

# ATTACHMENT I

**Program Proposal  
Master of Education in Middle Level Education  
Winthrop University**

**Summary**

Winthrop University requests approval to offer a program leading to a Master of Education in Middle Level Education to be implemented in Fall 1999.

The Board of Trustees approved the proposal on February 5, 1999. This proposal was submitted for Commission review on February 15, 1999. The proposal was reviewed without substantive comment and voted upon favorably by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs at its meeting on April 13, 1999.

The purpose of the program is to prepare teachers who currently hold a teaching certificate to become highly qualified middle level educators. The program envisions graduates of the program as educational leaders who will be able to maximize the educational experience of early adolescents. Winthrop has developed the following specific objectives for the program:

- Ensure that students in middle grades program receive a program that is considered exemplary by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the National Middle School Association (NMSA).
- Provide a curriculum that is innovative, sequenced, and interdisciplinary in the preparation of middle school teachers.
- Provide instruction in learning environments appropriate to the teaching and learning needs of prospective and current middle level teachers.
- Create opportunities for practitioners to develop strategies and assessments that concentrate on a wide range of intellectual, social, and physical characteristics of pre-adolescents and early adolescents.

The need for the program is based on national and state needs for well-prepared teachers trained in middle level education. The proposed program is based on the NCATE/NSMA guidelines for a master's level middle education program. The curriculum for the proposed program was reviewed by Dr. Ken McEwin during a recent visit to South Carolina on behalf of the Center of Excellence in Middle Level Initiatives. Dr. McEwin coordinates the NMSA/NCATE review process and noted that the proposed program was in alignment with the national guidelines. Middle school is seen as the point where many students begin to experience academic problems and where highly qualified middle level educators can make a difference in the learning success of students. The State has also recognized the importance of well-qualified middle level

school staff by developing the certification requirements for middle level certification. Approval of these certification requirements is pending. The proposed program will meet the requirements for teachers to add middle level certification to their current certification.

The curriculum consists of 36 to 39 credit hours. Nine of these hours will be in the graduate professional core, 15 in the middle level education core, and 12-15 in the disciplinary focus. The proposed curriculum is very closely aligned to that recommended by NCATE and NSMA for a master's level program. However, the staff urges the institution to be aware that NCATE 2000 will require that master's level programs also be aligned with the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Winthrop proposes five new courses in the middle level education core. These five courses are the ones that meet the standards of NCATE and NMSA curriculum guidelines. Staff at the S.C. Department of Education reviewed the program proposal and indicated that the program will meet the needs of those educators who teach in middle schools in South Carolina.

The number of existing faculty serving the new program is six headcount plus one new faculty member who will be hired under a reassigned faculty slot. This will not be a new faculty line but rather a reassignment of a current vacant line within the College of Education. Thus, seven headcount faculty or 1.3 FTE will serve the program. The new faculty member will be required to have experience in middle level curriculum development, a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience in a public middle school, and a doctorate in either middle level or elementary education.

Enrollments in the proposed program are estimated to begin at five headcount students in FY 1999-00 and increase to eight by FY 2003-04. Applicants will be those teachers in South Carolina who are currently certified in either elementary or secondary education. Enrollments are estimated based on current enrollment in Winthrop's M.Ed. programs in Elementary Education and Secondary Education. There are no employment concerns for graduates from this program as most of those enrolled will be teachers currently holding teaching positions. Also, with the initiation of middle level certification in the State, there will be a need for qualified middle level educators. There are no other middle level education programs in South Carolina at the present time although others are under development. Similar programs offered in the region are at UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Greensboro, and Appalachian State University. Enrollment projections meet CHE productivity standards.

The proposed program will be subject to accreditation by NCATE. Winthrop will be preparing a folio for review by the National Middle School Association which will be submitted to NCATE in Fall 1999. Once middle level teacher certification is approved

by the State, the NMSA review will also be submitted to the Professional Review Committee of the State Board of Education for approval as a new area of teacher certification at Winthrop.

There are no physical plant or equipment needs for the proposed program. The library resources are sufficient in terms of the Association of College and Research Libraries. However, Winthrop recognizes that they will need to purchase additional books to support some of the core middle level education courses. The purchase of these books will come from funds currently available to the Curriculum and Instruction Department in which the proposed program will be housed. Thus there is no request for additional funds for library support.

Winthrop indicates that there will be no new costs associated with the proposed program. The faculty line will be from a reassigned position, administrative support is currently in place, and no equipment or supplies will be required beyond that which is currently funded within the departmental budget.

Shown below are the estimated projections of existing and new costs associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years as compared with the estimated revenues projected under the Mission Resource Requirement and the Resource Allocation Plan.

Year	Estimated Existing Costs (Instructional)	Estimated New Costs	Total Costs	State Appropriation	Tuition	Total Revenue
1999-2000	\$42,319	0	<b>\$42,319</b>	0	\$12,615	<b>\$12,615</b>
2000-01	\$52,898	0	<b>\$52,898</b>	\$23,486	\$15,525	<b>\$39,280</b>
2000-02	\$66,501	0	<b>\$66,501</b>	\$29,151	\$20,044	<b>\$49,194</b>
2000-03	\$61,966	0	<b>\$61,966</b>	\$37,038	\$18,434	<b>\$55,473</b>
2002-04	\$78,592	0	<b>\$78,592</b>	\$34,545	\$23,603	<b>\$58,149</b>

These data demonstrate that if Winthrop University can meet the projected student enrollments and contain costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will not be able to cover the costs with revenues it generates by the fifth year of its implementation.

The proposed program has been commended by both the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs and the staff of the S.C. Department of Education in its design and for addressing the needs of middle school teachers and students. Winthrop has developed the program in consultation with middle school teachers, staff of the S.C. Department of Education and the Commission, the Education Improvement Act Select Committee, the S.C. Middle School Association, the S.C. Middle Grade School State Policy Initiative, and faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education. It is a well-designed program that will meet the needs of educators in the State.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee recommends that the Commission approve the proposed program leading to a Master of Education degree in Middle Level Education for implementation in Fall 1999, provided that no "unique cost" or other special State funding be required or requested and provided further that Winthrop examine the curriculum to make sure that it is appropriately aligned with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

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