

AEDC 455
Middle Level Curriculum and Organization
Spring 2009

Mission Statement: The USC Aiken School of Education, in partnership with the university community, regional schools, area professionals and businesses, prepares dynamic educators who are knowledgeable in their fields, skilled in the art and science of teaching, and dedicated to providing the quality education that every student deserves.

Conceptual Framework: The teacher education faculty in the School of Education challenges candidates to acquire and develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to become successful *Dynamic Educators* who can plan, instruct, manage, communicate, and are professionals.

Meeting Time: Monday, 5:45 – 8:45 p.m. Meeting Place: B & E 135
Instructor: Dr. Randall W. Stowe
Personal e-mail: rwstowe@bellsouth.net E-mail at work: rstowe@aiken.k12.sc.us
Telephone evenings: 803-642-5112 Telephone at work: 803-652-8250

1. Course description: This course will explore the characteristics of a developmentally-responsive middle-level program in terms of the students, teachers, teaching methods, curriculum, and organization.
2. The course is designed to meet the requirements for middle-level certification in South Carolina, which requires a course covering “middle level curriculum and organization.”
3. USC Aiken School of Education Conceptual Framework: This course is designed to facilitate the student’s development as a Dynamic Educator. The course specifically focuses on the development of the Dynamic Educator in regard to planning, instructing, communicating, growing professionally, and managing middle school classes.
4. The course will address the Initial Level Teacher Preparation Standards of the National Middle School Association(NMSA):
 - a. Standard 2. Middle Level Philosophy and School Organization
 - b. Standard 3. Middle Level Curriculum and Assessment
 - c. Standard 5. Middle Level Instruction and Assessment
 - d. Standard 7. Middle Level Professional Roles
5. Major topics covered:
 - a. What is middle school? (history, philosophy, major theorists)

- b. Early adolescent growth and development (cognitive, socioemotional, physical)
- c. Diversity among middle level students (abilities, interests, learning styles)
- d. Middle level teachers (characteristics, S. C. certification, professional roles, collaboration)
- e. Structures of middle school (scheduling, physical facilities, teaming, advisory, tracking)
- f. Middle grades curriculum (including S. C. standards)
- g. Instruction (developmentally-responsive strategies and techniques)
- h. Assessment (diagnostic, formative, summative, state-wide testing program)
- i. Parent and community involvement

6. Required texts:

- *Introduction to Middle School*, Sara Davis Powell, 2005, ISBN 0-13-060090-3 or 9780130600905
- *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*, NMSA, 2003, ISBN 10: 1-56090-142-X or 13: 978-1-56090-142-6

Recommended reading:

- *Turning Points 2000: Educating Adolescents in the 21st Century*, Anthony W. Jackson and Gayle A. Davis, 2000, Carnegie Corporation, ISBN 0-8077-3996-0 or 978-0-8077-3996-9

7. Grading scale and procedures:

- A = 93 - 100 points
- B+ = 90 - 92 points
- B = 85 - 89 points
- C+ = 80 - 84 points
- C = 77 - 79 points

Mid-term test covering the first half of the course = 25 points (50 questions)

Final test covering the entire course = 30 points (60 questions)

Project, the ideal middle school program= 20 points

Class presentations on an instructional strategy = 10 points (two @ 5 pts. each)

Attendance and class participation = 15 points

Test items will be as objective as possible and in a multiple-choice format. Class instruction will emphasize and expand upon key concepts. Class discussions, team activities, and the project will be geared to determining the characteristics of an effective and developmentally-responsive middle school program. Each student

will make two brief (5 to 10 minutes) presentations of a teaching technique or instructional strategy (e.g. manipulatives, cooperative learning, graphic organizers) that would be appropriate for middle level learners.

This statement should appear on all major examinations and assignments:

USCA Academic Code of Conduct

Honor Pledge:

On my honor as a University of South Carolina Aiken student, I have completed my work according to the principle of Academic Integrity. I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on the assignment/examination.

Signature _____ *Date* _____

8. Instructional format of the course: A typical class will consist of a lecture covering key concepts, group discussion and team exercises, and student presentations on instructional strategies. Regular attendance as well as a willingness to share your ideas with the class will be essential.
9. Schedule of Topics and Readings

| | |
|-------------|---|
| January 12 | Overview of the course, instructor's expectations, syllabus, introductions, historical perspective, rationale for middle school |
| January 26 | Early Adolescent Growth and Development Powell, Chapters 1 and 2 <i>This We Believe</i> |
| February 2 | Growth and Development Part 2: Cognitive Development |
| February 9 | Diversity Among Middle Level Students Powell, Chapter 3 |
| February 16 | Middle Level Teachers Powell, Chapter 4 |
| February 23 | Structures of Middle School Powell, Chapter 5 |
| March 2 | Middle Grades Curriculum and Standards Powell, Chapter 6 |
| March 16 | Midterm exam |
| March 23 | Instruction: Part 1 Powell, Chapter 7 |

| | |
|----------|---|
| March 30 | Instruction: Part 2 Powell, Chapter 8 |
| April 6 | Assessment in Middle School Powell, Chapter 9 |
| April 13 | Planning for Teaching and Learning Managing the Learning Environment Powell, Chapters 10 and 11 |
| April 20 | Families and Community Involvement Powell, Chapter 12 Project due tonight |
| April 27 | Problems of Middle School Students |
| May 4 | Final exam |

10. Details of the Project

The project will be a description of a highly effective middle school program, based on the literature. The ideal should be tempered with the realities of funding, state guidelines, and other obstacles. A typical format would include an introduction describing the philosophy/mission, facilities, curriculum, teachers, and other programs, including extracurricular and enrichment activities. This portion of the project might be as short as 2-3 pages.

Write the description as though the school actually exists. Your audience should be parents who are trying to decide whether their students should attend this public middle school.

The second part of the project will be an explanation of how your effective middle school seeks to address each of the fourteen characteristics outlined in *This We Believe*. This portion may be in list format, with each characteristic or recommendation listed followed by a brief description of how you would address the topic.

Your instructor will provide a rubric to assist you in this process.