



**CONTACT INFORMATION**  
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For Office Use:  
 Date Received \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eligibility Verified \_\_\_\_\_

# Undergraduate Research Grant Application

Please fill out this form. Print, sign and obtain faculty mentor's signature endorsing this application.  
 Submit application package to the Office of Academic Affairs, Harkins 208.

## I. Student Information

Student ID : 000000000  Junior  Senior

Name: PC Student Cumulative GPA: 3.65

E-Mail: pcstudent@friars.providence.edu Major(s): Psychology

Phone: 555-555-5555

I have received funding from the PC-URC in the past  for this project and/or  for another project.

## II. Faculty Mentor Information

Mentor Name: Dr. Kevin O'Connor Department/Program: Secondary Education Program

E-Mail: koconn17@providence.edu

Phone: 401.865.2123

## III. Project Information

**Title:** Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Middle School Students

**Project Summary (under 150 words): In non-technical terms, provide a brief summary of the project.**

The purpose of this study is to identify the character traits that comprise the stereotyped image of middle school students as held by pre-service teachers and to assess the level of favorability (or unfavorability) this population has toward middle school students. The study will use a descriptive research design. Approximately 150-200 pre-service teachers (students enrolled in one of PC's education majors) will serve as participants. Participants will be asked to rate their perception of a "typical middle school student" using a list of descriptive adjectives. Data will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Is this project associated with a credit-bearing class?**  yes  no

If associated with class, what is course title, number and semester the course will be taken?

**Significance (under 150 words): In non-technical terms, why is this work important?**

Pre-service teacher attitudes about students have the potential to affect where an individual will continue on to teach. If the "storm and stress" and "troubled" times of adolescence is a common trend and a widely held belief among this population of pre-service teachers, it could be deterring them from choosing middle school as a focus of their training and subsequent employment. This could also affect middle school students who might be getting robbed of exemplary teachers. Furthermore, if widely held negative belief about middle school students are identified, sharing this information with those responsible for their training would be meaningful.

**Project Description: Please briefly describe your research question(s) and what you will do to investigate the question(s). Description should be written for an educated but non-technical audience. DO NOT EXCEED SPACE PROVIDED. References not required in application, but should be made available upon request.**

The research questions guiding this investigation are as follows: What character traits comprise the stereotyped image of middle school students as held by pre-service teachers? What is the overall perception of middle school students - based on a dimension of favorability - held by pre-service teachers?

To address these questions, approximately 150-200 PC students enrolled in one of the undergraduate education programs at Providence College (elementary/special education, music education, secondary education) will be asked to participate. Participation will require the completion of a brief demographic questionnaire and completion of the Adjective Checklist.

The Adjective Checklist is comprised of 300 alphabetically arranged adjectives (traits) used in everyday life (e. g., "aggressive," "intelligent," "talkative"). This measure is designed as a self-descriptive personality assessment; however, it has been frequently used by social scientists interested in stereotype measurement. To obtain descriptions of stereotypes, researchers need only change the directions that appear on the measure's front cover. For this study, the demographic questions (name, age, sex) and directions that would normally appear will be replaced with the following set of instructions:

"This booklet contains a list of adjectives. Please read through the list quickly and put a check (☒) in the box beside each one you would consider to be characteristic of a typical middle school student. Do not worry about duplications or contradictions. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective. You may check as many of the words as you wish."

Embedded in the Adjective Checklist are a number of scales that researchers may parcel out for analysis. Two of these scales, favorability and unfavorability, will also be used in this study. The favorability scale (number of favorable items checked) consists of 75 adjectives that reflect positive characteristics (e. g., "cooperative," "energetic," "good-natured"). The unfavorability scale (number of unfavorable items checked) consists of 75 adjectives that reflect negative characteristics (e. g., "arrogant," "cynical," "hostile").

The responses on the Adjective Checklist will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The top 20 words used to describe a typical middle school student will be listed (frequencies, percentages). In addition, scores on the measure's favorability and unfavorability scales will be compared using a paired-samples t-test.

**Unique Contribution: Projects may vary from an idea that the student or group of students would like to pursue, to a joint student-faculty project, to a project that is part of the faculty member's ongoing research program. Concisely describe your unique contribution and the skills you bring to bear on the work.**

This is a joint student-faculty project that I am doing with Dr. O'Connor in the Secondary Education Program. Dr. O'Connor conceived of this study's design but has put me in the position of carrying out the full measure of the study. I've been conducting the literature review to support the proposed methodology, will be responsible for collecting and analyzing the data, and will take the lead on crafting the conclusions that will be drawn from the study's findings. I am a psychology major and have been taught and given experience in the skills needed to conduct a study of this sort from start to finish. I also have the interest and excitement to see it through.

**Budget : List your requested budget items, associated costs, and sufficient details of the calculations used to arrive at your request.**

Item: Adjective Checklist - 200 copies.

Cost: \$160.00 (<http://www.mindgarden.com/products/acl.htm>)

Rationale: This is the measurement tool used in the study. It is a copyrighted instrument that needs to be purchased.

Item: Adjective Checklist Manual

Cost: \$40.00 (<http://www.mindgarden.com/products/acl.htm>)

Rationale: This manual provides needed information on the psychometric properties of the instrument, the administration and scoring procedure, and on the scales that are embedded within the instrument (a few of which will be used as part of the analysis).

Item: Shipping for Adjective Checklist and Adjective Checklist Manual

Cost: \$20.04 (<http://www.mindgarden.com/products/acl.htm>)

Item: Funds to PC Prints Account

Cost: \$30.00 (estimate based on expectation for amount of literature needed to be reviewed for a research endeavor of this level and current student printing charges set at \$0.08 per page).

Total: \$250.04

**Budget Justification : Provide your budget justification here . Why are these resources required? In what ways will the project be enhanced by the Undergraduate Research Funds? Are there any other sources of funding for this work? And if so, how will this funding complement rather than duplicate other sources of support.**

This study is not being funded by any other source and the study simply cannot be conducted without the assistance of the Undergraduate Research Grant. In the previous section I have offered a brief rationale for each item requested. I'll add that the Adjective Checklist is the study's measurement tool and the study cannot be done without it. The Adjective Checklist Manual is requested because it contains information needed to properly use the instrument and report on its properties (e. g., reliability, validity). This manual is not available outside of purchasing it from the publisher. The request for PC Prints funds is made because I'll be continuing to engage the literature in the area under investigation and will need to make hard copies of journal articles or other print material while I put together the paper. In every study a literature review to determine what has already been done in the area of interest (or hasn't been done), what methods were used, and what results were found is of utmost importance. Every researcher must know where in the literature in her study will fall. Being able to print some of this literature will be very valuable to me.

This study has the chance of producing interesting and new findings to an area that has been neglected in the research literature and has an audience in those interested in early adolescence and teacher training. The requested funds will help me gather this information with my intention that I'll be able to share it with this audience after putting together a complete paper on the study.

**Does this project involve human subjects research?**

**yes**     **no**

**Does this project involve the use of animals?**

**yes**     **no**

\*If your project involves research involving humans or animals, seek approval from the appropriate committee. Approval is not needed at the time of application, but approval is required PRIOR to the start of your project.

For human subjects research Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required.

For research involving the use of animals Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval is required.

#### IV. Certifications

**Student Certification:**

- I certify that I am the primary author of this application and that the information provided is true.
- I agree to present my research at a campus-wide undergraduate research forum.
- I agree to submit a final report detailing the results of the research project within 30 days of project completion.
- I will acknowledge Providence College Undergraduate Research Committee support in any resulting presentation or publication.
- I authorize Providence College to use material contained within this application and/or the final report for promotional purposes in print and/or on the web.

Student Signature

**Faculty Mentor Certification:**

- I am a full-time Providence College faculty member and agree to serve as faculty mentor for this project.
- I have reviewed the application and believe the project is feasible as described.
- I agree to be contacted and provide further recommendation by telephone or letter, upon request.

Mentor Signature