

**MORAVIAN COLLEGE**  
**EDUC 331 – Science for Middle Level Learners**  
**FALL 2013**

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Office hours: Tuesday, 11:30-1:30 pm; Wednesday, 1:00-3:00 pm  
and by appointment.

**Overview**

This course will prepare pre-service educators to interpret middle level students' science experiences and guide their understanding of scientific concepts. The course involves a study of science content material and middle level science curricula that underpin the teaching of science in the middle school classroom. Students will gain a solid understanding of scientific topics, while they are learning how to implement activities with middle school students using constructivist, hands-on, inquiry-based methods. Preparation will include integration of literacy and mathematics as fundamentally related to successful science instruction. Prerequisites: F4 and QPA of at least 2.70; clearances for field experiences.

**Essential Questions**

1. Why is it essential to engage middle level students in scientific inquiry?
2. How can learning become more authentic by integrating science with other content areas?

**Expected Student Outcomes (ESO)**

- ESO 1. You will appreciate the nature and importance of science, and of teaching science to middle level learners.
- ESO 2. You will understand the concepts and processes of earth, life, and physical science in middle level curricula.
- ESO 3. You will demonstrate planning science lessons, including effective teaching methods, selection of appropriate resources/materials/technology, and assessments that address state and national standards.
- ESO 4. You will demonstrate teaching strategies that promote students' scientific inquiry, active involvement, and higher order thinking.
- ESO 5. You will understand PA Science Standards
- ESO 6. You will understand the National Science Education Standards (by the National Committee on Science Education Standards and the National Research Council).
- ESO 7. You will understand strategies appropriate for differentiating instruction for middle level learners.
- ESO 8. You will demonstrate integrating literacy, mathematics, social studies, art, and music within science lessons.
- ESO 9. You will understand the nature and importance of environmental and ecological issues.
- ESO 10. You will demonstrate class management and appropriate safety practices.

**Required Texts**

Victor, E., Kellough, R. D., & Tai, R. H. (2008). *Science K-8: An integrated approach* (11th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Friedl, A. E., & Koontz, T. Y. (2005). *Teaching science to children: An inquiry approach* (6th ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill.

The Victor and Kellough text has a website at [www.prenhall.com/victor](http://www.prenhall.com/victor). The site has annotated links for web resources pertaining to science in the middle school.

The Friedl and Koontz text has a website at [www.mhhe.com/friedl6e](http://www.mhhe.com/friedl6e). The site has chapter links and multiple-choice quizzes, and a glossary.

## **Teaching Assignments and Classroom Activities**

“Learn from yesterday, Live for today, Hope for tomorrow.

The important thing is to never stop questioning.” Albert Einstein

### ***Reading Assignments***

Reading assignments will include chapters in the texts and additional relevant materials. As part of each reading assignment, consider these questions and be prepared to discuss them in class:

- What is my understanding of the science concepts and processes?
- What is my understanding of the science teaching methods?

### ***Teaching Assignments***

Teaching assignments focus on scientific concepts and scientific processes. Instructional strategies feature inquiry-based instruction. The objective of the lesson should require thinking above the knowledge level.

***Discrepant events.*** You will participate in discrepant events so that you will be able to use them to arouse students' natural curiosity and develop their skills and knowledge in the sciences. Discrepant events will provide one method for examining students' preconceptions and reasoning patterns in order to establish prerequisite skills.

***Experiments and demonstrations.*** As you participate in experiments, demonstrations, and subsequent discussions, you will appreciate the importance of engaging students in these learner-centered activities to develop scientific reasoning and investigative strategies. Explicit rules and routines for class management will include methods for safety in the science classroom.

***Classroom assignments.*** There will be short assignments that you will complete individually or with your group, where you will be exploring content in various ways. They will require work during class and outside of class, and will involve presentation to and discussion with the class. All group members must be involved in researching, preparing, and presenting group assignments. These assignments will be graded as excellent (A), satisfactory (B), or unacceptable (F). To be excellent, the assignment must be complete, demonstrate effort, and be creative; your presentation of the assignment to the class must be accurate and interesting.

***Microteaching.*** You will prepare lesson plans for and present two micro-teaching sessions to the class. This will give you an opportunity to implement the methods that you are learning. One lesson will be directed at 4-6 grade students, and one at 6-8 grade students. Each lesson will focus on one of the major areas of science (physical, life, earth). Each lesson will demonstrate appropriate use of science equipment and relevant technology. One lesson must integrate a literature book (specific guidelines will be given for designing this lesson), and one lesson must integrate another content area (e.g., mathematics, social studies, art, music). Students must be actively involved in both lessons, and one of the lessons should include a hands-on demonstration or experiment. Lessons will be 10 minutes in length.

The lesson plan must include the objective of the lesson. Indicate the cognitive level of the lesson, according to Bloom's taxonomy, must be indicated. In addition, indicate the Pennsylvania science standard addressed; identify it by number and write it out in words. At least one lesson should involve higher order thinking, at the application or analysis level, and may be constructivist in nature. Follow the Moravian College lesson plan format. Write out the procedure in outline or bulleted form.

When presenting your lesson, stay in your role throughout the lesson. For example, do not talk to us as your classmates while the lesson is in progress. Speak with a vocabulary appropriate to the designated grade level, and prepare materials at that level as well. When you are the "student" for a lesson, stay in your role throughout the lesson. Do not attend to other activities, or have side conversations with classmates.

There will be a sign-up sheet for microteaching lessons.

**Learning center.** You will create a learning center that explores a science topic or concept and provides related science activities for students. You may select the grade level. The content will focus on an area of science not used for your microteaching. The center should be complete with all materials and instructions and contain at least three activities. At least one activity must involve higher order thinking. There will be a sign-up sheet of topics for learning centers.

### **Written Assignments**

There will be several kinds of written assignments. Written assignments may require use of outside texts and journals; these will serve to extend your understanding of teaching concepts and provide familiarity with educational resources.

Assignments should be professional in substance and appearance. All written work is to be prepared using a computer. Hand-written papers will not be accepted. Quality writing is expected in your assignments. They should be well written, that is, they should have a logical sequence and structure, and they should have no errors in spelling or grammar. Papers should be double spaced with 1" margins on all sides of the paper. Use a standard font (e.g., Arial, Times). When your paper is finished, spell (and grammar) check it, then read it before submission. The presence of spelling and grammar errors will lower your grade. Assignments must be submitted in hard copy; assignments may not be submitted by email. When you use resources and references, identify them within the document where they occur, and on a reference list at the end of your assignment.

**Blackboard Discussion Forum.** Important information about our class will be posted on our Blackboard site at <http://blackboard.moravian.edu>. Announcements will inform you of any changes. The Discussion Forum will enable us to exchange ideas, insights, and resources about various topics throughout the semester. The Discussion Forum is organized around the major science topics of the middle level curriculum. You will post three substantive questions/issues during the semester to the Discussion forum, and you will post substantive responses to three questions/issues posed by classmates. To receive full credit, you must complete at least three posts by October 9, and six posts by November 20. Information about logging in and using the site will be given in class.

**Identifying resources.** There are extensive resources available to support your mastery of content and method. During the semester, report on four references:

- one from a website relevant to a science topic in the middle school
- one from a book suitable for use in a middle school science classroom
- one from the journal, *Science Scope* (actual paper journal available in Reeves Library)  
give title, author, year, volume, and page numbers
- one that is a current event related to a science topic for middle school

You may describe these resources in your Blackboard posts or submit them as a written document. In each case, cite the resource specifically and what within the resource was useful to you. To receive full credit, you must complete your resources by November 20.

**Examinations.** There will be two one-hour exams during the semester. Exams will include science content, science processes, and pedagogy concepts.

**Final project.** You will design a thematic unit plan focusing on a science topic. Select a science topic (theme) and list the science standards that the unit will address. Select the grade level. Design the curriculum for the unit, which must integrate literacy, social studies, mathematics, and music or art. Write the detailed lesson plans for five science lessons, all of which include inquiry activities where students are actively involved. Give the science content for each lesson in a detailed outline form that demonstrates your understanding of the content. Label each lesson objective with its cognitive taxonomy level. All lessons must include an objective at the application level or higher. List the multiple intelligences and the science processes that are included, and explain each item on your list. Describe how the other content areas will be included. Use the Science and Literacy Framework for planning the lesson that integrates literacy. Lessons follow the Moravian College lesson plan format. You may select a topic other than the

specific ones you used for your microteaching and learning center. There will be a sign up sheet of topics for final projects. This project is your final examination.

### **Attendance and Class Participation**

Attendance in every class is expected. Arrive on time and remain for the entire class session. If you need to be absent, call to tell me the reason. If you do not notify me, your absence will be recorded as unexcused. Lateness or partial class attendance will count toward absence. A missed class cannot truly be made up because of the critical role that discussion plays in each class session. Even so, you are responsible for the missed work. Lateness and absence can lower your grade.

Appropriate class participation includes several attributes. Be prepared for each class session by completing the assignments and considering ideas and questions that emerge from the assignments. During class, remain actively involved by paying attention and sharing your relevant and thoughtful responses and questions. Class participation on a regular basis is expected to ensure grasp of textual materials and important concepts. Participation will be assessed on evidence of your completion of the assigned work, the relevance and quality of responses, the questions and comments made during class sessions, and your voluntary contributions that enrich class discussions. Be present in class, and stay with the class. Inattention or focus on work unrelated to class activities is not acceptable. Side conversations disable your understanding of the lesson, distract classmates, and display disrespect to the speaker. Be sure your cell phone is turned off during class; you may not text, may not check email, and may not take phone calls during class. Lack of appropriate participation or inappropriate participation will lower your grade for each class session in which it occurs.

You can expect to work 6-9 hours per week outside of class preparing for this class.

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Learning Services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510.

Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

### **Field Component**

The purpose of the field experiences is to provide students with appropriate classroom experiences in a developmental and sequential manner. All field experiences are directly related to coursework and must be successfully completed to pass the education course.

### Course Evaluation

Each assignment will be graded based on specific criteria that are stated in the syllabus and are presented during the discussion of each assignment. Please note that unless a mutually agreeable revised due date is negotiated with the instructor, any late assignment will lose five percentage points for each day it is late, and any assignment not submitted within two weeks of the due date will receive a "0." It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for a course.

Assignment of grades will follow these Moravian College Catalog definitions, quoted here:

- A, A-: These grades indicate achievement of the highest caliber. They involve expectations of independent work, original thinking, and the ability to acquire and use knowledge effectively.
- B+, B, B-: These grades indicate higher than average achievement. Evidence of independent work and original thinking is expected.
- C+, C, C-: These grades are given when the student has devoted a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention to the work of the course and has satisfied the following criteria: familiarity with the content of the course, familiarity with the methods of study of the course, and active participation in the work of the class.
- D+, D, D-: These grades indicate unsatisfactory work, below the standard expected by the College, in which one or more important aspects falls below the average expected of students for graduation.
- F: This indicates failure.

Classroom Assignments	20%
Microteaching lessons	20%
Learning Center	10%
Blackboard	10%
Examinations	20%
Final Project	20%

The Moravian College policy on academic honesty will be followed.

Collaboration with peers can be valuable in enabling your understanding of various aspects of your work. However, the work you submit must be the result of your individual effort, apart from the collaborative process. You may use paper and on-line resources as you develop your work. Here, too, the work you submit must be the result of your individual effort, apart from the resources. In all cases, cite the sources that you used to avoid plagiarism. Note that academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the assignment and notification of the Academic Dean, in accordance with Moravian College policy.

## Course Outline

### **I. Introduction**

- Concepts of effective teaching
- Bloom's taxonomy
- Multiple intelligences

### **II. The Nature of Science**

- Science as a process of inquiry
- Scientific processes

### **III. Science Content**

- Physical Science
- Life Science
- Earth/Space Science
- Environmental and Ethical Issues
- NSTA and Pennsylvania Science Standards

### **IV. Science Pedagogy**

- Objectives, Standards, and Lesson Plans
- Inquiry, Cooperative Learning, and Problem Based Learning
- Constructivist approach
- Questioning and feedback
- Higher order thinking skills
- Class management and safety
- Assessing student performance by various means
- Integrating the curriculum
- Adapting to needs and individual differences of students
- Problem posing, problem solving, peer persuasion

### **V. Resources**

- Curriculum projects
- Models
- Instructional technology - computer, Internet sites
- Current events

## Course Schedule

Week starting	Assignment due
8/26	Introduction Friedl - Ch. 1, 2
9/2	Universe Victor - Ch. 2, 9      Friedl - Ch. 14 (through p. 274) no class 9/2 for Labor Day
9/9	Earth Victor - Ch. 10
9/16	Universe and Earth Friedl - Ch. 11 (through p. 215), 15 (p. 274 - end) no class 9/17
9/23	Water, Weather, Climate Victor - Ch. 3, 11
9/30	Water, Weather, Climate Friedl - Ch. 12, 16 Exam on 10/3
10/7	Plants Victor - Ch. 12      Friedl - Ch. 18
10/14	Animals Victor - Ch. 5, 14      Friedl - Ch. 19 no class 10/14 for Fall Recess
10/21	Human Body Victor - Ch. 15      Friedl - Ch. 19
10/28	Human Body and Genetics Victor - Ch. 7 Exam on 11/7
11/4	Matter and Energy Victor - Ch. 16      Friedl - Ch. 3, 4
11/11	Friction and Machines Victor - Ch. 17      Friedl - Ch. 5
11/18	Sound and Light Victor - Ch. 19      Friedl - Ch. 8
11/25	No Class – Thanksgiving
12/2	Learning Centers Conclusion

Environmental issues and Diverse learners methodology are integrated into the topics throughout the semester.

Note: This schedule is tentative and will be modified as necessary.