

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, THEATRE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES
Bachelor of Arts in English: Middle Grades Education (6-9)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The undergraduate Middle Grades Education program embodies uniquely distinct components, which prepare students for teaching in grades six through nine. The program is organized so as to teach candidates academic and personal skills and concepts, which are essential to successful teaching in the middle grades. A unique program based upon what is known about the special needs of this age group is offered.

Candidates in the Middle Grades Education program acquire a thorough knowledge of early adolescence as a unique developmental state between childhood and adolescence. Study focuses on learning theories and the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and moral characteristics and needs of young adolescents as they relate to all aspects of the program.

Theorists and specialists in the field of Middle Grades Education provide a solid foundation for the program. The works of William Alexander (1981), John Lounsbury (1988), Gordon Vars (1998), David Elkind (1981), Robert Havighurst (1986), Lawrence Kohlberg (1981), Jean Piaget (1964), and others support a developmentally responsive program. The theories and expertise offered through their writing pervade the UNCP program and provide consistent connections among the components of the program.

The Middle Grades Education program is designed so that the understanding of middle level philosophy and basic principles of curriculum and instructional strategies that are developmentally appropriate for emerging adolescents are presented both theoretically and clinically to middle grade candidates. As a unique area of specialization, the Middle Grades Education program provides a course of study that is based on current research and successful practice.

The Middle Grades Education program is one of 12 teacher education programs offered at UNCP. Middle Grades Education majors are subject to Teacher Education Program policies, admission requirements, continuation requirements, and graduation requirements. The Middle Grades Education program is accredited by the National Association for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the NC Department of Public Instruction.

Program of Study

The preparation of middle school educators is an important part of the overall teacher education program at UNC Pembroke. The purpose of the Middle Grades Education program is to prepare teachers who are knowledgeable about and committed to an education for young adolescents that is developmentally responsive, socially equitable, and academically challenging. Within this framework, the prospective teacher will:

- Understand the theoretical base, research, and exemplary practices of middle level education;
- Understand the history and philosophy of middle level education and theories about its future development, including organizational components and assessment and evaluation in the middle school setting;
- Possess content expertise and curriculum integration in two fields of teaching appropriate to the middle school;
- Integrate technology into the middle school classroom;
- Understand and appreciate learners from different racial, ethnic, social, cultural, and linguistic groups and meet the needs of a broad range of learning styles of middle school students;
- Be reflective practitioners who continually evaluate the effects of their choices and actions on other (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community).

Standards for Middle Grades Teachers

Standard 1: Middle level teachers understand the major concepts, theories, and research related to young adolescent development, and they provide opportunities that support student development and learning.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral development of young adolescents and use that knowledge to establish productive learning environments based on mutually respectful relationships.
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers demonstrate with enthusiasm their multi-faceted role as a teacher of young adolescents – role model, coach, and mentor - sharing the responsibility for engaging them in their own learning.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers understand the role of classroom, family, peer group, community, and society in young adolescent development and engage students in activities related to their corresponding responsibilities, needs, and growing self awareness.
- Indicator 4: Middle level teachers understand issues of young adult health and developing sexuality.

Standard 2: Middle level teachers understand major concepts, principles, theories and research underlying the philosophical foundations of the developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools, and they work successfully within these organizational components.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand, articulate and apply developmentally responsive practices that reflect the philosophical foundations, rationale, and characteristics of middle level programs (e.g. flexible scheduling, common planning periods, advisor/advisee program).

- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers know and analyze the historical and contemporary models of schooling and best practices for the education of young adolescents.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers understand, support, and work successfully within teams and with colleagues to maximize student learning and school improvement.

Standard 3: Middle level teachers understand major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research related to middle grades curriculum and use this knowledge in their practice.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers demonstrate their command of content knowledge by designing, modifying, implementing, and assessing curricula based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCS) and other relevant middle level resources (e.g. national content standards, local content standards).
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers plan interdisciplinary curriculum based on core and elective curricula that are relevant, challenging, and exploratory.

Standard 4: Middle level teachers understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to working collaboratively with family and community members, and they use that knowledge to maximize the learning of young adolescents.

Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand and plan instruction that connects subjects to the diverse experiences of all young adolescents.

Standard 5: Middle level teachers understand and use the central concepts, tools of inquiry, standards, and structures of content in their teaching field(s) and create meaningful learning experiences that develop young adolescents' competence in subject matter and skills.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers know and use their depth and breadth of content knowledge to maximize student learning through effective content-specific teaching strategies.
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers know and are committed to teaching in ways that help young adolescents understand the interdisciplinary connections between course-specific knowledge, other areas of curriculum, and their life experiences and interests.

Standard 6: Middle level teachers understand, value, and integrate literacy skills (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, and listening) into all content areas.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers integrate literacy skills into mathematics, science, social studies and/or language arts.
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers understand the processes of reading and strategies to enhance the comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation of text in

- mathematics, science, social studies, and/or language arts for all students, including those who read below grade level.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers understand the connection between reading and writing and model a wide range of strategies effective to purpose, audience, and context in mathematics, science, social studies, and/or language arts.
 - Indicator 4: Middle level teachers understand the writing process and model this process in mathematics, science, social studies, and/or language arts.
 - Indicator 5: Middle level teachers understand the nature of the ESL learner and model a wide range of effective strategies for this diverse population.

Standard 7: Middle level teachers understand and use the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to effective instruction, and they employ a variety of strategies for a developmentally appropriate climate to meet the varying abilities and learning styles of all young adolescents.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand, value, plan, and use a variety of teaching and learning strategies that motivate young adolescents with varying abilities, learning styles, and interests.
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers provide experiences that actively encourage observing, questioning, and interpreting knowledge and ideas from diverse perspectives.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers maximize the learning of young adolescents by establishing positive learning environments and employing effective classroom management techniques.

Standard 8: Middle level teachers understand and use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate learning and teaching to ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of young adolescents.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand and use a variety of traditional and alternative assessment measures and communicate the results knowledgeably and responsibly to appropriate audiences (e.g. students' families, educators, community members).
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers know, plan, and implement instructional practices based on formal and informal student assessment (including student self assessment) and use those results to monitor and improve their teaching.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers maintain useful records and create effective plans for evaluation of student work and achievement.

Standard 9: Middle level teachers understand the complexity of teaching young adolescents, and they engage in practices and behaviors that develop their competence as professionals.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers engage in and support professional development practices (e.g. consult with colleagues, attend professional development activities, and seek additional resources to enhance competence).

- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers understand and reflect on young adolescent development, the instructional process, and professional relationships in addressing the diverse needs of young adolescents.