

Planning Summary
Master of Arts in Teaching (M. A. T.) for Middle Level Teaching
Conrad D. Festa, President
College of Charleston

New Program Proposed:	Master of Arts in Teaching for Middle Level Teachers
Academic Unit Involved:	The School of Education
Degree:	Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.)
Proposed Date of Implementation:	Fall, 2007
Hours required:	Minimum of 30
CIP Code:	13.1206

Introduction

The College of Charleston, in collaboration with The Citadel, seeks to establish a new Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) program to prepare middle level teachers to meet the critical need for highly qualified teachers in the Lowcountry and in the state of South Carolina. This new M.A. T. for preparing middle grade teachers is being requested by the College of Charleston with the understanding that it will become joint with The Citadel contingent upon full NCATE approval of The Citadel's education programs in the Spring Semester, 2008.

It is of utmost importance to the continuing development of the state and the nation for educational institutions to create pools of highly qualified teachers for middle school classrooms. This program will recruit, prepare, and support candidates who already have bachelor's degrees to teach in the fields in which they desire to teach.

At present there are few pathways into teaching that offer incentives for people with bachelor's degrees to choose teaching over other career opportunities for which they are qualified. This proposed initial certification program will recognize the value of the candidate's degree in a field in which they will teach. The program coursework and field experiences will enhance candidates' knowledge and skills with advanced study in both content and subject-specific pedagogy.

Middle school teacher candidates will share a core of courses, many of which are already offered through advanced programs at the College of Charleston and at The Citadel. In addition, middle grades M.A.T. candidates will experience middle level-specific courses in accordance with National Middle School Association guidelines, as well as master's level courses in a chosen content area.

Justification of Need

The state of South Carolina has recently instituted middle level certification. This is a major and significant change in the requirements for teaching middle school and few teachers presently meet those requirements. There is an urgent need for programs designed to allow teachers and teacher candidates to earn the new certification. In addition, for several years in South Carolina the number of teaching positions at the middle level has exceeded the number of qualified applicants. In fact, middle level teachers are consistently labeled “critical needs” by the State Department of Education. The Schools of Education at the College of Charleston and at The Citadel understand the dire need for strong, highly qualified teachers and share the commitment to establish this M.A.T. program in response to these needs.

Local subject area supervisors are working desperately to hire highly qualified teachers for all classrooms so that we can provide an excellent education for all adolescents. However, due to the limited number of available teachers in some content and geographical areas, teachers must frequently teach out of field to fill needs, particularly in schools with the most challenging student populations. The federal No Child Left Behind Act mandates that teachers be highly qualified in the content areas they teach. Our proposed M.A.T. will ensure that persons who become certified through the program will meet and exceed the requirements to be highly qualified as designated in NCLB.

A NCATE accredited institution with nationally recognized teacher preparation programs, the College of Charleston offers quality undergraduate and graduate programs that prepare teachers to teach in urban, suburban, and rural settings with students from middle, high, and low-income home settings. The Citadel anticipates full accreditation for its School of Education unit in the fall of 2008, and the proposed M. A. T. for Middle Level Teachers will become a joint program at that time. We recognize that in addition to being highly qualified in terms of content, effective teachers must have a repertoire of content-specific instructional strategies at their disposal. They must also understand the development of, and diversity among, the adolescents they teach. They need techniques for creating and maintaining a productive learning environment in which curriculum, instruction, and assessment result in student learning. The need for teachers who possess these qualities and skills will be fulfilled through the proposed M.A.T.

Anticipated Program

The M.A.T. for middle level teachers will serve two primary constituencies. The first constituency is graduates who, after earning a bachelor’s degree, decide they want to teach. This program will allow these graduates to earn a master’s degree and certification. The College of Charleston is particularly successful in graduating physics and chemistry majors in large numbers. Students in the sciences often ask about procedures to become certified to teach within a year or two following graduation. The proposed program would be the ideal way for these recent graduates to earn a master’s degree and fulfill their desire to enter the middle or high school classroom. English, history, and mathematics majors inquire about possibilities as well.

The second constituency is professionals who have completed an undergraduate degree, have established careers outside education, and who recognize the need for teachers and have the desire to

help meet that need. Currently the College of Charleston has M.A.T.s in Elementary Education and Special Education with over 70 teacher candidates at any given time. With new certification guidelines, that M. A. T. in Elementary degree is now for grades 2-6 only. Parallel to this, The Citadel offers M.A.T.s in several secondary fields of study. This proposed M.A.T. in middle level education is intended to provide a similar path to certification for those who want to make a mid-career change to teach middle school.

A tertiary constituency for the proposed program is teachers who need to increase their content knowledge to meet the highly qualified criteria of NCLB and/or recertification coursework requirements.

Faculty at both the College of Charleston and The Citadel are confident that the proposed program will meet all the various SPA standards associated with the degree.

Program Productivity Estimate

A high level of interest and participation is anticipated for the M.A.T. for middle school teachers. The following are conservative enrollment estimates based on inquiry levels over the last 5 years.

Year	Fall	Spring	Summer	Total
2008	15	15	15	15
2009	20	20	20	20
2010	25	25	25	25
2012	25	25	25	25
2012	25	25	25	25
Five year totals	110	110	110	110

Assessment of Program Duplication

There is presently no duplication for the middle school program in the South Carolina Lowcountry. In addition to the collaboration between professional education faculty from the College of Charleston and The Citadel, the arts and sciences faculties at both institutions will work together to deliver this program.

Relationship of Program to Existing Programs

Both the College of Charleston and the Citadel have well-established, high quality graduate programs that will support and strengthen this proposed M. A. T. There are M.A.T. programs in Elementary Education, Special Education, and Early Childhood Education at the College of Charleston and M.A.T.s in secondary Biology, English, Mathematics, and Social Studies at The Citadel. In addition the two institutions currently offer joint Master of Arts degrees in History and English and a joint Master of Science degree in Computer and Information Science. The School of Education at the College of Charleston, in conjunction with the School of Languages, Cultures , and World Affairs, offers a Master of Education in Languages. The College of Charleston School of Sciences and Mathematics has M.S. degrees in Mathematics, Marine Biology and Environmental

Studies. The College of Charleston's School of Sciences and Mathematics, in conjunction with the School of Education, offers a unique and highly successful Master of Education in Sciences and Mathematics specifically for teachers of mathematics and science. Coursework offered in these programs as well as in The Citadel's M.A.T.s, will be available to candidates in the proposed M.A.T. in middle grades teacher preparation program.

Much of the coursework for the proposed program is already available at the College of Charleston and The Citadel. Faculty have successfully collaborated on programs for many years and have structures in place that ensure rigor, quality, and resources to create demanding coursework that is relevant to the content and pedagogical needs of future middle school teachers.

Relationship to Other Institutions

The proposed M. A. T. in teacher preparation for middle grade teachers is being requested by the College of Charleston with the understanding that it will become joint with The Citadel contingent upon full NCATE approval of The Citadel's education programs in the Spring Semester, 2008.

Estimation of Total New Costs

Because the M.A.T. for middle level education will be delivered in conjunction with the newly established Center for Partnerships to Improve Education and its new faculty and program director, the College of Charleston will require only one new School of Education faculty member to teach in and direct the proposed program. The Citadel will not require additional faculty lines to offer this program but will recruit replacement faculty with the knowledge and skills needed for this program in teacher preparation for the middle grades. By using the Center for Partnerships, existing coursework, and relying upon current arrangements with local middle schools, a minimum of new course work will be needed. Existing classroom space is adequate and minimal additional office space will be needed. No additional fees will be necessary to meet the needs of students. The combined library holdings from a variety of programs at both institutions are more than adequate to meet the needs of the program. The College of Charleston will request an additional graduate assistant for this program.