

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
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Learning & Teaching in the Middle School
Summer 2016
M, T, W, Th 10:50 - 1:45
(Fieldwork Tuesdays & Thursdays Weeks 1 – 3, 8am-3pm)
Murray Hall 204

Instructor: Amy Lewis	Email: amy.lewis@gse.rutgers.edu
Phone Number : 908-763-7160	Location: 205C, GSE 10 Seminary Place
Office Hours: by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: <i>Admission to the Teacher Education Program</i>
Mode of Instruction: <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

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Course Description

Learning Goals

New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (2014)¹:

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

¹ <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)²

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.

² http://caepnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/final_board_approved1.pdf

Course Goals

The purposes of the course are for students to:

- Understand the characteristics of middle school learners
- 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. Students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared for every session. Frequent, unexcused tardiness or absence will result in a reduction in the course grade. Students are expected to use laptops or cell phones during class only when the use is clearly related to class purposes. Prior notice for class absences is requested.

Class Participation: Outstanding participation goes beyond regular attendance, attentiveness and cooperation. To earn 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 meaningful learning to occur, time to reflect is necessary. Reflections should include the following:

- Identification what was learned during the week's class meetings and work in the field and an explanation of how this learning is valuable to your professional growth and development
- Analysis of the elements/aspects of the learning experience that facilitated or inhibited your learning and an explanation of why you think this was so

- Evaluation of how this information could be used to improve your professional learning and that of others

Reflecting upon the learning experiences and considering the aforementioned points will help future teachers better understand their own learning process, make connections to the content, and chart a course forward regarding continued professional development. Each week students will be required to write a reflection of 2-3 pages (double spaced) that considers these points and other points s/he considers important to the learning process. A minimum of one topic should be addressed weekly. Reflections should include citations from at least one reading and supporting evidence 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 the analysis. **Reflections are due on Google Classroom under the appropriate link on assignments by 5:00 pm on the Sunday evening following the week, thus due dates are: 6/5, 6/12, 6/19 & 6/26.** Late submissions will be downgraded.

❖ Lesson Plan & Practice Teaching

Each student will be responsible for developing and teaching a lesson within his/her content area and based on the relevant standards. Lessons will be taught during our final week of class.

Lesson plans are due on 6/16. Everyone will receive feedback prior to teaching the lesson.

Students are also encouraged to ask their cooperating teachers for feedback. The lesson must include the necessary content background and materials so the class can successfully participate in the lesson. **The reflection due for this week must include a reflection on the 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.

❖ Culminating Project/Assessment

An end of unit project will serve as a culminating assessment. **Culminating Project/Assessments are due on 6/23.**

Required criteria for this assignment include the following:

- A list of the unit goals and the relevant standards
- A handout that provides details for completing the project, expectations for grading, and all due dates that could be provided to potential middle school students
- Supporting worksheets or scaffolding tools that the students would need/use to successfully complete the project
- Specific grading criteria that you would apply to assess students' work (this can be a rubric, a checklist, etc. - specific criteria must be stated)
- A one page rationale that explains the assessment purpose and design with a focus on how the project will meet the needs of middle school and diverse learners

❖ Annotated Bibliography

This assignment provides the opportunity to delve deeper into scholarship relevant to each content area. Each week students will identify a reading within their chosen content area that deepens the understanding of teaching in the field and existing area of inquiry. Five readings will be collected and evaluated for this assignment. Acceptable readings are chapters presented in relevant books and journal articles. **The annotated bibliography is due on 6/30.**

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, **the annotated bibliography for this assignment should focus on the relevancy of the reading to your future practice and 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, 2nd Edition*, or are available on Sakai under course assignments.

Meeting #	Date/Topic	Meeting Location/Time	Assignment/Reading Due
1	Tuesday, 5/31 Classroom Community	Sampson G. Smith School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 1 Text - The Classroom Learning Community
2	Wednesday, 6/1 Goals & Standards	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Access & print out content standards for your area
3	Thursday, 6/2 Objectives & Assessment	Sampson G. Smith School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 3 Text - Preparing Learning Targets & Assessing Student Learning Reflection due 6/5 by 5:00
4	Monday, 6/5 Interdisciplinary Teaching	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Reading: <i>Literacy as the Link: Common Core Standards and Content Area Teaching</i>

5	Tuesday, 6/6 Assessing Student Learning	Sampson G. Smith School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Reading: <i>Planning, Implementing and Assessing an Authentic Performance Task</i>
6	Wednesday, 6/7 Performance Based Assessment	West Windsor-Plainsboro School visit 9:00 am - 12:30 pm	Reading: <i>Keeping it Real</i>
7	Thursday, 6/8 Lecture v. Student Centered Learning	Sampson G. Smith School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 5 Reflection due 6/12 by 5:00
8	Monday, 6/13 Teaching with Technology	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Chap. 6 Text Reading: <i>Using Technology to Motivate Middle School Students</i>
9	Tuesday, 6/14	Sampson G. Smith School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Chap. 7 & 8 Text
10	Wednesday, 6/15 Differentiated Instruction	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Chap. 9 & 10 Text
11	Thursday, 6/16	Sampson G. Smith School 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	Lesson Plans Due Reflection due 6/19 by 5:00
12	Monday, 6/20 Service Learning	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Chap. 11 Text Reading: <i>Social & Emotional Learning in Middle School Curricula</i>
13	Tuesday, 6/21	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	LA Lessons
14	Wednesday, 6/22	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Social Studies Lessons
15	Thursday, 6/23	Murray Hall Rm 204 10:50 am - 1:45 pm	Science & Math Lessons

			<p>Culminating Projects/Assessments Due</p> <p>Reflection due 6/26 by 5:00</p>
16	Thursday, 6/30		Annotated Bibliography