middle Grades Education, CSU ranks 7th in average number of M.Ed. degrees conferred.

Institution	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Avg. of Four Years
State Universities					
University of West GA	26	31	37	25	30
GA Southwestern	12	37	22	26	24
Armstrong Atlantic	7	11	17	42	19
Georgia Southern University	15	11	16	27	18
University of Georgia	21	18	16	8	16
Valdosta State	7	14	13	12	12
Columbus State University	9	10	10	10	10
Georgia College & State U	11	13	12	5	10
Albany State University	11	8	10	7	9
Georgia State University	12	11	8	3	9
Augusta State University	4	3	6	5	5

Table 3.13 M.Ed. Middle Grades Education Degrees Conferred by Institution

III K. This Program's Contribution to Achieving CSU's Mission

The M.Ed. Middle Grades Education helps CSU to accomplish its mission of serving the educational needs of a diverse region. By preparing highly-qualified teachers for grades 4-8, the program helps to improve the quality of education and the quality of life in the institution's service area.

IV. Conclusion about the Program's Viability at CSU

The M.Ed. Middle Grades program at CSU is a viable one. As indicated by the evaluation of the NCATE/PSC Board of Examiners in February 2005, the quality of the program is very strong. All NCATE/PSC standards were judged to be met for all initial and advanced programs.

The viability of the program is also ensured by the collaborative relationship that exists between the College of Education, College of Science, College of Arts and Letters, and P-12 teachers. Representatives from each of these groups work together to make improvements to the middle grades education programs at CSU and to impact middle level education in our region.

The number of M.Ed. degrees in Middle Grades Education conferred by CSU has been fairly consistent over the past four years with an average of 14 candidates have completed the degree program.

V. Program Improvement Plan

The Middle Grades Program Advisory Committee (PAC) will oversee the following efforts to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to teacher candidates.

- Align coursework with the new Georgia Performance Standards in an effort to help prepare teachers to teach with the new standards.
- Establish and coordinate class rotation schedules so that students may plan program duration and completion.

VI. Summary Recommendation

Recommendation: Maintain the Program at the Current Level

The program quality is very strong and the number of degrees conferred each year is adequate. As previously mentioned, CSU will continue to work to improve the current M.Ed. program in middle grades education by responding to new initiatives (e.g., Georgia Performance Standards), improving the curriculum, providing better support and resources for students, and intensifying recruitment efforts. By enhancing the quality of the program, we hope to attract more potential students.