

**AMLE 2015**  
**Keeping Teachers in the Middle (and Highly Qualified)**  
National Professors of Middle Level Education (NAPoMLE)  
Best Practices in Teacher Preparation

**Positive comments from Adolescent Growth & Development students, Spring 2015:**

“Thank you so much for putting the coursework on Blackboard early. This REALLY helps me out!” -Lindsay

“Thanks for checking in to see how things are going in this course. I am completing my adolescent advocacy reference list and plan to upload it by the due date. My case study mentoring project is coming along well. All of the readings and assignments for this course are clear and easy to access. Thanks for being available, and I will post any concerns to you if needed.” –Felicia

“It is amazing to me that all of this wonderful information about adolescent growth and development exists and many people do not utilize it. Parents, educators, and policymakers should be required to take this course! It needs to be our daily goal to use our teachable moments and our knowledge of adolescents to help improve our students and ultimately our society.” –Elizabeth

“I have already changed a few things I do in my classroom as a result of taking this course. My understanding of adolescent (and young adult) emotional development has changed how I view many of my students. I understand them and their outrageous behaviors much better. Our relationships are stronger and our interactions are much more positive.” –Lindsay

**There were a few complaints (I'll keep them anonymous):**

“Last week I had no problems using my network ID and password. Last night and today I can't log on. Any advice? Am I the only one having issues? I have 4 of my resources for the research paper. Let me know if I'm doing something wrong.”

“Sorry to be pain, but I cannot get onto the USCA website. I've tried from two different computers (two different networks) and the message says, 'This website is not available.' Please advise.”

“My classmates are moving at snail speed with discussion posts. I'm going to assume they are working vigorously on other course materials and assignments. May I have a little extra time on my responses to them?”

**Comments from Middle School Curriculum & Organization:**

The course was a huge help for me in getting highly qualified at the middle level. I also wish that the other students had kept up their "end of the bargain" and participated. I appreciate your feedback and your creative ways of having us learn the material. I really liked the way our assignments were designed to break down the chapters and give some personal reflections as well. I also liked the discussion springboards, especially the one where we thought of a fictional character and applied what we have learned to that character. Very creative! Also, you introduced me to Prezi and several websites that I will be using in August! -- Joe

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## **USCA Middle Level Education Add-on Licensure Courses Offered On-line**

- Middle School Curriculum, Philosophy, and Organization
- Adolescent Growth and Development
- Reading and Writing in the Content Areas

### **EDUC 635- Adolescent Development (Dr. Deborah McMurtrie, Instructor)**

For several years I have been teaching a face-to-face, semester-long undergraduate adolescent development course. Last fall I was asked to adapt that course in order to develop an online, eight-week graduate course for teachers in the spring. After drafting the new syllabus, I contacted Veronica Outlaw to see if there was anything I needed to add. She invited me to join the distance learning course development cohort, and I soon realized that I had a lot of work to do!

Designing the course was challenging and time-consuming, but also quite rewarding. First, I had to completely rethink my instructional objectives and organize them into modules. Next, I aligned those objectives with readings, discussion questions, and self-assessments. I found that I had to rewrite my project descriptions to make them crystal clear, and then convert my rubrics to digital form. Throughout this process I worked with Veronica to make sure that everything in the course was coherent and consistent.

I taught the course from March 16 to May 5, 2015 and received very positive feedback from the students (see below). Once the course was up and running, it practically ran itself. Going through this process has made me a better instructor, and I would definitely do this again.