

**Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey**  
**15:251:575:A2**  
**Learning & Teaching in the Middle School**  
**Summer2015**  
**M, T, W, Th 10:50 - 1:45**  
**Scott Hall Rm 205**

Instructor: Dr. Greer Burroughs	greer.burroughs@gse.rutgers.edu
Phone Number 732 932 7496 ext 8339	10 Seminary Pl Rm 15C
Office Hours: M & W 2:00 - 3:00 pm Or by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: Admission to the GSE graduate program in elementary education
Mode of Instruction: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: from the instructor

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### **Course Description**

#### **Learning Goals**

#### **New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (2014)<sup>1</sup>:**

**Standard Two: Learning Differences.** The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

- ii. Essential Knowledge

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap9.pdf>

2) The teacher understands and identifies differences in approaches to learning and performance and knows how to design instruction that uses each learner's strengths to promote growth

5) The teacher understands that learners bring assets for learning based on their individual experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as language, culture, family, and community values

iii. Critical Dispositions:

1) The teacher believes that all learners can achieve at high levels and persists in helping each learner reach his or her full potential;

2) The teacher respects learners as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests;

3) The teacher makes learners feel valued and helps them learn to value each other

**Standard Three: Learning Environments.** The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

ii. Essential Knowledge

1) The teacher understands the relationship between motivation and engagement and knows how to design learning experiences using strategies that build learner self-direction and ownership of learning;

iii. Critical Dispositions

2) The teacher values the role of learners in promoting each other's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.

**Standard Five: Application of Content.** The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

ii. Essential Knowledge

6) The teacher understands communication modes and skills as vehicles for learning (for example, information gathering and processing) across disciplines as well as vehicles for expressing learning;

iii. Critical Dispositions

3) The teacher values flexible learning environments that encourage learner exploration, discovery, and expression across content areas.

**Standard Seven: Planning for Instruction.** The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

ii. Essential Knowledge

- 2) The teacher understands how integrating cross-disciplinary skills in instruction engages learners purposefully in applying content knowledge.
  - 3) The teacher understands learning theory, human development, cultural diversity, and individual differences and how these impact ongoing planning
- iii. Critical Dispositions
- 1) The teacher respects learners' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction
  - 4) The teacher believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on learner needs and changing circumstances.

**Standard Eight: Instructional Strategies.** The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

- ii. Essential Knowledge
- 2) The teacher knows how to apply a range of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning goals
- iii. Critical Dispositions
- 1) The teacher is committed to deepening awareness and understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.

## **Council for the Accreditation of Education Professionals (2013)<sup>2</sup>**

### **Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions**

- 1.1 Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Knowledge
- 1.2 Instructional Practice
  - Learning Experiences
- 1.6 Learner and Learning
  - Learning Experiences
- 1.8 Learner and Learning
  - Relationships and Communication

### **Course Overview**

This course explores the characteristics of middle schools and middle school learners and how they relate to effective teaching and learning. Emphasis will be on effective methods of instruction and assessment in the middle school. An on-site field component will provide a practical context for exploring course content.

### **Course Goals**

The purposes of the course are for students to:

- Understand the characteristics of middle school learners

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<sup>2</sup> [http://caepnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/final\\_board\\_approved1.pdf](http://caepnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/final_board_approved1.pdf)

- Create lessons, activities and assessments that reflect understanding of middle school learners and best practices within content areas
- Prepare to meet the needs of diverse learners by applying practices of differentiated instruction
- Understand the value of framing instruction around themes, essential questions, and culminating projects
- Appreciate the interdisciplinary opportunities of the middle school setting
- Analyze classroom management strategies relevant to middle school learners
- Sharpen skills in lesson, unit and assessment design

## **Course Requirements**

### **❖ Participation**

Participation in this course will include taking part in a variety of activities – written, verbal, individual, and group. I expect students to arrive on time and be prepared for every session. Frequent, unexcused tardiness or absence will result in a reduction in the course grade. I also ask that students do not use laptops or cell phones during class, unless the use is clearly related to class purposes. Please let me know ahead of time if you will be missing class, as it will affect how I plan lessons.

**Class Participation:** Outstanding participation goes beyond regular attendance, attentiveness and cooperation. To receive an A grade for class participation one must demonstrate meaningful participation in all class activities and discussions. For activities this means serious effort should be evident. During class discussions comments should reflect thoughtful consideration of the topics, demonstrate consideration of course readings and make meaningful contributions to the class discussions (these are contributions that go beyond just expressing one's opinion). Since this is a field based class students are expected to regularly make connections between class topics and experiences in the field.

**IMPORTANT:** Completing all readings prior to class is essential

### **❖ Weekly Reflections**

Due to the schedule of the summer session, class will move rapidly with many topics, readings and activities addressed each week. For learning to become meaningful individuals need time to reflect on the experience. Reflections should address each of the following points:

- Identify what you learned that week and explain the value of this learning for yourself
- What elements of the learning experience facilitated or inhibited your learning and why you think this was so?
- How can you use this information to improve your own learning and that of others?

Answering questions such as these help learners better understand their own learning process and make connections to the content and chart a course forward as a learner. Each week you will be required to write a reflection of 2-3 pages (double spaced) that considers these questions and other points that are important to you. You must address a minimum of one topic and one reading from the week, as well as something you learned from class or the field. High quality reflections will include direct references to class events, events from the field and citations of text that are relevant and meaningful to your analysis. **Reflections are due on Sakai under the appropriate link on assignments by 5:00 pm on the Sunday evening following the week, thus due dates are: 5/31, 6/7, 6/14 & 6/21.** Late submissions will be downgraded.

## ❖ Lesson Plan & Practice Teaching

Each member of the class will be responsible for developing and teaching a lesson within the individual's content area and based on the relevant standards. Lessons will be taught during our final week of class. **Lesson plans are due on 6/11.** Everyone will receive feedback prior to teaching the lesson. You are also encouraged to ask your cooperating teachers for feedback. Remember you must provide our class with all of the necessary content background & materials so we can successfully participate in the lesson. **The reflection due for this week must include thoughts about your lesson and teaching. Questions such as, "What did I learn from this teaching experience," and, "What would I modify?" should be addressed in this reflection.**

All lesson plans must follow the GSE lesson plan model and must be submitted to Sakai.

## ❖ Culminating Project/Assessment

You will be responsible for creating an end of unit project that would serve as a culminating assessment. **Culminating Project/Assessments are due on 6/18.** There are several criteria that you will need to include in this assignment:

- A list of the unit goals to be assessed through this project and the relevant standards.
- A handout that would be given to the students that provides details for completing the project, expectations for grading and all due dates
- Supporting worksheets or scaffolding tools that the students would need to successfully complete the project
- Specific grading criteria that you would apply to assess the students' work (this can be a rubric, a checklist, etc. - but it must state specific criteria)
- A one page explanation for why you designed the assessment as you with a focus on how the project will meet the needs of middle school and diverse learners.

## ❖ Annotated Bibliography

In this assignment you will have the opportunity to delve deeper into scholarship relevant to your own content area. Each week you will be responsible for identifying a reading within your content area that deepens your understanding of teaching in the field and existing area of inquiry. You will need to identify and read five readings for this assignment (you have an additional

week at the end of our class to complete this assignment). Acceptable readings are chapters presented in relevant books and journal articles. **The annotated bibliography is due on 6/25.**

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph. Although the purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited, **I would like you to focus on the relevancy of the reading to you and a statements of how you plan to use this information.**

### Grading:

Class Activities & Participation	10%
Weekly Reflections	20%
Annotated bibliography	25%
Lesson Plan & Teaching	20%
Culminating Project	25%

### Class & Assignment Schedule

All readings are from the course text, *Instructional Strategies for Middle and High School, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, or are available on Sakai under course assignments.

Date/Topic	Meeting Location/Time	Assignment/Reading Due
Tuesday, 5/26	Linwood Middle School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 1 Text - The Classroom Learning Community
Wednesday, 5/27	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Access & print out content standards for your area
Thursday, 5/28	Linwood Middle School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 3 Text - Preparing Learning Targets & Assessing Student Learning  <b>Reflection due 5/31 by 5:00</b>
Monday, 6/1 Interdisciplinary Teaching	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Reading: <i>Literacy as the Link: Common Core Standards and Content Area Teaching</i>
Tuesday, 6/2 Assessing Student Learning	Linwood Middle School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Reading: <i>Planning, Implementing and Assessing an Authentic Performance Task</i>
Wednesday, 6/3 Performance Based	West Windsor-Plainsboro School visit 9:00 am - 12:30	Reading: <i>Keeping it Real</i>

Assessment	pm	
Thursday, 6/4 Lecture v. Student Centered Learning	Linwood Middle School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 5 <b>Reflection due 6/7 by 5:00</b>
Monday, 6/8 Teaching with Technology	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Chap. 6 Text Reading: <i>Using Technology to Motivate Middle School Students</i>
Tuesday, 6/9	Linwood Middle School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 7 & 8 Text
Wednesday, 6/10 Differentiated Instruction	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Chap. 9 & 10 Text
Thursday, 6/11	Linwood Middle School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	<b>Lesson Plans Due</b> <b>Reflection due 6/14 by 5:00</b>
Monday, 6/15 Service Learning	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Chap. 11 Text Reading: <i>Social &amp; Emotional Learning in Middle School Curricula</i>
Tuesday, 6/16	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	LA Lessons
Wednesday, 6/17	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Social Studies Lessons
Thursday, 6/18	Scott Hall Rm 205 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Science Lessons <b>Culminating Projects/Assessments Due</b> <b>Reflection due 6/21 by 5:00</b>
Thursday, 6/25		<b>Annotated Bibliography Due</b>