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Graduate Admissions Committee:

My name is Scott Pangrazzi and I seek admittance into the Masters of Arts in Educational Technology program at Michigan State University. The reason I chose this program as an area of interest and study is due to my past academic experiences in secondary education and history and my practice as a high school social studies teacher that believes in differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction allows the best opportunity to reach a multitude of students that all learn in various ways. This program will help improve my technological skills and allow me to reach more students in the process.

The undergraduate education I received from Michigan State University has played a key role in my use of differentiated instruction in the classroom because the degree program I participated in provided great variation. Due to the College of Education's requirement for secondary education, I was tasked with not only taking educational studies classes, but I also had to complete the requirements for a full degree program as well. This involved acquiring the credits to complete a history major, geography minor, the classes required to apply for the teaching internship year, as well as designated social studies credits to receive an endorsement on my teaching license. Though this involved completing a total of 147 credits in my four undergraduate years, while maintaining a 3.89 GPA, it allowed me to take a variety of classes at the same time. As I studied African history I was also learning about Geographical Information Systems, high school classroom practices, and the legislative process in the United States. With this wide variety of classes I learned to balance several topics at once and be able to understand

and articulate them to my professors and fellow classmates. This is a skill that has served me well in my first year of teaching since I have three different preps each semester and a total of five for the whole year. Through this program I hope to improve upon my skills of differentiated instruction and learn to adapt my knowledge of history, geography, and political science and present it to my students in new and unique ways.

I was fortunate as a student to always have interesting and engaging social studies teachers. It is because of these teachers that I chose this career and hope to influence my students to become teachers themselves. This does not mean that they have to be elementary, secondary, or college instructors, however that they are able to see my practices, learn from them, and adapt them to whatever field they choose to share their knowledge with others. Though a vast majority of my students will not choose to become educators, I would hope that they carry that spirit with them into their occupation and pass on their knowledge to eager learners to help advance their field. The best way I have found to accomplish this task is to make each class unique and present the material in engaging ways. Whether it be a class discussion, lecture, group activity, independent work, or formal assessment students should leave the room with a better understanding of the class concepts and find value in the work they are doing. The Masters of Arts in Educational Technology program can provide me with the skills to continue this practice in my classroom and find new ways to engage my students on a daily basis. The program's ability to help teachers connect with each other, their students, and the social world through advanced technological tools will offer that ability to improve my craft and help student's become teachers in their area of interest as well.

As part of a differentiated classroom students are also expected to create different assessments to display their knowledge of class concepts. The classes offered through the

Masters of Arts in Educational Technology program will allow me to present these methods to my students and open up new possibilities to share information in a nontraditional way.

Specifically, this process would begin with information I hope to learn in CEP 820: Teaching K12 Students online. The opportunities I will receive in this class will permit me to teach my students the possibilities technology and the Internet offer inside the classroom, while also allowing me to teach them the proper way to use these tools and the responsibility that goes along with harnessing them. Also, CEP 818: Creativity in Teaching and Learning will help further my knowledge of differentiated assessments and give me the ability to convey this message to my student's to help promote their creation of these diverse project-based assignments. Finally, the information gained from a class like CEP 813: Electronic Portfolios will serve to have my students create a digital footprint that they can be proud of. Also, it will serve as a learning tool for students to assess the progress they have made in a certain class overtime, allowing them to see how their knowledge grows and their skills have been developed. Through these individual classes I will have built the knowledge to combine all these skills and reach my goal of creating a more diverse classroom setting and give opportunities to students to express their knowledge through many different mediums and styles.

Though my interest in becoming a teacher started long before my arrival at Michigan State University, the information I learned through the classes and experiences provided to me solidified my decision. My diverse undergraduate experience created a thorough understanding of a variety of topics, while my teaching internship provided by this university helped shape and develop my skills so I could present this knowledge better. With admission to the Masters of Arts in Educational Technology program I would be able to continue this growth by helping advance my mission to create a diverse classroom setting through differentiated instruction.