

## EDUC 504 Principles of Middle School Pedagogy

### I. EDUC 504: Principles of Middle School Pedagogy

### II. 3 Credit Hours

### III. Course Rationale and Overview:

Principles of Middle School Pedagogy considers the developmental, disciplinary, and instructional needs of the early adolescent student.

The early adolescent has unique emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual needs when compared with younger or older students. The purpose of this course is to prepare effective and reflective teachers who understand and appreciate middle level students' special needs.

This course seeks to bridge the gap between educational theory and the middle school classroom while preparing teachers to enter the unique vocation of middle school education.

Computer technology is integrated throughout this course and an emphasis is placed on the teacher as a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally. The student continues to develop their professional portfolio.

This course is a required component of the secondary teacher education certification curriculum and precedes the specific methods courses in the student's subject or field endorsement and the student teaching experience.

### IV. Course Description:

EDUC 504 examines curricular and instructional strategies for middle school grades 5-8. Interdisciplinary curriculum, personalization of learning, instructional technologies, and other teaching strategies for the early adolescent are discussed, modeled and practiced.

### V. Place of Course in the Curriculum:

This is the fifth course in the secondary level professional education sequence.

### VI. Goals and Objectives of the Course:

The goals of this course are:

1. To understand the major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research related to middle level curriculum and assessment. (T-S3, T-D1)

2. To understand that middle level curriculum should be relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory (T-K1, T-D1)
3. To identify multiple assessment strategies that effectively measure student mastery of the curriculum (T-S3)
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies (T-S2, LR-S1)

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- a. Employ a variety of strategies for a developmentally appropriate climate to meet the varying abilities and learning styles of all young adolescents. (T-S2, LD-S2)
- b. Develop appropriate assessments to measure student mastery of curriculum. (T-S3)
- c. Integrate technology in curriculum planning. (LD-S3)
- d. Become a reflective practitioner of the middle school mindset (LR-S1)

## VII. Course Content

### **Part 1 - : The School and the Learner**

#### **Topics:**

1. Middle school philosophy
2. Student focused instruction
3. A “needs-based” environment
4. Physical, intellectual, emotional and social development during puberty
5. Diversity in learning preference, bringing diverse groups together
6. Impact of culture on development

**Readings:** Chapters 1-4

### **Part 2 - : Strategies of Middle School Curriculum**

#### **Topics:**

1. Forces impacting middle school curriculum
2. Five curricula of middle schools
3. Role of standards and standardized test in curriculum planning
4. Steps in curriculum planning

**Readings:** Chapters 5-6

### **Part 3 - : Planning for Student Focused Instruction**

#### **Topics:**

1. Planning units around essential questions
2. Writing objectives for unit and lesson plans
3. Designing student-centered learning activities that assess learning
4. Differentiation of instruction
5. Interdisciplinary learning activities

6. Organizing principles for selecting instructional strategies
7. Direct instruction

**Readings: Chapters 7- 8**

**Part 4 – : Selecting Student Focused Instructional Strategies**

**Topics:**

1. Using technology
2. Learning stations
3. Cooperative and small group learning
4. Inquiry learning
5. Problem-based learning
6. Games
7. Role play

**Readings: Chapter 9**

**Part 5 – : Grading and Assessment as a Student Focused Teacher**

**Topics:**

1. How teaching practices have influenced assessment practices
2. Reexamining traditional practices
3. Rethinking the practice of homework
4. What to grade and how to grade
5. Designing performance-based assessments
6. Student accountability
7. The role of beliefs and attitudes in successful student-focused teaching

**Readings: Chapters 10 and 11**

**VIII. Suggested Methodology: (T-S2, LD1-3, LR 2-4)**

1. E-Lecture
2. Small group discussion on discussion board and live conferencing tool
3. Large group discussion on discussion board and live conferencing tool
4. Readings
5. Written Assignments
6. Presentations
7. Teaching Demonstration
8. Videos
9. Case Studies
10. Debate
11. Journaling
12. Guest Speakers

IX. Suggested Student Roles and Course Requirements: (T-D1, LD-S2)

1. Read assigned chapters and be prepared to participate in online discussions and debates each week in both large and small groups. Must be able to support positions with additional and relevant research on topics covered.
2. Written assignments.
3. Complete research project to share with class (Power Point presentation, video, podcast, wiki, blog or other electronic form approved by instructor).
4. Maintain Del-icio-us account to store and share research information (<http://delicious.com/>)
5. Maintain a weekly journal to reflect on professional growth and development
6. Teaching demonstrations
7. Complete 10 hours of field work to become acquainted with educational settings (see schedule)
8. Continuing development of online professional teaching portfolio (Live Text <https://www.livetext.com/> )

X. Suggested Evaluation: (T-D1, LD-S2)

Weekly Discussion	20%
Weekly Journal	10%
Reading Reaction/Reflection Papers	20%
Research Project	20%
Field Experience	20%
Final	<u>10%</u>
	100%

XI. Recommended Resource Materials:

**Required Textbook**

Vattercott, C. (2007), *Becoming a middle school teacher*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. NY: McGraw Hill.

**Supplementary Text (Suggested but not required)**

National Middle School Association

<http://www.nmsa.org/>

Middle School Journal

<http://www.nmsa.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/tabid/435/Default.aspx>

21<sup>st</sup> Century Classroom

<http://www.nmsa.org/annual/AbouttheConference/21stCenturyClassroom/tabid/1778/Default.aspx>

Educational Leadership

[http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational\\_leadership.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership.aspx)

[This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adults](#) Position paper by NMSA

[Thirty and Counting: The Middle School Movement](#)

**ERIC #:** ED192436

**Title:** What Is the Middle School Movement Really About?

**Author:** Lipsitz, Joan Scheff

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