

Augusta State University
College of Education – Department of Teacher Education
MGED 3213 – The Middle School as Organization - Spring 2005

Hours: 3 Semester Hours

Prerequisites: Admission to the Teacher education Program

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Students will examine the Middle School as an organization and elements of an effective Middle School. Middle School philosophy and the origins of the Middle School movement will be examined as the basis of the Middle School components such as teaming, flexible scheduling, interdisciplinary curriculum, parental/community involvement and educational structures built to meet student/adolescent needs.

TEXT:

Wiles, Jon and Bondi, Joseph. (2001). The new American middle school: Educating preadolescents in an era of change. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

CLASS CALENDAR: Spring 2004

10 January - 11 February	Classes meet on campus
14 February - 18 February	Field Experience Labs
21 February - 11 March	Classes meet on campus
14 March - 15 April	Field Experience Labs
18 April - 04 May	Classes meet on campus

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED:

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

2. understand how students learn and develop and be able to provide developmentally appropriate learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
5. use an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.
9. be a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and actively seeks the opportunity to grow professionally.
10. foster relationships with school colleagues, parents and agencies in the larger community to support the learning and well being of all students.

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Throughout the course students will demonstrate the ability:

1. examine the historical and research based factors influencing the development of the Middle School philosophy and analyze the basic tenets of this philosophy, comparing and contrasting Middle School to the Jr. High. (NCATE/NMSA 3, 4, 5: PSC II, V: NB VII: CF9)
2. analyze how elements of the school organization reflect this philosophy. (NCATE/NMSA 2, 3,4,5,6: PSCII, V: NB IV, V, VI, VIII: CF 9)
3. analyze how elements of the school organization reflect the nature of early adolescent students and serve to address student needs. (Management Module) NCATE/NMSA 3.3, 5.1; PSC II; NB IV, IX, VII, X: CF 2,5)
4. critique the effectiveness of the current Middle School movement in working toward this philosophy and organization. (NCATE/NMSA 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: PSC II, V: NB IV, V, VI, VIII: CF 9, 2)
5. identify barriers to progress in the Middle School and develop collaborative strategies related to how they may be addressed. (NCATE/NMSA 2, 3, 4.5, 4.6, 6.1; PSCV, VI, VII; NB V, IX, XI; CF 9, 10)

COURSE OUTLINE:

The Middle Grades Program is founded on the premise that instructors model the practices they espouse that students employ in an effective classroom. The course outline is designed to provide topics essential for students to attain the intended course outcomes and objectives. Specific time lines, reading assignments, and assessment dates are not included so that the instructor can model how these are determined along with students to assure that their learning needs are met and questions are addressed from a student centered/student driven perspective.

TOPICS:

1. A Middle School Philosophy
 - a. the movement to Middle School
 - b. characteristics of a “true Middle School”
 - c. student centeredness and the adolescent
 - d. program design
2. School Organization
 - a. learning communities
 - b. interdisciplinary teams
 - c. flexible scheduling
 - d. activity programs for adolescents
 - e. school community and families, resource people, community groups, education colleagues
 - f. school improvement and progress and assessment
 - g. comprehensive guidance programs
 - h. pro-active management of student needs (management module)
3. Curriculum/Organized Learning
 - a. formal programs
 - b. core curriculum / connections
 - c. schoolwide advisement programs
4. Instruction
 - a. teacher preparation
 - b. delivery systems

ASSESSMENT:

Performance based standards for each assignment/activity will be determined and explained prior to each assignment. Students will work toward successful attainment of all standards. Assignments which do not meet all standards will be graded returned with specific improvements to be made, as built in intervention. The assessment is designed to require use of higher level thinking skills and to provide authentic opportunities for student to demonstrate learning, as inherent to sound middle grades practice. Assessment of the course objectives may include but is not limited to methods such as: simulation, debate, research, micro-teaching, reflective teaching, lesson/unit development, analysis of interviews and observations, self and peer evaluation , research and journal writing.

The course assessment must include evidence of student learning, reflection and self assessment in relation to the following for inclusion in an comprehensive electronic portfolio:

- analysis of elements of a true Middle School related to adolescent needs (CF 2,5,9)
- statement of Middle School philosophy in action (CF 2,5, 9)
- analysis of role in Middle School related to collaboration and leadership (CF 10)

FIELD EXPERIENCE COMPONENTS: (NCATE/NMSA 8.1,8.2)

Developing Pedagogy and Content Expertise

At school site students will be assigned to an instructional team to work on Middle School pedagogy assignments and meet individual content specialization needs for lab.

Pedagogy:

- include teaching small groups of students/tutoring students
- focus on teaching skill, how decisions are made and instructional skills
- observe in classroom with instructional focus
- include interactive observations/dialogue with teacher and students
- focus on developing instructional strategies to meet a variety of student needs (exceptionality, diversity, learning styles): work with these students in small groups and one on one
- make transition to some whole class lessons

Content:

- examine content standards, courses of study, curriculum guides
- select appropriate material appropriate to content area(s) and middle grade students
- examine a variety of instructional approaches related to areas of content expertise
- examine/develop appropriate means to assess content learning congruent with instructional approaches and learner needs/development

Clinical Lab: content pedagogy course will have a lab/clinical/simulation teaching/practice to address both pedagogy and content in a formal ISL (Impacting Student Learning) documentation

CLASS ATTENDANCE:

Students are to maintain regular attendance to attain maximum success in the pursuit of studies. It may be necessary for the student to be absent from scheduled classes or labs for personal reasons. On such occasions, all matters related to student absences, late assignments, including the making up of work missed, are to be arranged between the student and the professor. After the equivalent of one and one half weeks of absences from a class, regardless of cause, the student may be subject to withdrawal from the class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

All written tasks will be evaluated on accuracy, completeness, clarity depth of analysis and reflection, coherence, well-reasoned or argued positions, clarity of expression, consistent correct usage of standard English and consistent use of APA style (when appropriate).

1. **Daily Assignments, Class Attendance, and Reflection Questions (10%)**
You will be asked to participate in class activities as groups and individuals to complete team or individual assignments that will be evaluated as part of this category.
2. **Article Reviews (20%)**
You will read four articles from the on-line journal, Middle School Promise Journal: Special Edition Addressing Adolescent Needs, and write a professional review for each.
3. **Reflective Journal -School-based Lab Field Experience (20%)**
The lab setting provides an opportunity for students to observe middle school organization and participate in content teaching and adolescent learning in the middle school setting. Your journal will address assigned focus questions based on lab observations and activities.
4. **Mid-term (20%) -Action Research Project Design and Annotated Bibliography**
You will select a research issue/topic regarding middle school organizational, curriculum, instructional or assessment best practices and design a action research project to include problem statement, literature, method of research , results of research and conclusions.
5. **Research Journal Article (20%)**
You will complete an authentic journal article based on your action research project for inclusion in your electronic portfolio or submission to the Collegiate Middle Level Association (CMLA) for publication.
6. **Final: On-line Visit- Model Middle School Analysis/ Class Presentation (10%)**
You will select two state or national Lighthouse Schools (exemplary/model middle schools and submit a written analysis/critique relating to what extend elements of the school's organization reflect the middle school philosophy or best practices in middle school organization.

MGED 3213 Spring 2005 – Reading Assignment Sheet – REVISED 2/8

(Wiles and Bondi, 2001)

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1.	1/11-1/13	1. Middle School Philosophy Middle School Program Criteria
2.	1/18-1/20	2. Middle School Concept / The New Middle School Chapter 1
3.	1/25-1/27	3. Learning Experiences for Emerging Adolescents Chapter 2
4.	2/1-2/3	4. Organizational Structures, Facility, Policy, Regulations Chapter 3
5.	2/8-2/10	5. Organizational Structures, Facility, Policy, Regulations Chapter 3 (Continued)
6.	2/14-2/18	6. Field Experience Labs
7.	2/21-2/24	7. Teachers as Delivery Systems / Teacher Preparation Chapter 4
8.	3/1-3/3	8. MID-TERM: Action Research: Inquiry Based Project Program, Design, Curriculum and Integrated Learning Chapter 5
9.	3/8-3/10	9. Instructional Materials / Teacher Networking Materials Chapter 6
10.	3/14-3/18	10. Field Experience Labs
11.	3/21-3/25	11. Field Experience Labs
12.	3/28-4/1	12. Field Experience Labs
13.	4/4-4/8	13. Spring Break
14.	4/11-4/15	14. Field Experience Labs
15.	4/19-4/21	15. Full-Service Middle Schools: Learning Communities Chapters 6, 7
16.	4/26-4/28	16. Instructional Theory for the New Middle School Chapters 8, 9
17.	4/3	17. Comprehensive Assessment: Middle School Program Analysis

Chapter 10

Bibliography

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- McEwin, K. (1996). America's middle schools: Practices and progress-a 25 year perspective. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.
- National Middle School Association. (2003). This we believe: Successful Schools for young adolescents. Westerfield, OH.
- National Middle School Research Committee. (2003). Research and Resources in support of this we Believe. Westerfield, OH. National Middle School Association
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