



# The University of Georgia

University Council  
Athens, Georgia 30602

March 12, 2014

## UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2013-2014

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal to offer the existing major in Social Studies Education (M.Ed.) as an online program will be an agenda item for the March 19, 2014, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley, Chair  
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Provost Pamela S. Whitten  
Dr. Laura D. Jolly



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# The University of Georgia

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College of Education  
*Educational Theory and Practice*

26 August 2013

Curriculum Committee  
College of Education  
University of Georgia  
Athens GA 30602

Colleagues:

I write to express my strong endorsement of the Social Studies Education Program's Proposal for an External Degree. The proposal encapsulates an initiative that the program and the department have been working on for some time and for which some of my departmental colleagues were able to gain course development funding last summer.

This proposal was prepared to meet two ends. First, as a result of recent strategic hires, it is in the best position it has been in for many years to expand the reach of its MEd degree beyond its traditional catchment area. On-line teaching is the only way to do that. Second, the program sought through this initiative to contribute to improving the College of Education's credit-hour production. While the department itself continues to enjoy high credit-hour production, it realized that it could contribute directly to ameliorating the college's predicament through innovative programming, in this case, on-line availability of its strong face-to-face program.

I urge your favorable consideration of this proposal.

Cordially,

Ronald E. Butchart  
Distinguished Research Professor and Department Head

**Social Studies Education Program**  
**Proposal for an External Degree**  
**The University of Georgia**

*Institution:* The University of Georgia

*Date:* August 1, 2013

*College/School/Division:* Education

*Department:* Educational Theory and Practice

*Degree:* Master of Education (M.Ed.)

*Major:* Social Studies Education

*CIP Code:* 13131801

*Proposed Start Date:* Summer 2014

## **1. Needs Assessment**

This is a proposal for a fully on-line version of the currently existing Masters of Education (M.Ed.) degree program in Social Studies Education (SSE). We will be applying to make this an e-rate program.

The mission of the SSE program at the University of Georgia is to advance knowledge of students and schools and to promote the development and application of teaching strategies, curriculum design practices, assessment principles, and research methodologies to improve secondary social studies education.

Our program prepares teachers for social studies classrooms at the initial and advanced preparation levels, as well as preparing researchers who wish to focus on aspects of social studies education.

Selected master's-level coursework in the SSE program has been offered online for the past four years (typically during summers) to support the engagement of students from around the state of Georgia. These courses have proven to be quite popular, and we have received frequent requests to expand our online course offerings. At the same time, our face-to-face enrollments in master's-level courses have fallen over the same period, as graduate students who are full-time teachers seek out more flexible learning options that better meet their needs. Thus, the need and the justification for a fully online version of our existing M.Ed. degree come from this combination of the initial successes of our online endeavors and the increased competition for potential students from other online and flexible delivery degree granting institutions. We are confident that given the choice, potential students will opt for a UGA degree over other options. We will maintain our face-to-face M.Ed. option because students enrolled in that program are absorbed into coursework already being offered as a part of other graduate offerings, but it seems clear that we will continue to lose many potential students if we do not provide an online option.

The target audience we seek to attract includes:

1. Full-time working social studies teachers who seek a master's degree to gain new skills, abilities and credentials;
2. Recent graduates of initial certification programs in social studies education who wish to continue in their studies and receive a master's degree before beginning a teaching career;
3. Career change professionals who wish to earn a master's degree in social studies education but are not looking to concurrently receive Georgia teacher certification (the M.Ed. is not a path to initial teacher certification).

In sum, we believe that offering a fully online program will be of benefit for several reasons. First, this move will allow us to better support social studies teachers across the state by offering master's programs that will be significantly more inclusive of the overall population that, as the state's land grant university, we are charged to serve. Second, the proposed online version of the SSE M.Ed. is being co-developed with an online version of the Middle School Education (MSE) M.Ed. degree program also housed in our department. The development of core courses across the two programs will enhance collaboration among department faculty while at the same time reaching a broader base of students with our programming. Finally, increasing the number of students who graduate with M.Ed. degrees from our program has the potential to increase the pool of future Ph.D. applicants in our department.

We are aware that the creation and implementation of an online version of our program is not without costs in terms of departmental time and resources. However, we believe that the cost of inaction is even greater. Teachers (and other working professionals) are opting for online education in increasing numbers and the SSE program is well prepared to enter the online market.

## **2. Admission Requirements**

Requirements for admission to the Social Studies Education online M.Ed. program mirror those in place for our on-campus degree. Prospective candidates for the M.Ed. program online, must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. Admissions requirements include:

- Graduate School application form
- Application fee
- One official copy of transcripts from all institutions attended – minimum undergraduate (and prior graduate) GPA of 3.0
- Three letters of recommendation
- For international students, official TOEFL or IELTS scores
- Graduate Record Exam (GRE)
- A 2-4 page personal statement describing career aspirations, academic preparedness, experience in education settings and working with youth, and potential to contribute to a diverse community of learners and teachers.

Admissions are competitive; merely meeting minimum requirements does not ensure admission.

All materials submitted as part of an application are considered and evaluated by the faculty within the SSE Program. Admissions are evaluated holistically, and recommendations for admission are based on an applicant's qualifications, recommendations, statement, and how these match with faculty interests and the program's capacity.

### 3. Program Content

The academic standards for the proposed online M.Ed. degree program are the same as those for the on-campus degree program. The online degree will require the same standards of academic excellence and rigor. Expectations for student participation are consistent with our departmental and program standards. Some of the courses in the program have already been taught fully online or in a blended delivery format. At least five tenured and tenure-track faculty in the department have agreed to participate in instruction of the program along with several part-time instructors who have taught both face-to-face and online master's level courses within the department in the past. All courses offered are appropriate for distance delivery. There are no laboratory requirements required as a part of the program. Full-time faculty members will serve as advisors for the students in this program to plan the program of study, to set professional and career goals and to establish a support system for the student. Students will be admitted by cohort (initial cohort of 18 students in the first year, perhaps increasing to cohorts of 25 students based on our experience with the first cohort). Students who successfully follow the curriculum outlined in the Program of Study will complete the degree in six consecutive terms, beginning in summer and finishing in the spring of the second year.

- 12 total courses (36 total credit hours)
- 2 courses per semester, including summers
- All courses on-line (2-day face-to-face launch event, 1-day face-to-face at start of Year 2, and 1-day face-to-face capstone event for all students who reside in the state of Georgia; online alternatives provided for students who cannot attend)
- Culminates with a capstone course in which students will engage in and produce action research

The curriculum for the M.Ed. online program includes:

*\* Courses that are currently offered on campus. Online (e versions) of these under development.*

*\*\* Courses that are currently under development. These may be offered in the face-to-face program as well, but that change would not occur as part of this program roll-out.*

Summer year 1

**\*\*ETAP 7080E - Educational foundations**

**\*ESOC 7080E – Curriculum theory in social studies education**

Fall year 1

**\*\*EDMS 7060E - School, family, and community**

**\*ESOC 7050E – Problems in social studies teaching**

## Spring year 1

\*\*EDEC 7420E - Classroom management

\*ESOC 6990E – Research in social studies

## Summer year 2

\*\*ESOC XXXXE – Media & Technology in social studies classrooms

\*ESOC XXXXE - Social studies content-area (Teaching Civics, Teaching Economics, etc.) elective: specific courses will be based on student and faculty interest; e.g., ESOC 6150E; ESOC 7010E; ESOC 7200E; ESOC 7520E)

## Fall year 2

\*EDMS 7050E - Adolescent learning

\*ESOC XXXXE - Social studies content-area (Teaching Civics, Teaching Economics, etc.) elective: specific courses will be based on student and faculty interest; e.g., ESOC 6150E; ESOC 7010E; ESOC 7200E; ESOC 7520E)

## Spring year 2

\*ESOC XXXXE - Social studies content-area (Teaching Civics, Teaching Economics, etc.) elective: specific courses will be based on student and faculty interest; e.g., ESOC 6150E; ESOC 7010E; ESOC 7200E; ESOC 7520E)

\*\*ETAP 7500E - Action research capstone course

Courses in the SSE M.Ed. online degree program will utilize both synchronous and asynchronous instruction and will be taught primarily through the UGA eLC-New learning management system (Desire2Learn). A faculty design team is currently in the process of developing a range of modules to be used in courses in the program. However, each instructor will have freedom to design their instructional environment and a large part of the course content according to the course concepts, instructor style and students' needs.

In their last term, students are required to complete an action research project for completion of the master's degree program. This culminating project will be developed in parts throughout the program, and will require students to reflect on and apply their coursework to demonstrate how what they have learned in the program has improved their own classroom practice. Students' action research projects will be presented to faculty and peers as part of a one-day culminating activity at the end of the final semester in the program. In-state students will be expected to attend this day face-to-face. An online option will be available for out-of-state students.

## **4. Student Advising**

Students in the ESOC M.Ed. online degree program will be assigned to a part-time academic advisor. The academic advisor will be responsible for tasks including but not limited to the

following: advising students about the program of study, expectations for success, courses to take each semester, and responding to students' needs regarding courses; orienting accepted students to the University of Georgia, e.g., getting a student ID, registering for courses via OASIS/Banner, handling any flags on their admission or registration (e.g., proof of U.S. residency). The academic advisor will also respond to queries from people who are interested in the online program, support prospective students in the application and admissions processes, respond to inquiries from enrolled students about various aspects of the M.Ed. online program, e.g., how to apply for a T-5 teaching certificate, and follow up and stay in communication with program alumni as part of documenting the program's impact and soliciting suggestions for program improvement. The advisor will also have regular opportunities to discuss career options with students and help the students meet their educational goals while in the program. The advising will take the form of communication through a combination of email, telephone conferencing, and video conferencing (e.g., Skype). Of course, face-to-face meeting is also an option if the student chooses to come to campus.

All students will be required to have functioning computers with web-cams and microphones and a high speed internet connection, as most all of the communication both with advisors and instructors will be done electronically. The consequences for students who fail to respond to communication from their advisor or course instructor will be similar to those for students who fail to complete required activities in a face-to-face class and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Students who need to pause their program or reduce their course taking below the standard two courses per semester will be advised regarding re-entry on a case-by-case basis.

## **5. Resident Requirements**

The residence requirement will be satisfied through two consecutive semesters of six credit hours (12 total hours) of online coursework.

All enrolled students pursuing graduate degrees at the University of Georgia must maintain continuous enrollment from matriculation until completion of all degree requirements. Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for a minimum of three (3) credits in at least two semesters per academic year (fall, spring, summer), including the 3 hours of *graduate* credit that is required for registration during the semester in which degree requirements are complete, until the degree is attained or status as a degree-seeking graduate student is terminated.

## **6. Program Management**

The coordination of the SSE M.Ed. online program will be the responsibility of the faculty in the ETAP department teaching in the online program, in collaboration with the Social Studies Education program coordinator, who has coordination oversight for all degree programs in SSE. The ETAP faculty members and SSE program coordinator will maintain the quality and viability

of the online program through ongoing feedback from students and instructors in the program and through regular meetings to plan, assess, and modify the program as needed. The SSE program coordinator will serve as liaison between the SSE M.Ed. online program and other programs and departments related to program and course goals and objectives, course scheduling, etc. All courses will be taught by faculty in the College of Education or by part-time instructors associated with the program.

As noted earlier, a cohort target of 18 new students will be admitted each year. Prospective students will apply by early spring semester to begin the program in the summer.

### *Assessing the Program*

Students will complete course evaluations at the close of each semester in the same way as face-to-face students (using the COE Web portal). In addition, students in the online program will participate in an annual survey to provide feedback specific to aspects of the online program experience. The focus of this survey will be to assess advisement, registration, support, programmatic issues and other related topics to help faculty conduct yearly assessments of and adjustments to the program.

### *Application and Matriculation*

Students will apply for this online degree program in the same way they would apply for on-campus degree programs through the Graduate School. As a part of their letter of intent, students will need to specify that they wish to be an online student. Applications will be reviewed in February. Acceptance into the online program will be made by the ETAP Faculty as a whole using the criteria discussed in the *Admission Requirements* area of this document.

### *Duplication*

We know of no other master's degree program at UGA that would be in direct competition with or a duplication of this online M.Ed. degree in Social Studies Education with the exception of our own face-to-face program. As we noted earlier, this face-to-face program has been experiencing declining enrollment due to competition from online programs at other institutions. Thus, while some students who may have considered the face-to-face program may now apply to the online program, we anticipate a significant net gain in students on balance.

The proposed online program *will* be in competition with online programs at other institutions, but that is somewhat intentional. We note that while some of the competing institutions are other members of the University System of Georgia, many of the providers are for-profit institutions not based in Georgia.

### *Transitioning Coursework to Online*

Faculty has been teaching various versions of several of the existing courses in hybrid formats that rely heavily on electronic learning technologies. In addition to the work already undertaken, we will be working with the office of online learning and their instructional developer to take existing coursework to an online setting.



### *Ensuring Compliance With Best Practices*

Faculty teaching in the online program have each completed the College of Education's Innovations in Teaching and Technology Academy in which best practices in design, format, and pedagogy were discussed. At the end of each course, we will evaluate the degree to which existing practices have resulted in positive results for learning, as measured by end-of-course evaluations as well as qualitative analysis of student work by faculty teams. Furthermore, we will maintain our ongoing relationship with the Office of Online Learning to assure our continued alignment with best practices in online education.

### *How Faculty Will Be Trained to Teach Online Courses*

As stated above, faculty members involved in the teaching of online courses have had a significant amount of training and previous experiences working with learning technologies. In preparation for this particular course of study, each faculty member will be involved in the design of the courses that she or he will teach. As a result, each faculty member will have individualized contact with the instructional developers from the Office of Online Learning.

### *Course Revision Methods and Intervals*

Courses are offered once each year. Courses will be revised before each successive offering of the course based on the following: 1) faculty assessment of student engagement and learning, 2) end of course evaluations, 3) the continued development and enrichment of pedagogical strategies, and 4) current educational and socio-political context.

## **7. Library and Laboratory Resources**

There are no laboratory requirements for the online program. In terms of library access, students will have the same online access to Galileo, GIL, and all other aspects of the university online library system. Students who choose to come to campus at any point during their program will also have access to any of the physical resources of the campus library system.

## **8. Budget**

This online degree program will be maintained with relatively low costs for the College of Education when compared to the income it will generate. The needs of the program are composed of graduate assistant support, faculty (including full-time and part-time), computers, and advertising.

We note that the emerging body of research on online instruction is clear about the integral role that engaged and interested Graduate Assistants play in the success of such programs. Given the increased expectations of online teaching experience for new faculty members, we anticipate significant enthusiasm among our doctoral students for participating in assistantships to support the online programs in our department. Specific responsibilities for graduate assistants will include, but are not limited to:

- **Technical Support** – includes structuring/making changes to course sites, uploading items, responding to students with troubleshooting aid, supporting faculty and staff in new

technologies, supporting major learning management changes like migration to new learning management systems.

- **Student Support** – includes responding to student emails about course requirements and technology, on-campus needs for distance students, helping utilize and access online resources such as the library systems, etc.

- **Promotion and Development of the Online Program** – includes assisting program faculty with programmatic initiatives, such as tutorials, presentations, upkeep of websites; arranging legal use of multimedia materials from third parties, recruitment materials for online program, registration, surveys and communication.

**See attached budget for detailed revenue and expense information.**

An e-rate program leadership team, including faculty membership from each e-rate program, will propose a plan to the ETAP department faculty for the use of program revenue.

#### **9. Program Costs Assessed to Students**

Costs for students taking the online M.Ed. are assessed at the UGA approved e-rate of \$643/credit hour plus applicable fees.

#### **10. Accreditation**

The online master's degree in Social Studies Education, like all degrees in the Department of Educational Theory and Practice, are subject to accreditation by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

## UGA Online Program Proposal Budget Sheet

Use the spreadsheet provided to identify anticipated revenues and expenses for the program. If in the first year, there are no courses offered, and therefore no tuition revenue accrued, identify any departmental resources that will be allocated in support of the program as well as any additional resources that will be needed. Note that the University will provide services in the form of course design/development, faculty training, marketing, and student support. Once courses are offered, project the revenue associated with tuition and fees using the information provided on the form. The E-Rate Differential Tuition should be entered in the Program Revenue section along with any other funds that are redirected in support of the program. Be sure to utilize the Guidelines that have been designed to help in completing this form. Additionally, you may wish to review the sample completed Budget form.

Line #		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1	<b>Program Name:</b> Master of Social Studies Education				
	<b>Projected Enrollments</b>				
2	New Students				18
3	Existing Students				0
4	<b>Total Enrollments</b>				18
	<b>Projected Student Credit Hours</b>				
5	New Student Credit Hours				324
6	Existing Student Credit Hours				0
7	<b>Total Student Credit Hours</b>				324
	<b>E-Rate Tuition*</b> (no entry required unless differing from UGA standard rates)				
8	Base tuition per credit hour				\$368
9	Differential Tuition per credit hour <i>(UGA standard rate is entered. If program is requesting a different rate, change the figure entered for each year -- assume a \$25 increase every other year)</i>				\$275
10	Total E-Rate Tuition Per Credit Hour				\$643
	<b>Tuition Revenue **</b>				
11	Total Base Tuition				\$119,232
12	Total Differential Tuition Revenue				\$89,100
13	<b>Total Tuition Revenue</b>				\$208,332

## UGA Online Program Proposal Budget Sheet

Degree/Certificate Program Departmental Budget					
<b>Program Expenses ***</b>					
14	Direct Instructor Support Costs (2 summer units @7000)			\$14,000.00	
15	Graduate Assistants (1 doctoral student for year @50%)			\$23,259	
16	Faculty Release Time (5 @ \$7000 for course development)			\$35,000	
17	Program Coordinator			\$0	
18	Advising Support (.25 @ 29,365 per year)			\$7,341.25	
19	Clerical Support (5% of 30,000)			\$1,500	
20	Professional Development (4 conferences/training @ 1250)			\$5,000	
21	Supplies/Operating			\$3,000	
22	Additional Marketing				
23	Course Development/Enhancement ***				
24	Faculty Training ***				
25	Marketing ***				
26	Student Support ***				
27	Other Expenses (please be specific)				
28	<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$89,100
<b>Program Revenue</b>					
29	E-Rate Differential Tuition Revenue		\$0	\$0	\$89,100
30	Grant Funds				
31	Other: (Name source)				
32	College/Department Redirection				
33	<b>Total Revenue Allocated for Program</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$89,100
34	<b>Annual Program Balance</b> (Total Program Revenue less Total Program Expenses)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Notes:</b>					
*An E-Rate Tuition is charged for fully online programs. The e-Rate Tuition is the sum of the Base Tuition and the E-Rate Differential Tuition. Each year UGA sets a					
** The e-Rate Differential Tuition Revenue is derived by multiplying the E-Rate Differential Tuition rate by the number of credit hours to be generated per year. This					
*** Program expenses are costs that will be incurred by the college/department with the development and offering of the new program. The University will provide					
				1/30/2012	



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# The University of Georgia

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Office of Online Learning

Date: January 31, 2014

To: Dr. Cory Buxton, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator, Department of Educational Theory and Practice, College of Education

Re: Online Graduate Degree in *Social Studies*

Based on the results of a recent market research study conducted on Social Studies, I am excited to express my support for the newly proposed online program to be offered out of the College of Education. The results of the study demonstrated program viability, suggesting there is sufficient market demand for the program, and the market is not yet saturated with similar online programs. In addition, the proposed new program helps the University fulfill one of its strategic goals to increase online graduate education.

In hopeful anticipation of University approval of this program, the Office of Online Learning agrees to support the program in the following ways:

- Assist faculty in the design and development of each of the program's courses, ensuring courses meet University standards as well as State and Federal regulations;
- Prepare faculty through training and development activities focused on best practices in online education;
- Provide marketing expertise to assist in establishing and executing strategies which leverage UGAonline's marketing efforts with program-specific needs;
- Assist in establishing a program-specific continuous quality assurance plan to ensure that course design, content, and instructors are continually being evaluated for improvement;
- Provide ongoing assistance for online faculty in the maintenance and revision of programmatic courses;
- Provide a central point of communication to guide students to the appropriate resources across the University in an effort to foster student success.

If during the review process there are questions or concerns to which can be address by the Office of Online Learning, please contact me at (706) 542-1841.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith Bailey, Director, Office of Online Learning

CC: Dr. Craig Kennedy, Dean, College of Education  
Dr. Laura Bierema, Associate Dean for Academic Programs, College of Education  
Dr. Laura Jolly, Vice President for Instruction  
Dr. Ron Cervero, Associate Vice President for Instruction