

***Urban Accelerated Certification and  
Master's Program (UACM)***

***Early Childhood and Elementary  
Education***

***Program Manual***

*Program Theme: BEING AN EMPOWERED URBAN EDUCATOR*

*|Unit Theme: PREPARING INFORMED, EMPOWERED, COMMITTED,  
AND ENGAGED EDUCATORS*

Fall Semester, 2015

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## Preface

Large proportions of urban children live in families and communities that are caught in cycles of poverty and racism (Wilson 1978) which affect their choices and hopes. According to Haberman (1995), five forces influence children in poverty: lack of trust in adults, violence, feelings of hopelessness (often mistaken as lack of initiative), bureaucratic mindlessness, and a culture of authoritarianism. Haberman (1995) further contends, "for the children and youth in poverty from diverse cultural backgrounds who attend urban schools, having effective teachers is a matter of life and death" (p.1).

The UACM Master's Program is designed for the teacher who wishes to establish a learner-centered classroom. This program is based on the assumption that learning is a constructive process which builds on the knowledge and experience of the learner. Through an integrated approach that provides choices and opportunities for decision-making and dynamic group interactions. The program is designed so that teacher participants will have opportunities to partner with faculty to shape the paths by which content is learned. Certain beliefs characterize this program. Learning happens in a social setting where children and teachers learn together. Meaningful learning occurs in the context of the university and in the classrooms. With these beliefs as the core, the master's program provides opportunities for teachers to reflect upon and refine their understanding about teaching and learning.

In order to obtain the greatest benefit from the UACM Master's Program it is necessary that the teacher be organized and persistent in the following areas: attending and participating in all classes, exhibiting honesty on all submitted work, and communicating respectfully, honestly and openly with all instructors.

The purpose of this manual is to help the beginning teacher who is participating in this level of graduate study to see the connections among the courses that they have taken during the first year of the program at Georgia State and are taking the second year of the UACM program, thus better enabling them to become empowered teachers that can transform traditional approaches so that the students they teach become critical thinkers, inspired learners, skilled workers and involved citizens.

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## **UACM Mission and Beliefs**

The UACM is a rigorous program that seeks to promote the success of elementary students schooled in urban contexts through the development of pedagogically competent, equity-oriented, caring, empowered teachers who are change agents inside and outside the classroom:

- We believe that teachers have the ability and power to provide experiences in which children succeed, which subsequently provides the confidence and competence for children to continue creating their own success;
- We believe that in order to foster these successful experiences, teachers must engage and connect with the children in their classrooms by treating them with respect, by having high standards for them, and by possessing the ability to pass on to the children a fervent belief that they can achieve;
- We believe that in order to foster successful experiences, teachers must be knowledgeable about the child's culture and must actively integrate this knowledge into the best practices of teaching and learning;
- We believe that the teacher must create purposeful, structured environments in which children are free to explore, experiment, and learn;
- We believe that teachers must establish an environment in their classrooms where children are respectful of each other, their environment, and the adults in their lives; and
- We believe that teachers must respect the language of their children and have knowledge of its background and principles and must model and expect mastery of mainstream American English from their students.

# **Program of Study and ECEE Course Descriptions**

## **Urban Accelerated Certification and Master's Degree Program of Study and ECE Course Descriptions**

### **Summer Semester**

- EPY 7090 The Psychology of Learning and Learners: The Young Child (3)  
EPSF 7120 Social Foundation (3)  
EPRS 7920 Classroom Testing, Grading and Assessment (3)

### **Fall Semester**

- ECE 6415 Curriculum and Assessment: Literacy and Math (3)  
ECE 6660 Mentorship in the Urban Classroom I (3)  
ECE 6830 Critical Theories and Research in Urban Education I (3)

### **Spring Semester**

- ECE 6416 Curriculum Integration and Assessment: Social Studies and Science (3)  
ECE 6661 Mentorship in the Urban Classroom II (3)  
ECE 6831 Critical Theories and Research in Urban Education II (3)

### **Summer Semester**

- ECE 6800 Urban Education Capstone Seminar (3)

### **Total Semester Hours: 30 (Year II)**

#### ECE Course Description

##### ECE 6830(3)

##### Critical Theories and Research in Urban Education I

Candidates examine critical issues and trends in urban education while engaging in research and reflective practice. Candidates become familiar with current scholarship in urban education and develop confidence (as well as agency) in their own understandings, actions, and teacher research.

##### ECE 6415(3)

##### Curriculum and Assessment: Science and Math

Candidates examine, integrate and apply current theory and professional standards to the teaching of reading and social studies in the urban classroom. Candidates assess and enhance children's concepts, skills and dispositions in reading, language arts and social studies through investigations of real issues.

ECE 6660(3)

Mentorship in the Urban Classroom I

Candidates must have certification through the Urban Alternative Preparation Program in the department of early Childhood education at Georgia State University. And currently hold a position as a first year of teaching in an urban elementary school. This field based course is designed to actively support teachers during their first year of teaching, using a systematic form of reflection to mentor and assess their professional development

ECE 6831(3)

Critical Theories and Research in Urban Education II

Candidates continue to examine critical issues and trends in urban education while engaging in research and reflective practice. Candidates will apply their understanding of scholarship in urban education and develop confidence (as well as agency in their own understanding, actions, and teacher research

ECE 6416(3)

Curriculum Integration and Assessment: Social Studies and Literacy

Candidates examine, integrate and apply current theory and professional standards to the teaching of reading and social studies in the urban classroom. Candidates assess and enhance children's concepts, skills, and dispositions in mathematics and science through investigations of relevant data.

ECE 6661(3)

Mentorship in the Urban Classroom II

This field based course continues to actively support teachers during their first year of teaching, using systematic form of reflection to mentor and assess their professional development.

ECE 6800(3)

Urban Education Capstone Seminar

This culminating course offers candidates the opportunity to reflect upon all coursework within the second year of the urban program, and how they have linked this knowledge to students' intellectual and emotional growth and learning. Research projects related to critical issues and trends in urban education will be presented.

**Program Expectations  
and  
National Board of  
Professional Teaching  
Standards (NBPTS)**



## **Program Expectations (Non-Negotiable)**

- The course work in year two of the UACM program will focus on building on the application of the content learned in the first year of the program. Building on content knowledge and applying content pedagogical knowledge contributes to the ongoing development of competent equity-oriented educators.
- Master's degree candidates will make consistent effort in all practices to continually implement culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). CRP is not an option but at the core of the program mission.
- In order to focus on the application in the field of what was learned during the certification phase (year one) of the program, seat time during the Master's year has been streamlined. As such attendance and active participation are requirements of participation in the Master's program

## **National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)**

The UACM Master's Program is based on the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. These standards seeks to identify and recognize teachers who effectively enhance student learning and demonstrate the high level of knowledge, skills, and abilities and commitments reflected in the following five (5) core propositions:

### Proposition 1

Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

### Proposition 2

Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

### Proposition 3

Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

### Proposition 4

Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

### Proposition 5

Teachers are members of learning communities.

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to meet the NBPTS standards through course assessments, major projects, STARS assessments, and the capstone experience.

# **Action Research Project**

## Action Research Project

Quality teachers consistently reflect on their practices, procedures, and interactions and make the necessary adjustments to ensure meaningful relevant learning is taking place. Teachers can take this process to another level by learning how to conduct an action research project. Action Research is a process in which ***educators examine their own educational practice*** systematically and carefully using the techniques of research. As part of the Master's program a proposal will be written in the fall to be implemented in the spring on research to be carried out in your classroom. ***The major purpose of the research is to improve classroom practice and help you as a teacher reflect on how your teaching, changes in your behavior and/or changes in classroom policies affect the children that you teach.*** Specifically your research will examine the effects of some aspect of classroom practice on the children, the parents and or the school. The final paper will include a review of the literature, stated purpose of the research, methods of inquiry, results, and reflection/discussion. The focus is not just on producing a research paper, but rather to encourage you as a teacher to be an on-going researcher, reflecting on your practice, willing to experiment, and capable and motivated to document classroom and school effects.

This major project assesses your ability to meet the NBPTS Standard 4. This standard states that teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience. As with most professions, teaching requires an open-ended capacity that is not acquired once and for all. Because they work in a field marked by many unsolved puzzles and an expanding research base, teachers have a professional obligation to be lifelong students of their craft, seeking to expand their repertoire, deepening their knowledge and skill and becoming wiser in rendering judgments. Accomplished teachers are inventive in their teaching and recognize the need to admit new findings and continue learning, stand ready to incorporate ideas and methods developed by others that fit their aims and their students, what exemplifies excellence, then is a reverence for the craft, recognition of its complexities and a commitment to lifelong professional development (NBPTS 4).

# **Community iMovie**

## **Community iMovie**

Teacher effectiveness is a central concern and consideration as new teachers enter the field. Beginning teachers need support that facilitates their ability to engage students in authentic and powerful learning experiences. Focusing on theory to practice helps teachers make connections between resources available for the learner and the content to be learned. Indeed, Shulman's model of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) necessitates that teachers must be knowledgeable in content, learner, pedagogy and context.

The Community iMovie focuses on providing opportunities for each teacher to understand the learner in relation to content (what) and instruction (how) by exploring the resources available inside and outside the classroom (context) that can facilitate effective learning. As content coaches, our roles are to support and foster reflectivity and questioning, and offer guidance toward untapped resources (known and new).

Through the Community iMovie assignment teachers will explore and gather community resources and artifacts that can be used to build connections with students and facilitate mathematics learning.

(NBPTS 2).

# **Problem Solution Project**

## **Problem Solution Project**

As a part of the Master's degree program you will be expected to implement a Problem Solution Project. This project is intended to empower students to be involved citizens by acting as change agents in their classroom, their school, their community, or their world while learning a great deal about a particular topic. The Problem Solution Project has three main goals: (1) enhance knowledge, attitudes, and skills in the content areas through meaningful use of reading, writing, mathematics, and scientific problem solving, (2) empower children to try to make a difference in making their school, community, or world a better place, (3) empower teachers to work with children through authentic projects.

This major project assesses your ability to meet the NBPTS Standard 1. This standard states that teachers are committed to students and their learning. As such, a teacher's mission extends beyond developing the cognitive capacity of their students. Teachers are concerned with their students' self concept, with their motivation, with the effects of learning on peer relationships, and with the development of character, aspiration, and civic virtues. These aspects of the student important as they are in their own right are also essential to intellectual development. Proficient teachers consider students potential in this broader sense when making decisions about what and how to teach (NBPTS 1).



# **Cross-Career Learning Communities (CCLC)**

## **Cross-Career Learning Communities (CCLC)**

One requirement of the Master's degree program is participation in a Cross-Career Learning Community which is a type of Critical Friends Group (CFG). The Cross-Career Learning Community will provide face-to-face and online support and dialogue. This group will help you as a teacher grow in the knowledge and skills identified by the Georgia Framework for Teaching.

Candidates will be a part of a grade-level learning community that consist of 3-10 educators. Group members are committed to improving their practice through collaborative learning.

Professional learning communities are strong when teachers demonstrate:

- Shared norms and values
- Collaboration and community
- Reflective dialogue
- Detribalization of practice
- Collective focus on student learning
- Spirit of shared responsibility for the learning of all students
- Professional learning communities can develop when there is a time to meet and talk
- Physical proximity
- Interdependent teaching roles
- Active communication structures
- Teacher empowerment and autonomy

A professional learning community is enhanced when there is:

- Openness to improvement
- Trust and respect
- A foundation in the knowledge and skills of teaching
- Supportive leadership
- Socialization or school structures that encourage the sharing of the school's vision and mission (Kruse, et. al)

Participating in the grade-level learning community assesses your ability to meet the NBPTS Standard 5. This standard states that teachers are members of learning communities. As such they need to be able to work

together on the improvement of school-wide curricula and the coordination of instruction, as well as work together to strengthen their teaching. Sometimes they observe each other teach, at other times they engage in discussions about teaching, and occasionally they collaborate in trying out new instructional strategies. While the particulars of how teachers choose to improve their instruction will vary according to the structure of opportunity and a teacher's disposition and interest, the principle underlying such engagement is the continuous pursuit of teaching excellence in the company of peers (NBPTS 5).

# **Student Learning Project**

## **Student Learning Project**

The Student Learning Project is school-based activity that provides candidates with an opportunity to directly apply class readings and discussions to their classroom practice, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice. For this project, Master's candidates will develop a series of cognitively demanding mathematics lessons. After implementing those lessons, candidates will assess and critically reflect on their students' learning of the mathematical content. The topic of the lessons will be related to what the candidate is currently teaching in her/his classroom.

This major project assesses your ability to meet the NBPTS Standard 3. This standard states that teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning. As such, accomplished teachers hold high expectation for all students, and see themselves as facilitators of student learning. To fulfill these responsibilities, teachers must create, enrich, and alter the organizational structures in which they work with young people. (NBPTS 3).

# Mentorship

Support by university faculty is the ongoing focus of the mentorship in Year II of the program. University field supervisors provide consistent feedback to reinforce and bolster the new teachers' confidence throughout the school year. Supervisors will provide support in helping beginning teachers demonstrate effective classroom practices as they implement the practices learned in Year I of the UACM Program and apply them to the framework of the school in which they are working. The field supervisors will engage beginning teachers in structured planning; reflecting and problem-solving conversations on a regular basis. The supervisors will also support beginning teachers in developing clear and appropriate goals for their students and themselves as novice teachers. The field supervisors will maintain a focus on student learning by working with the beginning teachers in examining student work and analyzing assessment results. University Content Specialist will also support beginning teachers in the implementation of best practice for their content area through targeted learning community work.

# **Multimedia Capstone Project**



## Multimedia Capstone Project

Capstone is defined by the Encarta Dictionary as something that is considered the highest achievement or most important action in a series of actions. A crucial phase of UACM Master's degree program is a culminating Multimedia Capstone Project. This project is staged in a public forum and displays the candidate's synthesis of their own learning experiences and how they are empowered as an educator. The multimedia capstone project takes the form of digital storytelling. Digital storytelling combines the age-old art of storytelling with various multimedia tools, such as video, pictures, music, graphic art and spoken word among other technologies. Digital stories are most often informative and emotionally-charged personal stories. Specifically, the purpose of this experience is to synthesize the candidate's graduate experiences, culminating in a video presentation, which demonstrates the candidate's knowledge of theories related to various aspects of pedagogy and the content fields, as well as skill in applying that knowledge to schools and classrooms. Knowledge is drawn from candidates' major projects, personal experiences and coursework (Brown & Bensen, 2005).

A key component of the Capstone is the idea of Empowering Education. Empowering education is a critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change (Shor, 1992, P.15). Thus education is a process through which teachers and students mutually investigate subject matter related to life issues, social issues and academic knowledge. Through this dialogue an evolving, democratic learning community (Johnson 2004) is built that enables students and teachers to become active agents of learning. Ultimately, the process empowers teachers to transform traditional approaches so that students develop as critical thinkers, inspired learners, skilled workers, and involved citizens.

Candidates will create a 10-12 minute video of your Master's degree experiences. It must be developed around the theme of being an empowered educator, and it must synthesize how each of your major projects meets the NBPTS and empowers you and/or your students. Your capstone presentation will include the following:

1. an introduction of what it means to be an empowered educator,
2. an Action Research synthesis,
3. a Problem Solution Project synthesis,
4. a Content Coaching iMovie synthesis,
5. a CCLC synthesis,
6. a Student Learning Project synthesis,
7. an optional personal experience synthesis, and
8. a conclusion.

Content should be:

- 1) Clearly organized around the theme of Empowering Education, which is carried out throughout the video synthesis of the Major Projects/Activities and the NBPTS.
- 2) Logical development of idea. Does not wander or unnecessarily repeat. Moves from point to point through the development. May contain surprises.
- 3) Knowledgeable (including critical) references to course, concepts, theories, issues, and trends. Reflects depth and appreciation of the teaching field's theories and practices.
- 4) References to personal experiences, both within and beyond the UACM Program, indicating personal assimilation of elements of the program. Evidence of reflection, of reasoning prior understandings and assumptions and practices – a personal, professional synthesis with intellectual rigor.
- 5) Includes implications for schools, schooling, policies, and/or practices.

Performance should be:

- 6) Timed so presentation moves effectively and stays within time limits.
- 7) Effective use of a variety of communication modes and materials. Materials add, not distract.
- 8) Professional delivery: voice, organization, artifacts, flow.

## Capstone Rubric Example

	<b>Outstanding</b> (4 pts)	<b>Satisfactory</b> (3 pts)	<b>Needs Improvement</b> (2 pts)	<b>Needs Significant Improvement</b> (1 pt)	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Realization of the Empowering Education theme.</b> (1, 10%)	Organization around the theme of Empowering Education is well developed and carried out throughout the video synthesis of the Major Projects/Activities.	Organization around the theme of Empowering Education is generally well developed and carried out throughout the video synthesis of the Major Projects/Activities.	Organization around the theme of Empowering Education needs to be better developed. Implementation throughout the video synthesis of the Major Projects/Activities may need improvement.	Organization around the theme of Empowering Education needs to be significantly better developed. Implementation throughout the video synthesis of the Major Projects/Activities needs significant improvement.	Realization of the Empowering Education theme is not provided or unacceptable.
<b>Demonstrate relationship to NBPTS Standards</b> (1, 10%)	Synthesis detailing how each major project meets the NBPTS standards is organized and well developed.	Synthesis detailing how each major project meets the NBPTS standards is developed.	Synthesis detailing how each major project meets the NBPTS standards needs improvement.	Synthesis detailing how each major project meets the NBPTS standards needs significant improvement.	Description of relationship is not provided or unacceptable.
<b>Logical development of ideas</b> (1, 10%)	Implementation of logical development of ideas is well developed. Does not wander or unnecessarily repeat. Moves point to point, in a timely fashion, though the development may contain surprises.	Implementation of logical development of ideas is generally well developed. Does not wander or unnecessarily repeat. Moves point to point, in a timely fashion, though the development may contain surprises.	Implementation of logical development of ideas needs improvement. It may wander or unnecessarily repeat. It may not transition smoothly from point to point.	Implementation of logical development of ideas needs significant improvement. It may wander or unnecessarily repeat. It may not transition smoothly from point to point.	Logical development of ideas is not provided or unacceptable.
<b>Knowledge of teaching theories and practices.</b> (1, 10%)	References (including critical references) to course, concepts, theories, issues, and trends are well developed. References reflect excellent depth and appreciation of the teaching field's theories and practices.	References (including critical references) to course, concepts, theories, issues, and trends are generally well developed. References reflect good depth and appreciation of the teaching field's theories and practices.	References (including critical references) to course, concepts, theories, issues, and trends need improvement. References reflect some depth and appreciation of the teaching field's theories and practices.	References (including critical references) to course, concepts, theories, issues, and trends need significant improvement. References generally do not reflect depth and appreciation of the teaching field's theories and practices.	Knowledge of teaching theories and practices is not provided or unacceptable.

<b>Integration of personal experiences with program elements (1, 10%)</b>	Integration of references to personal experiences, both within and beyond the UACM program, indicating personal assimilation of elements of the program are well developed	Integration of references to personal experiences, both within and beyond the UACM program, indicating personal assimilation of elements of the program are generally well developed.	Integration of references to personal experiences, both within and beyond the UACM program, indicating personal assimilation of elements of the program need improvement.	Integration of references to personal experiences, both within and beyond the UACM program, indicating personal assimilation of elements of the program need significant improvement.	Integration of personal experiences with program elements is not provided or unacceptable.
<b>Reflection and synthesis of understandings and assumptions (1, 10%)</b>	Evidence of reflection, of reasoning prior understandings and assumptions and practices is well developed. It includes personal and professional synthesis with intellectual rigor.	Evidence of reflection, of reasoning prior understandings and assumptions and practices is generally well developed. It includes personal and professional synthesis with intellectual rigor.	Evidence of reflection and of reasoning prior understandings and assumptions and practices needs improvement. The personal professional synthesis with intellectual rigor could be further developed.	Evidence of reflection and of reasoning prior understandings and assumptions and practices needs significant improvement. The personal and professional synthesis with intellectual rigor needs significant development.	Reflection and synthesis of understanding and assumptions is not provided or unacceptable.
<b>Implications for teaching (1, 10%)</b>	Analysis of implications for schools, schooling, policies, and/or practices is well developed.	Analysis of implications for schools, schooling, policies, and/or practices is generally well developed.	Analysis of implications for schools, schooling, policies, and/or practices needs improvement.	Analysis of implications for schools, schooling, policies, and/or practices needs significant improvement.	Implications for teaching are not provided or unacceptable.
<b>Adherence to time limit (1, 10%)</b>	Outstanding use of time. The presentation was within the established time limits.	Satisfactory use of time. The presentation was generally within the established time limits.	Use of time and adherence to time limits need improvement.	Use of time and adherence to time limits need significant improvement.	Adherence to the time limit was not demonstrated or unacceptable.
<b>Use of communication modes and materials (1, 10%)</b>	Use of diverse communication modes and materials is well developed and professionally presented. The materials add and do not distract.	Use of diverse communication modes and materials is generally well developed and professionally presented. The materials add and do not distract.	Use of diverse communication modes and materials was not diverse and needs improvement.	Use of diverse communication modes and materials was not diverse and needs significant improvement.	The use of communication modes and materials was not demonstrated or unacceptable.
<b>Professional delivery (1, 10%)</b>	Voice, organization, artifacts, and flow are well developed and professionally presented.	Voice, organization, artifacts, and flow are generally well developed and professionally presented.	Voice, organization, artifacts, and flow need improvement with regards to development and presentation.	Voice, organization, artifacts, and flow need significant improvement with regards to development and presentation.	Professional delivery was not evident or unacceptable.
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Needs Significant Improvement	Unsatisfactory