



REQUIRED Cover Page

**APPLICATION FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT**

**\*\*All applicants please complete this cover page.**

<b>Choose one:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Creative activity <input type="checkbox"/> Research activity <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Enhancement activity	<b>Date of Last PDG Award (Semester and Year awarded):</b> _____ <b>Date of ATU Faculty Appointment (Semester and Year):</b> Spring '04
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**1. Project Title:** Components of the Middle Level Education Concept That Are Implemented in Arkansas Middle Level Schools

**2. Name of Principal Investigator/Project Director:** V. Carole Smith

**3. School (abbrev):** Education **4. Department:** Curriculum and Instruction

**5. Campus Mail Address:** ycarole.smith@atu.edu **6. PI/PD Campus Phone:** 968-0421

**7. Amount Requested:** \$ 8,451.00 **8. Total Cost of Project:** \$ 10,00.00

**9. Does this project involve:**

**10. Duration of Project:** 1 – 2 years

**Yes No**

- ☐ ☒ human subjects?  
☐ ☒ animals/animal care facility?  
☐ ☒ radioactive materials?  
☐ ☒ hazardous materials?  
☐ ☒ biological agents or toxins restricted by the USA Patriot Act?  
☐ ☒ copyright or patent potential?  
☐ ☒ utilization of space **not** currently available to the PI/PD?  
☐ ☒ the purchase of equipment/instrumentation/software currently **available** to the PI/PD?

**NOTE:** If the answer is "yes" to any of the above questions, the investigator must attach appropriate documentation of approval or justification for use/purchase.

**SIGNATURES**

*Daniel Bell* 10-17-05  
Department Head Date

*Sherry Shatz* 10-17-05  
Dean Date

**This Section to be completed by the Office of Academic Affairs**

PDC Committee Award Recommendation: Yes ☒ No ☐  
PDC Committee Proposal Rank: 1 of 1 Total Proposals.  
Recommendation of VPAA: Yes ☒ No ☐  
Recommendation of President: Yes ☐ No ☐  
Award Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Components of the Middle Level Education Concept That Are Implemented in Arkansas Middle Level Schools**

### **B. Abstract**

Arkansas added middle level licensure for teachers in the 1999 – 2000 school year. This project surveys schools in Arkansas that encompass grades 5 – 8 to see if implementation of part or all of the components of the middle level education concept and the addition of highly qualified teachers in middle level education has been effective in increasing student achievement.

### **C. Objectives**

To survey schools encompassing grades 5 – 8 in Arkansas and identifies how many of the 14 characteristics of middle level schools are being implemented.

To compare student achievement of schools that identify themselves with the middle level concept and schools that do not.

### **D. Significance/Need**

The traditional configuration for middle level schools nations wide has been grades six through eight. The primary components for effective middle level schools are advisor/advisee programs, team teaching, exploratory classes, and flexible scheduling. In addition, effective middle schools develop interdisciplinary and integrated teaching units for student center classrooms. (NMSA 2003) “Best practices” in effective middle schools focus on student achievement by addressing the developmental characteristics of the young adolescent.

Since Arkansas’s change of licensure from grades K-6 to P-4 and 4-8, there has not been a definitive study on where or how this change has been effective. Although research indicates that implementing parts of the middle level concepts results in improved student achievement, it is not recommended. Full implementation of the middle level concept is the only way to fairly judge it effectiveness. The discussions regarding middle level education in Arkansas has been overshadowed by personnel administrators seeking to fill classrooms with teachers that would not be considered “highly qualified” in the circles of knowledgeable middle level educators.

Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Published in 1989 made eight recommendations for creating effective middle schools. Four of these recommendations are significant to this study:

- Middle grades schools should transmit a core of common, substantial knowledge to all students in ways that foster curiosity, problem solving, and critical thinking.
- Large middle grades schools should be divided into smaller communities for learning so each student will receive sustained individual attention.

- Teachers and principals, not distant administrative or political organizations should have major responsibility and authority to transform middle grades schools.
- Teachers for the middle grades should be specifically prepared to teach young adolescents and be recognized distinctively for this accomplishment. (Jackson, 2000)

“Like its predecessor, Turning Points 2000 aims to help bridge the gap between current, unacceptable levels of intellectual development and a future in which every middle grades student meets or exceeds high academic standards and other key indicators of a successful school experience. (Jackson 2000)

The number of schools in Arkansas carrying the name middle school has increased since 1999. However, there is increased pressure in several states, as well as in Arkansas to regress to either K-8 models or K-6 models that were the norm prior to the 1960’s middle level movement. (McEwin 2004)

There is no research at this point that indicates whether or not young adolescents have higher achievement in a middle school or in grades K-8. (McEwin 2004) Middle level education is an area that is still under researched. There are repeated calls for more research on Middle Level Education and especially research by practioners and individuals who have worked in the area of middle level education.

The information gained through this data will create many additional questions about Middle level Education and its effectiveness or lack of in Arkansas and other states. What are the implications for rural schools that try to implement middle level education? How have teachers trained especially to be middle level teachers from middle level education programs affected middle level education in schools? Are teaching strategies identified by research as “best practice” used in Arkansas middle level schools? How has issues of accountability hurt or hindered the middle level programs?

#### **E. Process for Attainment of Objectives/Goals**

- I. Identify school with grades 5 – 8 in Arkansas through the state department of education by January 31, 2006.
- II. Develop Survey From November until January 2006.
- III. Survey these schools on their implementation of the 14 characteristics of effective middle level education. January to February 2006.
- IV. Analyze Data March 2006.
- V. Completion of analysis by April 2006.

Research Question	Data Source	Data Source	Data Source
Middle Level Characteristics	School Survey	Arkansas Department of Education	Principal Interviews

## **F. Dissemination of Results**

I plan to apply to several National Conferences to make presentations on the results of this study.

National Middle School Association Conferences in 2006 and 2007

Association of Teacher Educators 2006

National Middle School Association Symposium in 2007

## **Bibliography**

National Middle School Association. (1998). *This we believe*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.).

National Middle School Association (2003) *This We Believe: successful Schools for Young Adolescents*

Jackson, A. & Davis, G. (2000): *Turning points 2000*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1990). *Turning points: preparing American youth for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. New York. NY: Carnegie Corporation.

McEwin, K.C. & Dickinson, T. (2004). *Programs and Practices in K-8 Schools: Do They Meet the Educational Needs of Young Adolescents?* Columbus, Ohio: NMSA.

## **Professional Organizations and Journals**

National Middle School Association

Journals: Middle School Journal

Middle Ground

Web site: <http://nmsa.org>

Arkansas Association of Middle Level Education

Web site: AAMLE.org

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)

Journal: Educational Leadership

Web site: ASCD.org

Arkansas Department of Education

Web site: [arkedu.state.ar.us](http://arkedu.state.ar.us)

# PROPOSED BUDGET FACULTY RESEARCH GRANT

(include budget categories as appropriate)

1. Graduate assistant stipend \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Fringe benefits @ .4% (4/10 percent) of graduate assistant stipend \_\_\_\_\_

2. Non-work study stipend  
Fringe benefits @ .4% (4/10 percent) of non-work study stipend

500.00  
~~200.00~~ 1,000

3. \*Supplies (please list items to be purchased and estimated price per item including taxes and shipping, if appropriate):

Item No. 1 (e.g., software) Estimated Price

Item No. 2 (e.g., copying costs) Estimated Price

Item No. 3 Office Supplies, Paper, Stamps, Envelopes,  
Flash Drive,

150.00

565.00

Total estimated supplies

715.00

4. Travel (please list travel expenditures by date and estimated costs):

Conference attendance is for the purpose of presenting Data learned from survey of Arkansas Schools and other middle level information.

Travel No. 1 NMSA National Conference *apr* 2006 Estimated Price \$ 1500.00

Travel No. 2 ATE National Conference *low* 2006 1500.00

Travel No. 3 NMSA Symposium 2007 1500.00

Travel No. 4 NMSA National Conference 2007 1500.00

Travel No. 5 Middle Level Schools within the State 1000.00

Total estimated travel \$7,000.00

5. \*Capital Outlay (please list items to be purchased and estimated price per item including taxes and shipping, if appropriate):

Item No. 1 Estimated Price

Item No. 2 Estimated Price

Item No. 3 Estimated Price

(additional lines as needed)

Total estimated capital outlay

TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET

\$ 8,451.00

\* Items purchased under \$2,500 (including taxes and shipping) are considered supply items. Capital Outlay items are those which cost \$2,500 or more (including taxes and shipping). Please contact the Purchasing Office for questionable items.

## **V. Carole Smith, Ph.D.**

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**Arkansas Tech University  
Crabaugh Building Room 204  
Russellville, Arkansas 72801  
(479) 968-0421**

### **Highlights of Qualifications**

- ◊ 17 years of classroom teaching
- ◊ Twenty years of management and supervision

### **Education**

**Ph.D.** University of Arizona  
Major: Teaching and Teacher Education  
Emphasis: Middle Level Education  
Minor: Educational Psychology  
Dissertation: Easing The Transition From Middle Level Education to High School

**M.Ed.** University of Arizona  
Major: Education Administration

**M.of Mu.** University of Arizona  
Major: Music Education

**B.M.** University of Arizona  
Major: Music Education  
Minor: English

### **Employment History**

#### **Higher Education**

- ◊ Assistant Professor, School of Education  
University of Arkansas- Monticello

#### **Public School Experience**

- ◊ Director of Secondary Education, Littleton Public Schools, Littleton, Colorado

#### **Tucson Unified School District, Tucson, Arizona**

- ◊ Administrator, High School Assistant Superintendent's Office
- ◊ Middle School Principal
- ◊ Music Teacher

### **Specialized Training**

Classroom Walk-Through Training

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Facilitators' Institute I, II, III

Pathwise Training 2004

### **Presentations**

Presentation at the Arkansas Association of Teacher Educators Fall Conference, "*Strategies to Encourage Teachers to Participate in Professional Organizations*" (with Dr. Linda Bean). Arkadelphia, Arkansas. September 2004.

Presentation at the Southeastern Regional Association of Teacher Educators 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference, "*Mentoring Pre-Service and Experienced Teacher to Participate In Professional Organizations.*" (with Dr. Linda Bean and Dr. Lonnie McDonald). Orlando, Florida. October 2004.

Presentation "*A Partnership: No Child Left Behind and Middle Level Education.*" ArACTE Spring Conference with Dr. Max Terrell and Dr. Gene Dillard. April 16, 2004. Conway, Arkansas.

Presentation at the ATE Annual Conference, "*Rubrics: An effective Method To Strengthen Course and Program Assessments of Pre-Service Teachers,*" (with Dr. Gene Dillard and Dr. Max Terrell). Dallas, Texas, February 2004.

Presentation at the ATE Annual Conference, "*Can Middle Level Education Survive No Child Left Behind?*" Dallas, Texas, February 2004

Presentation at the ArACTE Spring Conference, "*A Rubric for Every Occasion: The New Wave of Performance-Based Assessment.*" (with Dr. Max Terrell and Dr. Gene Dillard). Harding College, Searcy, Arkansas, April 2003.

### **Publications**

Smith, V.C., Terrell, M., Dillard, G., Richards, R. (2003) "*Strengthening Teacher Education: A Master of Arts in Teaching Degree Provides a Fast Track Route for Alternative Certification.*" SRATE Journal Vol. 12. # 1.

### **Professional Development**

#### **Conferences, Workshops, Meetings, Lectures**

"A Framework for Understanding Poverty," Dr. Ruby Payne.  
September 27, 2004. Little Rock, Arkansas.

"Blazing Pathways together," Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and Arkansas Department of Education. 23<sup>rd</sup>

Annual Conference on Curriculum and Instruction. June 21 – 23, 2004. Hot Springs, Arkansas.

“Hats Off to Middle Level Education,” Arkansas Association of Middle Level Education Annual Conference. February 22-24, 2004. Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Association of Teacher Educators 2004 Annual Meeting. February 14 – 18, 2004. Dallas, Texas.

“Tomorrow’s Teachers Today: A Symposium on Middle Level Teacher Preparation,” National Middle School Association. February 7-8, 2003. Charlotte, North Carolina.

“Standards for Excellence in Education,” SRATE 2002, 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. October 30-November 2, 2002. Hot Springs, Arkansas.

NBPTS/NCATE 4<sup>th</sup> Partnership Conference for Graduate Programs, April 19-21, 2002. Reston, Virginia.

#### **Workshops, Meetings, Lectures Cont.**

Reader, (Scorer) for the School Leaders Licensure Assessment, Educational Testing Service, July 2002. Princeton, New Jersey.

#### **Professional Organizations**

National Middle School Association  
Arkansas Association of Middle Level Education  
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
Southeastern Regional Association of Teacher Educators (SRATE)  
Arkansas Association of Teacher Educators  
Association of Teacher Educators  
National Association of Professors of Middle Level Education

#### **Academic Committees**

NCATE Steering Committee (2004)  
NCATE Standard IV Committee (Diversity) (2004)

#### **Other Committees**

Arkansas Techs Women’s Leadership Council Steering Committee (2004)  
New Teacher Orientation Program - Center for Teaching and Learning (2004)  
Portfolio Review Process for Educational Leadership Candidates (2004)  
Portfolio Review Process for Counseling Candidates (2004)  
Meeting for the development of an Arkansas NBPTS code of Ethics (2004)



### **Selected Additional Professional Activities**

- ◇ Bridge to Excellence Mentor ATU (2004)
- ◇ Outside Evaluators "Teaching Math Content" University of Arkansas - Monticello
- ◇ Individual Leadership Academy (December, 2003)
- ◇ Facilitate Middle Level Advisory Board (2000 – 2003)
- ◇ Mentor Future Teachers and Walton Scholars (2000 – 2003)
- ◇ Facilitate Middle Level Advisory Board (2000 – 2003)

### **State Committees and Boards**

Arkansas Middle Level Association Board of Directors  
ArATE Board of Directors  
NBPTS Advisory Committee Arkansas Department of Education

### **National Committees**

Association of Teacher Educators Middle Level SIG

### **Service Organizations**

- ◇ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- ◇ Sigma Alpha Iota Music Fraternity

### **Community Service**

- ◇ Wesley Foundation Age to Age Advisory Board
- ◇ Bridge To Excellence Mentoring Program
- ◇ Work in an advisory capacity with Future Teachers of America Clubs in Warren, and Monticello
- ◇ SEARK Concert Association Board, Monticello, Arkansas

### **Special Interests**

Reading, Horseback Riding, Country Dancing, Piano