

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS  
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/07/2017 05:01 PM

## Technical Review

Applicant: Radford University (U423A170051)

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	40	40
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	25
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce</b>		
1. CPP 1	5	3
<b>Support for Personalized Learning Environments</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>101</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - Supporting Effective Educator Development - 8: 84.423A

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Radford University (U423A170051)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(3) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.

(5) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

### Strengths:

1. The applicant proposes to implement the Radford University – Appalachian Support for Specialized Education Training (ASSET) Program (e22). The applicant states its program will be online, self-paced, competency-based education training (e23). Further, the applicant states teachers will micro-credentials at their own pace and within their own communities (e23). The applicant states teachers will be awarded assessed and allowed to demonstrate within the simulation environment (e24).

2. The applicant states its online competency-based education (CBE) is aligned to simulation-based learning evidence-based practices (e27). The applicant states within simSchool, the simulations are tailored to fit the specific teacher's actual classroom grade level and demographic composition (e27). The applicant states the classroom scenario will reflect the academic and demographic challenges of rural Appalachian classrooms, including student with disabilities, low achieving students and ELL status (e29).

3. The applicant states their ASSET program is the collaboration of the Radford University, simSchool, the Human Resources Research Organization, Rockman et. al and SRI International (e23). The applicant states they will partner with State Education Agencies (SEAs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and consortia such as state and regional superintendents, and Training and Technical Assistance Center at Radford University (e33). The applicant states the partnership share the common goal of increase access to the general education curriculum for students with diverse learning needs in k-12 high-need schools.

4. The applicant states simulation and game-based, online CBE training has the potential to address the qualified teacher shortage in high need rural communities where access to student teaching experience is limited, difficult and costly for institutional instructors and mentors to observe performance (e24).

5. The applicant states its ASSET Program considers rural or near rural status and poverty as indicators of high need (e38). The applicant articulates rural Appalachian students with the highest need may have the least access to high

effective teachers (e38). The applicant presents relevant literature that correlates teacher attrition with high levels of poverty and low of spending on professional development. Further, the applicant presents relevant literature that suggests micro-credentials is important in rural and Appalachian areas because micro-credentials build support capacity and allows schools and teachers to define their context specific needs and choose the specific competencies they want to develop.

**Weaknesses:**

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. No weaknesses noted
4. No weaknesses noted.
5. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 40**

**Selection Criteria - Significance**

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**(1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.**

**(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.**

**(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.**

**(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

**Strengths:**

1. The applicant states its project will increase access to the general curriculum for high-need students such as students with disabilities, ELLs, and high-poverty students in rural Appalachia (e40). The applicant states Radford University has provided training and ongoing professional support in inclusive strategies for diverse learners for 43,000 teachers in the 34 rural Appalachian school divisions. The applicant states this project will serve 5,000 practicing teachers (e44).
2. The applicant states the costs and funding requested for the ASSET program is within range for the content and technical development of the project (e44).
3. The applicant states the project is sustainable because of the online competency-based education environment (e42). The applicant states competency-based education environments provide teachers with high-quality professional development for a low cost (e44).
4. The applicant states the content developed at each level of the collaborative process will be made available to additional rural partners across Appalachia through their partnership with SRI International, other RELs, and other organizations focused on rural education (e37). The applicant states it will share information about best practices through quarterly update flyers and bi-annual webinars. The applicant will report and publish research findings in peer-reviewed professional publications, and teacher education audiences at national conferences (e45). The applicant states it will share knowledge about professional development with other Institutions of Higher Education and P-12 schools (e45).

**Weaknesses:**

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. No weaknesses noted.
4. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
  - (1) **The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**
  - (2) **The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
  - (3) **The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

1. The applicant states qualitative case study and formative evaluation data will be collected to determine the design strengths and weaknesses of both the module and the overall production module (e37). As an example, the applicant states it will develop content for identified micro-credentials, with the outcome of 3-5 modules developed for each of the 5 micro-credentials (e46).
2. The applicant presents a management plan that proposes to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. The applicant presents a timeline that clearly outlines project activities and the tasks of the Principal Investigators (e47 – 49). The applicant defines the Principal Investigators as representatives from Radford University, simSchool, HumRRO, SRI, and Rockman (e47). The applicant states school and district administrators, will have an opportunity to review the pilot materials and provide their perspective on its perceived value to the participating school systems (e50). Additionally, the applicant states it will use online communication such as a Facebook Group Page, wikis, blogs, and chat rooms, will allow participants in several locations across Appalachia to share ideas and strategies (e51).
3. The applicant states Rockman et al (REA) will provide additional independent feedback to support module development during the preparation of instructional materials.

**Weaknesses:**

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 25**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

1. The Secretary considers the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

Note: Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook 3.0: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>; and (2) "Technical Assistance Materials for Conducting Rigorous Impact Evaluations" to the list of evaluation resources: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp>; and (3) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech\\_methods/](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/). In addition, applicants may view two optional webinar recordings that were hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. The first webinar discussed strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-Experimental Design Studies and is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=23>. The second webinar focused on more rigorous evaluation designs, discussing strategies for designing and executing studies that meet WWC evidence standards without reservations. This webinar is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=18>.

#### Strengths:

1. The applicant states formative evaluation will be collected as teachers completes the modules, Rockman et al, will provide additional independent feedback to support module development (e49). The applicant states data collection will include observations, interviews, and online and face-to-face focus groups. Through the data collection process, REA, along with teachers, school and district administrators will identify implementation challenges and successes and provide the project team with recommendations for program development (e52).

2. The applicant states formative evaluation will focus on the creation of modules and feedback on the validity of constructs used to represent teacher knowledge and skills in the learning management system (e51). The applicant will use a delayed-treatment randomized control trial approach, during Year 3, to identify the overall impact of the project on teacher learning and performance. The applicant presents a Logic Model to construct a validity argument to support the overall validity of the assessment components (e54-55).

3. The applicant states Human Resource Research Organization (HumRRO) will serve as a research consultant (e59). The applicant states it will monitor performance of students and teachers based on qualitative data and quantitative data, as the data become available (e59). The applicant will also compute effect size statistics, change in variance by group, changes in participants' perception of their own capabilities, and the impact on ASSET on their students (e59).

#### Weaknesses:

1. The applicant fails to describe how student outcomes will be measured. The applicant provides no measures of student assessment to determine student achievement.

2. No weaknesses noted.

3. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 18

#### Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:

(a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and

(b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.

Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

(a) The applicant states their teacher development model will be tailored to fit the specific needs of teachers and the students they teach. Additionally, the applicant states the ASSET proposal, will provide simulations based on the demographics of the area and school where the teacher works. The applicant states the modules will support inclusive classrooms and high-need students.

(b) None noted

**Weaknesses:**

(a) None noted

(b) The applicant did not address this criterion.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students' engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators' implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.

**Strengths:**

None noted

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not respond to this criterion.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/07/2017 05:01 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/08/2017 12:14 PM

## Technical Review

Applicant: Radford University (U423A170051)

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	40	37
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	25
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce</b>		
1. CPP 1	5	2
<b>Support for Personalized Learning Environments</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>98</b>



# Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - Supporting Effective Educator Development - 8: 84.423A

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Radford University (U423A170051)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(3) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.

(5) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

### Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates a limited approach to the priority. Specifically, the development and implementation of a web based curriculum for educators that will yield micro-credentials in a high demand content area (special education and STEM) pg. e22-26). The project addresses chronic teacher shortages and a lack of qualified teachers within the targeted communities (pg. e22). Proposed research activities are included in the design.

It appears that the applicant has allocated a sufficient amount of time to implement the proposed services. For example, in order for educators to be certified and receive a micro-credential, they are required to complete 3 to 5 hours per module for a total of approximately 100-150 hours per module (pg. e27), indicating an adequate duration of services. The applicant describes several quality indicators of the professional development services (pg. e27-32). The content, intensity and duration of the learning modules will appropriately and adequately lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

The applicant proposes to partner with Radford University, sanshool, the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), Rockman et al., and SRI International, State Education Agencies (SEAs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and consortia, such as state and regional superintendents, and the Training and Technical Assistance Center at Radford University (RU-TTAC). These organizations will assist with the implementation of a web-based competency based education in 243 high-poverty Appalachian counties that as yet have not been identified (pg. e19 and e23) and evaluative services. The services from the partners will assist teachers to acquire micro-credentials in high demand areas (pg. e23). Evidence of the partners' previous experiences and accomplishments validate their ability to support project implementation (pg. e32-37) The applicant provides evidence of compliance with WWC through the inclusion of seventeen Instructional Educational Guides that inform the current design (pg. e23).

To a minimum extent, the applicant supports those with the greatest need. For example, the applicant correlates teacher attrition with high levels of poverty which in turn result in limited resources dedicated to supporting professional development services with Appalachian schools. The combination of these factors result in ineffective teachers who are able to address the needs of students from diverse backgrounds pg. e39). To that extent, the proposed services will target

the needs of these educators.

To an adequate extent, the design is appropriate to address the needs of residents in rural geographical areas characterized by high poverty (pg. e39). The use of a web based learning environment provides a user friendly, accessible professional development to enable them to become more effective educators.

### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide any information on how teachers would be recruited for the proposed design. It is unclear if they will be able to meet targeted projections for the proposed number of educators needed. It is unclear what grade levels the project is targeting. The applicant's modules address students enrolled in grades 4, 8 and secondary students (pg. e73). Special education educators are listed as the targeted audience for the intervention (pg. e74), however, it is unclear if special education students are included in the design as the applicant omits discussion of specific needs among this population. One of the proposed modules involves assigning an adult advocate to students who are at risk of dropping out of school; and effort that is supported with moderate to strong evidence of support, however there is no discussion of school dropout rates among students or an area representing a great need among the student population in the narrative (pg. e76).

Beyond the lack of professional development opportunities for educators in the Appalachian schools, the applicant failed to provide adequate data or information to determine the extent of the need among the educator and student populations. For example, data regarding the number of ineffective, inexperienced or non-credential teachers employed, the number of vacancies due to attrition, or evidences of areas of high demand (special education) was lacking.

The applicant also indicates that limited professional development services are associated with lower levels of student achievement for those with diverse learning needs in inclusive classrooms (pg. e39) and the services provided will address that gap, however, data such as proficiency scores, school failure or grades repeaters, low high school graduation rates, etc. was not provided or any discussion or definition of diverse learning needs of students. In addition, while the applicant states that the literature indicates that poverty, disability, limited English proficiency, and low academic achievement are co-morbid conditions (pg. e39) specific descriptive data for the Appalachian region was not discussed. These factors influence the development of an appropriate project design.

**Reader's Score: 37**

### **Selection Criteria - Significance**

- 1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
  - (1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.**
  - (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.**
  - (3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.**
  - (4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

**Strengths:**

The results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement are moderately adequate. The applicant presents a demonstrated history of operating grant funded initiatives relating to professional development for educators in rural areas. For example, the applicant has provided large scale training and professional development for 43,000 teachers in the 34 rural Appalachian school divisions (pg. e41). The proposed project will address ASSET will serve 5,000 practicing teachers (pg. e42) in 243 schools (Appendix). If successfully implemented, the results will be very beneficial.

The applicant provides very limited information to determine if the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits. For example, the narrative states that "CBE development costs vary depending on breadth of reach" (pg. e44).

It is highly likely that the project purposes, activities, or benefits will be incorporated into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant. For example, current and new educators will have access to the technology. The only additional costs are associated with salaries for mentor/coaches (pg. e44). The approach is replicable to other schools and professionals.

To a great extent, the applicant will disseminate the results in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies. Examples include both internal and external strategies such as monthly partner meetings through discussion and through written briefs and quarterly update flyers and bi-annual webinars for our informal partners (pg. e44). An external evaluation team is charged with the responsibility of sharing the results through professional publications and presentation at national conferences (pg. e45).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
  - (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**
  - (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
  - (3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant outlines goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project. For example ASSET staff will develop content for identified micro-credentials and 3-5 modules will be developed for each of the 5 micro-credentials (pg. e45). The management plan includes a set of project activities, the assigned responsibilities of key project staff along with their time commitments (pg. e133-134), time period and year of implementation of project

objectives (pg. e47-49). Resumes of key personnel are included in the Appendix, pg. e77. The plan is adequate to achieve the goals and objectives on time. The procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project are adequate given the rural geographical area served. Examples include social networked technologies, such as wikis, blogs, social networking, and chat rooms (pg. e50). These social interactive venues permit and encourage a community and network of educators, parents, community residents and project staff.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 25**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

1. **The Secretary considers the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

**Note:** Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook 3.0: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>; and (2) "Technical Assistance Materials for Conducting Rigorous Impact Evaluations" to the list of evaluation resources: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp>; and (3) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech\\_methods/](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/). In addition, applicants may view two optional webinar recordings that were hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. The first webinar discussed strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-Experimental Design Studies and is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=23>. The second webinar focused on more rigorous evaluation designs, discussing strategies for designing and executing studies that meet WWC evidence standards without reservations. This webinar is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=18>.

**Strengths:**

Formative and summative evaluation data will be collected and analyzed and provide periodic feedback. Survey methodology will be used (focus groups, and in-depth interviews with teachers and school and district administrators) to identify implementation challenges and successes and provide the project team with recommendations for program development each year of the grant (pg. e52). The applicant will contract with an external evaluator Rockman et al (REA) (pg. e51) which lessens the amount of bias in the evaluation design to ensure validity and reliability (pg. e54). The Logic Model includes both short, medium and long term outcomes (pg. e56). Long term outcomes are increased workforce capacity for inclusive education in rural Appalachia and in other rural areas (pg. e54). Studies are presented that informed the development of the proposed project. The studies meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (pg. e57-59).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant failed to describe a plan to assess student achievement or student outcomes, which is a critical and essential component of the project and a necessary component when examining teacher effectiveness.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:

(a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and

(b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.

Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

In addressing CCP1, the applicant proposes to create a web-based, online competency-based education (CBE) training designed to increase teacher effectiveness and workforce capacity (pg. e23). As a result of the professional development and training, educators will receive micro-credentials in creating inclusive elementary and secondary environments in literacy and math, and inclusive environments in problem solving for high needs students in secondary schools (pg. e23).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide sufficient information for the reader to determine how the services would promote cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture.

b). While the applicant states CBE enhances teacher training, promotes the use of effective teaching practices, and increases overall teacher retention (pg.e32), it is unclear in the applicant's response how the proposed project improves the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds. Descriptive information regarding the components and implementation of CBE did not address the recruitment, support and retention of educators or a description of the diversity within their backgrounds.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students' engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators' implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.

**Strengths:**

The applicant did not provide an intention to address this criterion.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide an intention to address this criterion.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**           Submitted  
**Last Updated:**   08/08/2017 12:14 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2017 03:31 PM

## Technical Review

Applicant: Radford University (U423A170051)

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	40	40
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	25
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce</b>		
1. CPP 1	5	2
<b>Support for Personalized Learning Environments</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Total</b>	108	100

# Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - Supporting Effective Educator Development - 8: 84.423A

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Radford University (U423A170051)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(3) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.

(5) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

### Strengths:

The exceptional approach for this project is related to the exceptional design. The design is based on a competency based education (CBE) methodology, where teachers can gain professional development to increase their effectiveness, pg. e19. The CBE will consist of 5 micro-credentials based on research. The applicant's project design is directly related to a cited WWC with moderate evidence study, pg. e19. The applicant provided information related to the moderate evidence study, and explained how their project is similar. The competencies within the 5 micro-credentials are related to competencies supported by 17 practice guides with moderate to strong evidence, pg. e19. As stated by the applicant as related to the design, "...will be one of the first self-paced, competency-based teacher effectiveness training programs to embed learning sciences, analytics, simulation-based learning and gamification principles into every aspect of the CBE" pg. e19. The teachers will be required to complete approximately 100-150 hours per micro-credential, this is of sufficient quality and intensity. In addition, the applicant provided in Appendix A the structure of the modules which are of quality. The collaboration of the partners is planned. The applicant has designed a clear plan for the coordination of the project activities, Figure 2, pg. e36. The applicant has conducted a needs' analysis, which is based on statistics about overall teacher supply and attrition, pg. e38. Given this project design to address the teacher supply issue without taking teachers out of the classroom, is appropriate to address the needs of the target population.

### Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 40

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:



**(1) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.**

**(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.**

**(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.**

**(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

**Strengths:**

The significance of the project is related to the exceptional design of the project, hence, the increased likelihood of improvements in teaching and student achievement. In addition, the design is grounded in moderate evidence literature showing this model can be successful as an alternative model for teaching training and professional development, pg. e42. The applicant is expected to impact approximately 5000 teachers with this approach, therefore, the costs are reasonable as outlined by the applicant, pg. e44. The sustainability is likely given that the project design is based on the CBE environment existing online, therefore, any ongoing costs will be minimal for maintenance purposes only, no additional development costs, pg. e44. The applicant has a plan for the dissemination of the strategies and results. The outlets will include reports, publications and presentations at national education conferences.

**Weaknesses:**

There were no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

**(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

**(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant goals, objectives, and outcomes are clearly specified and measurable, pg. e46. For instance, 1000-2500 teachers in the Appalachian region will participate in the program. This is a specific and measurable outcome of the project. The applicant in Table 3 provided the defined responsibilities and timelines, which appear to be adequate to accomplish the project tasks. The applicant plan for ensuring feedback for the purpose of continuous improvement of the project activities is sufficient. The applicant will collect formative data and frequently meet to review the data for the purpose of continuous improvement of the project activities/components, pg. e49. The applicant provided the FTE for all key personnel and how they would ensure the project would be on time and within budget, pg. e132.

**Weaknesses:**

There were no weaknesses identified.

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

Note: Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook 3.0: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>; and (2) "Technical Assistance Materials for Conducting Rigorous Impact Evaluations" to the list of evaluation resources: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp>; and (3) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech\\_methods/](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/). In addition, applicants may view two optional webinar recordings that were hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. The first webinar discussed strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-Experimental Design Studies and is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=23>. The second webinar focused on more rigorous evaluation designs, discussing strategies for designing and executing studies that meet WWC evidence standards without reservations. This webinar is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia.aspx?sid=18>.

#### Strengths:

The applicant will utilize an external evaluator with proven experience in evaluating grants of this magnitude. Utilizing an external evaluator is important to remove any perceived biases as related to the evaluation of the grant. The evaluation plan is based on a randomized control trial, which is the gold standard in experimental research. The applicant discussed their plan to collect formative and summative data with the purpose to improve the project plan throughout the grant period and to assess the overall project at the end of the grant period, pg. e49-e50. This information will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress. In addition, the following important evaluation information was provided with clarity, (a) the key evaluation questions which will guide the evaluation; (b) the measure/source; and (c) data collection timing and frequency of the collection of data. Finally, the applicant provided other key evaluation information, (a) the stated detectable effect size, based on the sample sizes the applicant provided for the impact questions related to the teacher and student outcomes; (b) the types of quantitative analyses which will be used to answer the appropriate evaluation/research questions, a multi-level model analysis will be used which is necessary given the nested data of students-in-classrooms, classrooms-in-schools, and schools-in-districts, pg. e51-e59. Finally, the applicant provided the reliability indices for many of the measures that will be used on pg. e56.

#### Weaknesses:

There were two weaknesses with the evaluation section. First, the applicant did not provide any outcomes related to measuring student achievement, which should be at the core of any project designed to improve teaching effectiveness. Teaching effectiveness is directly tied to student achievement, hence, an outcome necessary to be measured related to the effectiveness of the project.

### Priority Questions

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:

(a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and

(b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.

Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

In Appendix A, the applicant has training components related to inclusive teaching techniques.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant included in Appendix A components associated with inclusive teaching techniques, more specific information should have been provided as related to a description of the training, and intensity/duration.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students' engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators' implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.

**Strengths:**

This competitive preference priority was not addressed by the applicant.

**Weaknesses:**

This competitive preference priority was not addressed by the applicant.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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