

**Augusta State University
College of Education
Teacher Education
Fall 2009**

COURSE TITLE: The Middle School Classroom: Environment, Curriculum and Practices

COURSE PREFIX AND NUMBER: MGED 3112

PREREQUISITES: Admission to the Teacher Education Program

INSTRUCTOR: Assistant Professor: Ronnie Harrison, Ed.S

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Students will examine the elements of an effective Middle Grades classroom including the classroom environment, a Middle School approach to implementing a student centered interdisciplinary curriculum, a middle school pedagogy and best practices. Meeting students' individual needs, including those of special needs students is embedded in the course.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED:

The student will:

Prepared

- understand how students differ in their approaches to learning and be able to create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- understand and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the learner's development of critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

Able

- 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.
- use knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and information technology techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, the learners, the community and curriculum goals.

Responsive

- understand and use authentic assessment to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

NATIONAL STANDARDS:SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES:

NCATE - National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

NMSA - National Middle School Association

INTASC- Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium

Throughout the course students will demonstrate an ability to:

1. analyze and develop strategies to create a positive/instructional learning environment which is student centered and fosters learning. (Management Module) (NCATE/NM<SA 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 7.2; INTASC 3,4,5)
2. define, examine, and critique various approaches to curriculum in the middle grades including traditional/separate subject, interdisciplinary, and integrated approaches. (NCATE/NMSA 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3, 7.1, 7.2; INTASC 3,4,7)
3. develop strategies to design learning activities which involve students in the process to capitalize on internal motivation and ownership as proactive/instructional classroom management. (Management Module) (NCATE/NMSA 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3, 7.2; INTASC 3)
4. examine and design learning opportunities/strategies to address diversity and meet individual student needs, including special needs students. (Special Education Module1 and 3) (NCATE/NMSA 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.1, 7.1, 7.2; INTASC 3)
5. examine, analyze and design effective approaches to pedagogy in the middle grades ranging from planning to implementation and assessment. (NCATE/NMSA 3,4,5,7; INTASC 3,4,5,6,7,8)

REQUIRED TEXT:

Lemlech, J. (2010) *Curriculum and Instructional Methods for the elementary and middle elementary and middle school*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. (7th Edition).

REQUIRED RESOURCES:

LiveText Assessment Systems Software, (Obtainable at the ASU Bookstore and online).

Augusta State University Department of Teacher Education Website:

http://www.aug.edu/teacher_development/

ASU Pipeline E-mail

COURSE OUTLINE:

The course outline is designed to provide topics essential for students to attain the intended course outcomes and objectives. Additional reading assignments and assessment dates may be developed along with students to assure that their learning needs are met and questions are addressed from a student centered/student driven perspective.

TOPICS:

1. The classroom environment:
 - i. student centered
 - ii. ethos of caring: pro-active management, relationships, ownership, risk taking, trust
 - iii. focused on learning; flexible, need focused, active
 - iv. connected to world outside of classroom
 - v. interdependence and individual responsibility
 - vi. inclusive of students from diverse backgrounds and with special needs
2. The Curriculum
 - i. from traditional to interdisciplinary, integrated approaches to content and the disciplines
 - ii. student driven curriculum and curriculum standards
 - iii. reading and technology and other connections
 - iv. inclusive: diversity, individuality, special needs
3. The pedagogy:
 - i. philosophy and beliefs: constructivist and student centered approaches/ engaged and democratic pedagogy (Management Module)
 - ii. culturally responsive instruction
 - iii. inquiry/thinking skills/creativity focused
 - iv. involving school community; parental involvement, families, resource people
 - v. technology and accessing information
 - vi. addressing individual differences learning styles, exceptionalities, intervention and extension (Special Education Modules 1 & 3)
 - vii. cooperative/active learning
 - viii. interactive / process oriented
 - ix. performance based / authentic and other forms of assessment
 - x. interdisciplinary teaming / flexible grouping and scheduling

ASSESSMENT

Performance based standards for each assignment/activity will be determined and explained prior to each assignment. Teacher candidates 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 assessments are designed to require use of higher level thinking skills and to provide authentic opportunities for students 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, research, micro-teaching, reflective teaching , lesson/unit development, analysis of interviews and observations, self and peer evaluation.

The course assessment will include evidence of teacher candidate learning, reflection and self assessment in relation to the following for inclusion in a comprehensive electronic portfolio (LiveText).

- **Prepared-** pedagogical knowledge (knowledge of interdisciplinary / integrated instruction, assessment strategies, developing thinking skills, student centered, planning) (INTASC 4,6,8)
- **Prepared-** content knowledge-specific to concentration (INTASC 7)
- **Able-** Implementing effective classroom management /developing a positive learning environment (INTASC 5)
- **Responsive-** meeting student needs / intervention (INTASC 3)

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

Semester I: Exploration of Self and Middle School: The field component of this course is designed to cause the student to evaluate self as a middle grades teacher. Teacher candidates will examine the middle school curriculum and instructional methods for middle level learners. Areas to be examined include:

Students will engage in the following experiences:

- observations in a variety of school settings/grade levels/content areas
- observations focused on instructional approaches and curriculum (how being taught and defined)
- transitions to instruction with small groups looking at these concepts
- identification of own strengths/preferences/self evaluation as teacher

COURSE INFORMATION

Attendance will be taken for each class session, and you are to maintain regular and punctual attendance to attain maximum success. It may be necessary for you to be absent from scheduled classes or labs for personal reasons. However, on such occasions, all matters related to student absences, including the making up of work missed, are to be arranged between the teacher candidate and the professor. Failure to turn in an assignment on the due date will result in a five point deduction for each day the assignment is late.

Non-attendance or tardiness in excess of more than 10 percent of class time, regardless of cause, may result in your being withdrawn from the course.

The academic honesty policy outlined in the ASU catalog applies to this class. Please review catalog information. Failure to comply may result in a failing grade or removal from the program.

The use of cell phones or beepers is not allowed in class. Turn off laptops during class.

Check your ASU Pipeline e-mail daily. This will be the primary form of class communication, especially during the five-week lab time.

SCHOOL-BASED LAB EXPERIENCE;

Rating Scale:

4= Exemplary

3= Proficient level of competence

2= Progress level-approaching competence)

1= Unsatisfactory level- not competent at this time

The lab setting provides an opportunity for you to observe and participate in content instruction with young adolescents in the middle school classroom setting. The final evaluation will be based on your lab teacher's evaluations.

GRADE POINT / GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

448 – 500 = A

423 – 447 = B

398 – 422 = C

348 – 397 = D

347 - And Below = F

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Each assignment will be submitted in LiveText and awarded the identified number or points for accuracy, completeness, clarity, dept of analysis, reflection, coherence, consistent usage of standard English and consistent use of APA style/citation (when appropriate). A rubric will be provided for all written tasks.

<u>ASSIGNMENTS</u>	<u>VALUE Points</u>	<u>DUE DATE</u>
<p>ISL Component: (Impacting Student Learning) Lesson Plans: You will develop two lesson plans (one for each of your concentration (content) areas incorporating the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and the process of Backward Design.</p>	100 100	Sept. 17 Oct. 15 Mid-Term Assessment
<p>Text Chapter Review: Collaborative Content Area Groups You will be assigned to a content area group to review the text chapter designated to your primary content area. The collaborative written review will focus on goals, concepts, programs, teaching approaches, assessment and relevant issues regarding the content area in implementing the curriculum. (Part III of Text)</p>	50	Nov. 24
<p>Interdisciplinary Lesson Plan: You will be assigned to a collaborative group to design and develop a thematic interdisciplinary lesson plan based on interdisciplinary curriculum instructional practices. This thematic lesson plan must include your two content areas and the GPS standards. The National Council of Social Studies Ten Thematic Strands should be considered.</p>	100	Dec. 1
<p>Class Presentation: (Mini- Lessons) You will choose an instructional strategy topic (provided by the instructor) and lead a class demonstration of the strategy to teach a specific concept. Specific focus should be give to how the strategy can be implemented to foster achievement of middle level learners.</p>	50	Presentation Dates To be Assigned
<p>Reflective Journal and Reflective Essay : Final Assessment ISL Component-Section 6: Reflection and Assessment Your reflective journal will address focused questions (assigned by the instructor) based on lab observations, activities, readings and student/teacher roles regarding curriculum and instruction. Based on your Reflective Journal, you will write a reflective essay in which you reflect upon the effectiveness of your teaching and learning in the lab setting during your lab MGED 3112 lab.</p>	50 50	Final Assessment Dec. 3

Topics for Reading and Discussion

Lemlech, J. (2010). *Curriculum and instructional methods for the elementary and middle school*. Boston, MA; Allyn & Bacon.

Aug. 18 Aug. 20	Overview : Responsive Curriculum and instruction INTASC Standards / Impacting Student Learning (ISL)
Aug. 25 Aug. 27	Chapter 1 Curriculum Today Influences and Challenges
Sept. 1 Sept. 3	Chapter 2 Differentiation for Learning
Sept. 10	Constructivist Learning Theory / Out-come Based Curriculum
Sept. 15 Sept. 17	Chapter 3 Classroom Management / Planning and Guiding Learning Experiences
Sept. 21- Sept. 25	Field Experience Lab Week
Sept. 29 Oct. 1	Chapter 4 Exposition and Discussion Strategies
Oct. 6 Oct. 8	Chapter 5 Inquiry Teaching Strategies
Oct. 13 Oct. 15	Chapter 6 Curriculum Planning / The Teaching Unit Mid-Term
Oct. 19 – Nov. 13	Field Experience Lab Weeks
Nov. 17 Nov. 19	Chapter 7 Monitoring and Assessing Students' Progress
Nov. 24	Chapter 8 Instructional Strategies – Mini Lessons and Demonstrations
Dec. 1 Dec. 3	Chapter 9 Instructional Strategies – Mini Lessons and Demonstrations

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- Popkin (1994). Active teaching. Marietta, GA: Active Parenting Publishers.
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