



The University of Georgia

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Graduate School

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VICE PRESIDENT  
UGA ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

October 23, 2003

Dr. Arnett Mace  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost  
Administration Bldg.  
Campus

Dear Dr. Mace:

At the Graduate Council meeting on October 22, 2003, a proposal to deliver the MEd degree program in Adult Education via Distance Education was approved. I am pleased to forward this proposal to you with my endorsement.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Maureen Grasso  
Dean of the Graduate School

MG:lcj

Enclosure

c: Dr. Jeri Benson  
Dr. Ron Cervero  
Ms. Fiona Liken

*Addendum for Distance Education Delivery of All Programs*

**Date:** April 21, 2003

**Institution:** The University of Georgia

**College/School/Division:** College of Education/ School of Leadership and Lifelong Learning

**Department:** Adult Education

**Degree:** Stand-alone Degree

**Major:** Adult Education

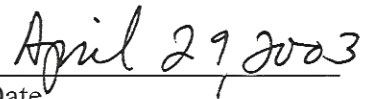
**CIP Code:**

**Proposed Start Date:** Fall 2001

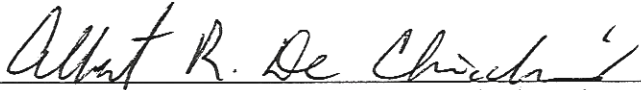
**Proposed End Date:** Summer 2003; New Cohort beginning Fall 2003



Department Head



Date



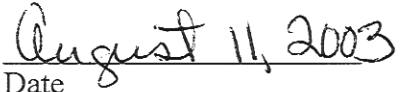
Chairman, College of Education Curriculum Committee



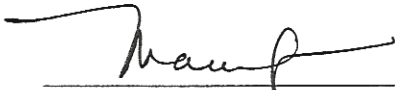
Date



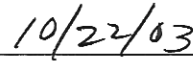
Dean, College of Education



Date



Dean, Graduate School



Date

University Curriculum Systems

Date

## **1. Description of the Delivery System**

The delivery mode of the master's degree program in Adult Education is through computer based internet instruction using the WebCT platform provided by The University of Georgia. The WebCT software can be used to create entire courses using text, images, video and audio presentations. Courses can be accessed through a web browser such as Netscape or Internet Explorer and student/instructor interaction will take place through the bulletin board for threaded asynchronous discussions and through email. The chat rooms may be used for synchronous real-time discussions, but participation is not required as part of the coursework.

## **2. Assessment of Societal Need and Demand for Distance Education Delivery**

The need for a distance learning program was determined after researching other university Adult Education departments that offer quality distance education programs and after receiving numerous requests from potential students from Georgia and from other states and countries. According to a December 1999 report from the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education as of 1997-98 44% of all higher education institutions offered distance education courses and of those with more than 10,000 students 87% offered distance education courses.

Since that time, the delivery of graduate degrees entirely on-line has become an increasingly accepted medium of delivery. For example, major research universities offer master's degrees online in a wide variety of fields including the liberal arts (Harvard University), engineering (Stanford, Georgia Tech, Michigan), nursing (Wisconsin, Michigan State), information sciences (UCLA, Columbia University), and business administration (Indiana, Florida, Maryland, and Penn State) and education. Our direct competitors offering a master's degree in adult education are Michigan State, Penn State, and a global consortium (University of British Columbia, University of Technology-Sydney, University of the Western Cape-South Africa, Linkoping University-Sweden).

Traditionally, students in the Adult Education Department at The University of Georgia are working adults and distance education is well-suited for working adults who are unable to attend traditional university classes due to job demands, location, or family responsibilities. Having the capacity to offer a master's degree through distance education will enable the Department to meet the needs of these students who are unable to attend on-campus classes and provide a new avenue to attract this potential pool of students to the Department.

## **3. Readiness of the Institution to Offer the Program**

### ***a. Institutional Mission and Relevance to Other Programmatic Offerings-***

The University of Georgia has a commitment to excellence in a teaching/learning environment which is dedicated to serving a diverse student body, providing high levels of academic support for high level achievement, and promoting instructional quality and effectiveness. As part of this commitment, the University of Georgia offers comprehensive educational programs designed for life-long learning and professional education as well as excellence in public service, economic development, and technical assistance activities for the citizens of Georgia.

The implementation of a distance education master's degree program by the Adult Education Department further enhances these commitments outlined by the University of Georgia. The program is designed to provide a teaching/learning environment for diverse students with a focus on high achievement and excellent instructional quality through computer-mediated instruction.

Through this program, the university is better able to maximize its commitment by reaching larger numbers of students in areas otherwise underserved by the University. This program also supports the College of Education's mission to provide the highest level of leadership in furthering education and lifelong learning for all citizens. Additionally, this program supports the strategic plan of the college's initiative of commitment to service and improving the quality of teaching and learning through distance education.

***b. Faculty Inventory with Delivery Expertise-***

Prior to teaching an online course, faculty member will be allowed release from an institutional assignment for the development of the course. The Department has a full time coordinator of online program delivery to assist each faculty member with course development and implementation as well as a Graduate Assistant who has excellent technical skills and knowledge. The university provides training in WebCT for all faculty members involved in distance education activities as well as technical assistance for faculty and students. Course design is supported by the WebCT template, which guides the faculty member through development of coursework.

***c. Facilities-***

Except for the regular upgrading of desktop computers for faculty members, there are no modifications of existing facilities to establish and maintain the alternative delivery of the program.

***d. Instructional Support-***

The university and the Department of Adult Education have extensive resources to support students enrolled in distance learning activities. Students may apply for admission to the university and the graduate school online as well as register for classes. The coordinator of the program will assess each student's readiness and skills level for success in the online learning environment through a personal telephone conversation. Students can be advised and counseled by their academic advisor through e-mail or telephone, and when feasible, through face-to-face meetings. Student/instructor interaction will take place through WebCT's bulletin board for threaded asynchronous discussions, chat rooms for synchronous real-time discussions, e-mail, and telephone calls.

Course materials will be delivered either electronically or mailed between the students and instructors. Grades will be determined by the quality and quantity of online discussions, class assignments, projects, papers, and online activities. Evaluation of each course will be an ongoing process based on course requirements and student interaction and satisfaction. Evaluation of the course and the instructor will be completed at the end of each course according to university guidelines.

***e. Student Services-***

The University of Georgia and the College of Education have extensive resources to support faculty and students enrolled in distance learning activities. Through Student E-Services students have access to information about the bookstore, e-mail accounts, and access to technology support services. Students registered for courses at the university may gain access to the library system by following the instructions at <http://libs.uga.edu/galileo.html>

*f. Cooperative Links with the Community-*

The economic impact of the M.Ed. program derives from developing the leadership ability of adult educators to create economic opportunity, enhance social well-being, and improve the quality of life of the institutions and communities in which they live and work. The cooperative links with the community are essential for setting up the internship course, which is required in the program of study.

*g. Accreditation and Legal Issues-*

The degree program is not under the accreditation jurisdiction of any outside agency. The program does not differ in any substantive way from the on-campus program in admissions, programmatic, or graduation requirements.

**4. Recruitment and Admission of Students-**

Before beginning the program students must have a personal computer, internet and email access. Through telephone conversations with the coordinator of the program, computer skills necessary for the program and expectations of tasks required are reviewed. The program will have a direct impact on affirmative action because it will give equal opportunity to any and all students no matter where they live or work. Students will be classified as in-state or out-of-state for tuition purposes based on USG Board of Regents Policy.

**5. Curriculum-**

The academic standards for this program are the same as those for on-campus delivery. Expectations concerning student readings, discussions, papers, and grades are consistent with departmental standards. All of the courses offered are appropriate for distance delivery. There are no laboratory requirements required as part of the program. If students follow the prescribed curriculum then completion of the program should take six semesters. The curriculum for the cohort beginning in Fall 2003 is listed below, including courses that are required and elective in our on-campus program.

EADU 7020	Adult Learning and Instruction (required)
EADU 7030	Program Development in Adult Education (required)
EADU 7650	Applied Project in Adult Education (required)
EADU 8020	Adult Education in Social Context (required)
ERSH 6200	Methods of Research in Education (required)
EADU 8030	International Adult Education (elective)
EADU 8050	Multicultural Adult Education (elective)
EADU 8090	Adult Development and Instruction (elective)
EADU 8200	Theory and Practice of Educational Change (elective)
EADU 8620	Adult Education Administration (elective)
EADU 9700	Internship in Adult Education (elective)

In addition to the required courses, electives are included that reflect adult education theories, as well as their practical application, in a comprehensive program. Based on evaluation results from the first cohort, students have found the curriculum includes knowledge and skills valuable in their careers and useful in their daily work.

**6. Consistency with Principles of Good Practice-**

All distance-learning activities offered by the Adult Education Department are in accord with the Principles of Good Practice as outlined at: <http://alt.usg.edu/research/goodpractice.html>. These

principles encourage a high level of student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active listening, prompt feedback, emphasis on task, communication of high expectations, and respect for diverse talents and ways of learning (Chickering & Gamson, 1987). The department will assess all on-line courses through surveys and questionnaires and faculty and student interviews. The program provides an appropriate balance of core, research, and elective courses and through the sequential scheduling of courses students are better able to plan their program of study. The learning structure provides opportunities for growth and development, faculty support, and the rigor of the program is comparable to traditional programs.

### 7. Fiscal Implications of the Program-

The program is now in its third year of operation. The table below shows the costs of the program in its development year (FY01), its first year of operation (FY02), and its second year of operation (FY03) when the first cohort graduates and the second cohort begins.

	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03
Personnel (faculty)	31,500	68,189	96,307
Personnel (Tech Support)	4,480	17,480	17,480
Personnel (Secretary)	3,150	3,150	3,150
Renovated Facilities	3,500	7,000	3,500
Administrative Overhead	0	7,560	15,120
Supplies & Materials	1,000	1,000	1,000
Professional Development	3,000	1,000	1,000
Total	46,630	105,379	137,557

#### FY01 Rationale

- Personnel/Faculty: Salary/benefits for program coordinator (50%)
- Personnel/Tech: Salary/benefits for technology support (10%)
- Personnel/Secretary: Salary/benefits for secretary (5%)
- Facilities: Desktop computer

#### FY02 Rationale

- Personnel/Faculty: Salary/benefits for program coordinator (80%); instruction and course release time for full-time faculty
- Personnel/Tech: Salary/benefits for technology support (10%) and instructional support (Graduate Assistant)
- Personnel/Secretary: Salary/benefits for secretary (5%)
- Facilities: Two desktop computers
- Overhead: 10% of tuition to support program operation

### FY03 Rationale

- Personnel/Faculty: Salary/benefits for program coordinator (80%); instruction and course release time for full-time faculty
- Personnel/Tech: Salary/benefits for technology support (10%) and instructional support (Graduate Assistant)
- Personnel/Secretary: Salary/benefits for secretary (5%)
- Facilities: Two desktop computers
- Overhead: 20% of tuition to support program operation

- a. What is the funding stream for this type of delivery as well as upgrades and replacements?

The funding stream for the program is derived from the University tuition return program, which augments the base budget. This is used for the career-track faculty member who coordinates the program and teaches in the program.

- b. What are the line costs for delivering this program?

The majority of courses in the program are taught by tenure-track faculty members as part of their normal instructional assignment.

- c. Does the campus project that any tuition adjustments will need to be requested to support the delivery of this program?

The primary audience at the current time are Georgia residents who pay in-state tuition. The Department's degree programs in general, as well as this M.Ed. program in particular, are recognized as among the best in North America. Therefore, future enrollment projections include attracting a regional audience and then a national and international audience. We will seek participation in the Academic Common Market to support reduced tuition for the regional audience. For the national and international audience, we will seek a tuition adjustment to reduce out-of-state tuition.

- d. What are the external sources of funding and support for the program?

No external sources of funding support the program at the current time.

- e. Will there be any operating budget requests for this program that would exceed normal operating budget guidelines?

The University already provides site licenses for WebCT, networks to host the hardware and software, and support services through the Office of Instructional Support and Development. Faculty members need desktop computers to stay current with the latest software developments. In addition, faculty will need laptop computers to be able to teach in the program anywhere and anytime.

- f. Please demonstrate the cost and benefit of developing this program for a distance education format.

This program is serving an audience of educators who could not attend the University of Georgia due to the distance they would have to travel for the on-campus M.Ed. program or because the demands of their work would prevent them from attending the on-campus program. Thus, this program serves an entirely new audience and truly extends the boundaries of the campus to anywhere in the world.

g. Assessment

Assessment/evaluation will focus on the course/program, instructors, students, and technology. Instructional results will be assessed throughout the courses as well as through summative evaluations at the completion of each course. This allows the instructor to know how well the goals were achieved as well as the learning outcomes. Students will demonstrate knowledge acquisition through the completion of papers, projects, and activities that relate to the instruction. Additionally, level of achievement will be compared to traditional classroom achievement to ensure that the same high standards are maintained in the distance education delivery system.

As part of an ongoing evaluation the department will address eight programmatic areas. With the majority of the first cohort of students having graduated in Summer semester 2003, we have preliminary data on these eight evaluation areas. Once the remainder of the first cohort of students graduates in Fall semester 2003, we plan to undertake a formal evaluation to address these areas. The sources of evidence for our initial assessment are: 1) course evaluations, 2) faculty evaluation of individual student work as reflected in course grades, 3) the end-of-program portfolio developed by the student, and 4) the final oral examination undertaken by 3 member faculty committees.

- Comparability of online requirements for courses to traditional classroom instruction  
Faculty members taught these on-line courses with the same reading materials, lecture notes, and written assignments as when they taught the courses in a classroom setting. Thus, the on-line course requirements are the same as traditional classroom instruction.

- Student participation online and the quantity and quality of this participation
- The quantity and frequency of interaction between students and between the instructor and the students

The courses are organized with required participation on threaded discussions throughout the semester. Students and faculty interact 24/7 on the discussion boards. Therefore, the quantity of student/student participation and the student/faculty interaction is demonstrably higher than in a classroom setting, which is limited to about 150 minutes a week. Faculty members report very high levels of quality in these most of these interactions. In fact, many faculty members feel that students who might be reticent in a classroom setting are quite active in the discussions.

- Student satisfaction and comfort level with the learning environment  
We regularly assess this through mid-course and end-of-course evaluations, which tell us that most students are very satisfied with this delivery system. We have found that it takes a couple of weeks at the beginning of the first semester for students to become comfortable. By the middle of the first semester, it seems quite natural for students to learn in this medium.

- Institutional resources available to students, such as technical support, library usage, and the bookstore services

Students have high levels of technical support by the program coordinator, the Graduate Assistant assigned to the program, and the University support services such as OIT in the College of Education. The library has been very accessible with the new on-line reserve system. Like other units on campus that have on-line programs, we are using MBS Direct for book orders. Students have found this service extremely efficient and cost-effective.



- Evidence of the development of critical thinking skills and knowledge acquisition reflected in student assignments, communications, and projects

As a graduate program, all of our courses are focused on both knowledge acquisition and critical thinking skills. Students have the same written assignments as when these courses are taught in a classroom setting. Faculty members read, evaluate, and give feedback on these papers and projects just as they do in a face-to-face course. Based on course grades and faculty members feedback, these students have demonstrated at least as much knowledge acquisition and growth in critical thinking skills as when the courses are taught in a classroom.

- Student retention

We have had good retention in the degree program, especially when compared to other on-line degree programs. Of the first cohort of 20 students that began in Fall 2001, 13 will have graduated by Fall 2003 and the 3 remaining students will graduate the following semester. A few students had to enroll in only one course per semester due to family and job responsibilities, therefore their graduation date was delayed. Of the second cohort of 25 students that began in Spring 2003, 23 are still enrolled in their third semester.

- Faculty satisfaction

Faculty members are very satisfied with teaching in the program and with the levels of students' achievement they have seen. Every faculty member who has taught has reported being surprised by the high level of student engagement and learning in the program. As we are now teaching the third cohort, most faculty members are teaching a course for the second or third time and have accepted this as part of their normal teaching load. That is probably the best indicator of faculty satisfaction.