

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

COURSE SYLLABUS

**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN MIDDLE AND JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOLS**

15:310:510:90

3 credit course

Name of course instructor: Dr. Alyce Hunter

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Semester: Spring 2012

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Analysis and evaluation of significant curriculum practices of the middle and junior high school with suggestions for new lines of development; consideration given to organizational patterns.”

This course examines curricular and instructional strategies for middle school students in grades 5-8. Background on the needs of the middle school student and the middle school movement is studied. Interdisciplinary teaming, grouping of students, and organizing of time and space in the middle school are also considered.

COURSE RATIONALE

The purpose of this course is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to exercise leadership in curriculum development, implementation, and assessment at the middle school level. This course challenges school curriculum leaders, as reflective practitioners, to meet the needs of all young adolescent learners through dynamic and guaranteed curricula. Students move beyond their own personal experiences as they learn how to define practice, roles, and conditions of practice and to focus improvement of curriculum for better results.

COURSE OVERVIEW

I. Course Objectives

Students will achieve growth towards becoming **caring, curious, competent, committed, community-active reflective practitioners** who are concerned, above all else, with transforming the lives of their students by demonstrating proficiency in knowledge, skill application, and dispositions relating to curriculum development, implementation, and assessment. The students will:

A. Cognitive Goals

1. To explore physical, social, personal, intellectual, and moral dimensions of early adolescent development and ways that school practices enhance or inhibit this development
2. To understand the implications of recent curriculum, instructional, and learning theory developments for middle school classrooms and
3. To understand processes for developing and implementing curriculum and instructional programs in the middle school
4. To demonstrate understanding of comprehensive planning, data-driven decision making, and problem solving skills and procedures
5. To comprehend the diversity of roles, expectations, and tasks and the conditions of practice for curriculum leaders
6. To develop familiarity with and an understanding of issues and challenges relating to curriculum development and change
7. To analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant theories, concepts and principles related to developing and managing middle school curriculum development and instruction
8. To understand models for curriculum documents and methods of curriculum evaluation
9. To evaluate specific strategies and concepts contained in the various middle school content areas and across disciplines

B. Skills

1. To demonstrate in writing and discussion the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate course content
2. To model effective group participation
3. To translate curriculum theory and knowledge into effective professional practice
4. To apply problem solving strategies and critical thinking to relate curriculum theory to practice

C. Disposition Goals

1. To see oneself as collaborative member of a school and district community who has the ability to engage all stakeholders in dialogue to improve teaching and student learning through curriculum development, implementation, and assessment
2. To have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all learners by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context as they relate to curriculum

The New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders and the ISLLC standards will be addressed in this course.

II. Course Content

A. The middle school student

B. The middle school movement and concept

- C. Interdisciplinary team organization
- D. Grouping students in the middle school
- E. Organizing time and space in the middle school
- F. Definitions of curriculum and other related terms
- G. Curriculum theories, history, and practice as a directive for the future improvement
- H. Various curriculum models and designs
- I. Current curricular developments in specific areas of teaching and learning and middle school curriculum, in general
- J. Subject specific and general educational standards
- K. Identification of essential knowledge, skills, content, and dispositions
- L. Ways to connect instructional planning and student learning
- M. Methods to create learning environments that lead to providing “guaranteed” curriculum
- N. Common Core Content Standards and Assessments-PARCC
- O. New Jersey Curriculum Model, New Jersey Suggested Curriculum, and UBD

III. Required Texts:

Covey, S. (2008), *The leader in me*. New York: Free Press.

George, P., & Alexander, W. (2003), *The exemplary middle school* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

ORGANIZATION OF COURSE

The course is offered as an internet course—this means that learners are expected to spend the same amount of time required for a “regular” class on the lesson and assignments. Students are required to respond to class lecture postings and all assignments in the time frame provided by the professor. The course will be guided by a series of lectures and on-line discussions. The lectures will serve as launching pads from which discussions, individual and group activities, additional readings, and on-line work-sessions will eventuate. Sufficient time will be allotted for discussions and informal and task-oriented group sessions. Most importantly, the course will be organized to provide an informative and valuable educational experience for its participants. Self reflection forms a most integral part of this course. Students are required to keep personal journals and develop an informed belief system relating to curriculum policy, practices, and procedures.

The instructor has provided additional information relating to how to succeed in the internet format at the end of this document, Please read “How to Get an “A” in an Internet Course,” “Checklist for Internet Course Success,” and “Ethics for Our Internet Course” which are included at the end of this document.

ASSESSMENT:

Responses are due when assigned by professor. Submit assignments in the course drop box. Even if a student completes all responses, if they are not on time, student will not receive full credit.

Attainment of the course objectives will be determined and assessed by the following:

1. *Complete weekly personal journal assignment containing all required responses (topics provided by instructor and including responses to *The Leader in Me*) and summative reflection on journal process. 100 points*
2. *Weekly questions and responses. Due to professor as indicated in course outline. 120 points*
3. *Read, summarize, and comment upon three articles relating to middle school curriculum. Post on discussion board for class comments. 50 points.*
4. *Complete midterm collaborative 30 points*
5. *Complete final exam reflective questions about course, course content, and individual learning 20 points*

Major Papers

6. *Major Paper I: Curriculum document following UBD design and other course requirements 100 points*
7. *Participate in critical friends' group relating to curriculum document 30 points*
8. *Major Paper 2: District/School Curriculum Project/Report: Report to include particular comments on relevance to middle school students and middle school philosophy.*
 - a. *Explanation of District or Building Policy/Procedures for Curriculum Writing, Implementation, and Evaluation*

Describe any policies and all existing procedures and practices connected with your district's/building's curriculum.
 - b. *Evaluation of the District's or Building's Policy /Procedures*

Objectively note strengths and weaknesses based on information you learned in this course.
 - c. *Reaction to the Policy/Procedures*

Gather reactions from district/building teachers and administrators (as least one -1) individual from each group.) Summarize the findings together with your personal reaction to your own experiences with the evaluation process.
 - d. *Commendations and Recommendations for Improvement based on "b" and "c" above.*

Finally include comments as to what is good about the curricular policy/procedures and also how you think the district/school might improve the curriculum process.

Write a seven to ten page paper in which you cite at least three sources to explain your findings.

100 points

NOTE:

If you have already done this assignment for another course, choose from one of the following for your agent of change project:

- ✓ Agent of Change: Find a way to make a change in your building in relation to middle school curriculum.
- ✓ Agent of Change: Present your middle school curriculum to another school.
- ✓ Agent of Change: Develop a public service video or website/web quest discussing middle school curriculum. The purpose of this choice would be to make your selected audience aware of middle school curriculum.

- ✓ Agent of Change: Come up with an idea on your own and a way to become an agent of change. Discuss it with me for prior approval.

Share your agent of change project to the class.

. By the middle of the semester you must provide an action plan in writing stating the purpose of your project, the steps you are taking to actualize your project, and the evaluation you will use to judge the success of your project. You will be presented your project to the class in the docshare and also are required to write a paper summarizing your work.

Grading:

A=500-550 points

B=450-499 points

C=400-449 points

D=350-399 points

F= 349 and below points

Format for Student Work

All students must use APA format for student papers, citation, and bibliography.

Disability Accommodations Statement

If you have any disabling condition that I should be aware of in order to better meet your individual learning needs, please do not hesitate to inform me. In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., tape recorders, special adaptive equipment, special note taking or test taking procedures) is strongly encouraged to contact me at the beginning of the course. Additional assistance is available through the New Brunswick Campus Coordinator at (732) 932-1711

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS ON-LINE COURSE:

Welcome to a most exciting adventure—our on-line course –

Here are some of the ideas and tips that I have to offer to you to help you embark and succeed on this on-line adventure:

- 1) Students report to me that in an on-line course they have to be able to interact with others in multiple ways and this requires more time, dedication, and time-management than does a traditional face-to-face class.
- 2) In an on-line course, reading and writing are more important than in a traditional class. You have to be able to read and understand the writing of others—your instructor and your fellow learners. You must be able to comprehend written directions so that you can complete assignments. You need to be able to compose clear questions to your instructor when you are confused or need clarification. As for your own writing, you need to answer questions completely and concisely with attention paid to spelling and grammar.
- 3) You need to be comfortable working with a computer and using the Internet. You need to know how to log into the course, send responses to your professor, work in on-line groups, and respond in the discussion board format.
- 4) You need to be able to manage your time well so that assignments are emailed to your professor on time and that you collaborate with your peers so that group assignments can

be handed in when they are due. You should expect to login to the course at least three times a week and spend at least two to three hours doing your on-line lessons.

- 5) An on-line course places significantly less emphasis on lecturing by the professor. You are required to be a more critical and creative thinker who can make personal “sense” of what you are to do to succeed in this course.

Checklist for On-Line Course Success

- Keep up with all deadlines—on-line class and required graded assignments. Work can be turned in through the course drop box or emailed to me directly.
- Learn the on-line Rutgers course system during the first week of the class.
- Log into the course frequently.
- Discover when and where you work best on-line. Create a schedule for yourself.
- Be patient with yourself , your computer, and the Internet
- Download and print documents/lessons you want to study or consider in depth.
- Save your work in more than one place.
- Find a friend or buddy who can help you achieve.
- Work hard.
- ASK QUESTIONS—of each other and of me. I LOVE to hear from you and no question or comment is insignificant to me. So please interact with me through my email or phone numbers. Or even stop in to see me if you feel comfortable, Yes, frequently my students will stop for a visit or a clarification at my other job as assistant superintendent/director of curriculum for the West Morris Regional High School District.
- Enjoy!

Ethics for Our On-Line Course

The same standards of conduct and courtesy apply on-line as in a regular classroom. However, it is important to remember that you must pay even more attention to these standards when you study and learn on-line. Here are some suggestions:

1. Participate and share.
2. Think BEFORE you hit SEND. How will the person reading this message interpret it? No one can see your smile if you are being sarcastic! No one can read what you don't write. So be sure to explain fully what you mean.
3. I always hope that I don't really need to include this but please, please remember to be kind and polite to each other and to me. Derogatory or inappropriate comments are unacceptable and subject to the same disciplinary action as they would have if they occurred in a traditional classroom.
4. Ask questions and respond to others so that we can help each other learn and grow as teachers, administrators, and people.

CLASS SESSIONS

Date	Essential Questions	Assignment
1/19	What is curriculum? What influences curriculum? What are the salient characteristics of young adolescents?	George, pp. 1-37
1/26	What is the history of the middle school movement? Why is it important to consider the history of the middle school movement as one develops and implements middle school curriculum?	George, pp. 38-72 Covey, pp. xxi-17 Assignment from 1/19 due to professor
2/2	What is interdisciplinary teaming? Why is it important to consider the organizational concept of interdisciplinary teaming as one develops and	George, pp. 301-364 Covey, pp. 18-43 Assignment from 1/26 due to professor

	implements middle school curriculum?	
2/9	<p>What are ways to organize middle school students for the most effective instruction?</p> <p>Why is it important to consider the most effective ways to organize students as one develops and implements middle school curriculum?</p>	<p>George, pp. 365-434</p> <p>Covey, pp. 44-70</p> <p>Assignment from 2/2 due to professor</p>
2/16	<p>What are ways to organize time and space in the middle school?</p> <p>Why is it important to consider ways to organize time and space as one develops and implements middle school curriculum?</p>	<p>George, pp. 435-499</p> <p>Covey, pp. 71-89</p> <p>Assignment from 2/9 due to professor</p> <p>Article summaries and critiques due</p>
2/23	<p>What are the purposes of advisor-advisee programs?</p> <p>Why is it important to consider the purposes of advisor-advisee programs as one develops and implements middle school curriculum?</p>	<p>George, pp. 252-300</p> <p>Covey, pp. 90-106</p> <p>Assignment from 2/16 due to professor</p>
3/1	<p>What is UbD?</p> <p>What are the Common Core Standards and why are they important to middle school curriculum?</p> <p>What is PARCC and why is it important to middle</p>	<p>George, pp. 73-99</p> <p>Covey, pp. 107-133</p> <p>Assignment from 2/23 due to professor</p> <p>Midterm due</p>

	<p>school curriculum?</p> <p>What are SGIs and why are they important to middle school curriculum?</p>	
3/8	<p>What are the various models or types of middle school curriculum?</p> <p>Why is a mission statement important for curriculum development?</p>	<p>George, pp. 99-129</p> <p>Covey, pp. 134-164</p> <p>Assignment from 3/1 due to professor</p>
3/22	<p>How does one identify essential knowledge, content, facts, skills, and dispositions?</p> <p>What are essential questions and enduring understandings?</p> <p>What major content experiences need to be provided for middle school students?</p>	<p>Covey, pp. 165-190</p> <p>Assignment from 3/8 due to professor</p>
3/29	<p>What are the reasons for and benefits of textbook series at the middle school level?</p> <p>What are the characteristics of effective instruction in the middle school?</p>	<p>George, pp. 151-224</p> <p>Covey, pp. 191-206</p> <p>Assignment from 3/22 due to professor</p>
4/5	<p>What are the characteristics of effective instruction in the middle school?</p>	<p>George, pp. 151-224</p> <p>Covey, pp. 207-224</p> <p>Assignment from 3/29 due to professor</p> <p>Journal assignment due</p>

<p>4/12</p>	<p>What is curriculum mapping?</p> <p>Why is it important?</p>	<p>Assignment from 4/5 due to professor</p> <p>Paper I due</p>
<p>4/19</p>	<p>How has technology been a catalyst for curriculum change?</p> <p>How are monitoring and assessing students' progress related to curriculum development and evaluation?</p>	<p>George, pp. 131-141</p> <p>Assignment from 4/12 due to professor</p>
<p>4/26</p>	<p>What is the nature of change with regard to curriculum?</p> <p>What are some of the issues relating to leadership that are facing curriculum leaders at the middle school level?</p>	<p>George, pp. 555-586</p> <p>Paper 2 due</p>
<p>5/3</p>	<p>What have I learned in this course?</p>	<p>Final due by 5/3</p>