

SYLLABUS

Developmentally Appropriate Practices, Structures, and Methods in the Middle School

DoDDS Mediterranean District: Incirlik, Naples, Vicenza, and La Maddalena

Instructor: Dr. Sandra L. Schurr, University of South Florida, College of Education,
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Course Title: Developmentally Appropriate Practices, Structures, and Methods in the
Middle School

Course Prefix and Number: 89313 – EDC - EDG 6931 - 703

Course Credit: 3 graduate credit hours

Course Dates: Fall 2004 – Spring 2005

Course Description: This course examines the unique characteristics of early adolescents, the organizational structures of effective middle schools, and the issues and trends related to these restructuring models/practices of middle schools in order to determine their most likely effects on achievement levels of students.

Content Outline: This course requires participation in all designated training sessions of August 2004, October 2004, and/or February 2005 in the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS), active participation in the school-site reform and restructuring activities, and in the documentation of participation through the construction and maintenance of a professional portfolio.

Required Texts/Readings:

Forte, I., & Schurr, S. (2002). *The definitive middle school guide: A handbook for success*. Revised Edition. Nashville, TN: Incentive Publications. ISBN: 0-86530-567-6

Jackson, A., & Davis, G. A. (2000). *Turning Points 2000: Educating adolescents in the 21st century*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press. ISBN: 0807739960

Course Objectives: Students will learn about the unique characteristics of early adolescents, the organizational structures of effective middle schools, and the issues and trends related to these restructuring models/practices of middle schools in order to determine their most likely effects on achievement levels of students. Students will participate in two of three designated training sessions of August 2004, October 2005, and February 2005 in the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS), actively participate in the school-site reform and restructuring activities, and in the documentation of participation through the construction and maintenance of a professional portfolio

Student Assessment Techniques:

Students will . . .

1. Maintain a comprehensive learning log of all training sessions and team visits as well as all assigned readings that summarizes and analyzes content, shares personal reactions, discusses implications for student achievement, and offers constructive suggestions for positive reform and improvement of middle school organizational structures.
2. Maintain a comprehensive portfolio of teacher and student-generated artifacts to document innovations, improvements, and new models and/or practices related to Needs and Characteristics of Early Adolescents, Interdisciplinary Teams, Advisory Programs, and other Organizational Structures appropriate for middle school settings.

Some artifacts to consider submitting are:

- Tools or techniques you developed for creating a positive middle school climate.
- Sample master and/or block schedule for your team.
- Tools you used in measuring effectiveness of your advisory sessions.
- Student self-assessments or self-evaluation checklists from your classroom/team.
- Outline of alternative ways you used advisory time.
- Guidelines or approaches you used to handle student behavior problems effectively.
- Set of personal goals for an effective advisory program you developed.
- Methods you tried for building a good parent communication program.
- Original advisory lesson plans or activities you created.
- Personal self-assessment checklists/results.
- Your team/classroom mission statement, rules, and handbook
- Student-generated journal entries from your classroom assignments or team activities.
- Sample agendas and minutes from your team meetings, parent conferences, or team planning sessions.
- Descriptions of tools used to assign team members, build team identity, make team decisions, solve team problems, or ways to assess team's progress.
- Samples of student work/projects related to advisory activities, interdisciplinary units, team practices, or classroom instruction.
- Suggestions for assisting with middle school reform at your school.
- Agendas and personal comments/reactions to team meetings.
- Personal reactions to readings/selections from either *The Definitive Middle School Guide* or *Turning Points 2000*.

DEADLINE FOR PORTFOLIO ARTIFACTS

All materials are due on or before April 10, 2005. Mail to Dr. Sandra Schurr at the address listed above. Please keep a copy of your work and mail by a traceable shipper. If you want your portfolio back, please include correct mailing address to send it to, along with correct postage.

NOTE: You can look for your grade online by clicking OASIS from the university homepage, **<http://www.usf.edu>** or request it to be mailed by clicking on GRADE MAILER. You may also request an official transcript by OASIS at the same Web site.

COURSE REGISTRATION COST: In a special offer, the state of Florida is charging DoDDS teachers in-state, resident tuition. The current resident tuition rate is \$233.07 per credit hour plus a \$37 flat fee and \$20 non-degree-seeking application fee. The same nonresident tuition is \$894.56 per credit hour — you save almost \$2,000!