

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

251:578 Theories and Practices of Early Childhood Education

Fall 2013

Wednesdays 7:40-10:20

Ed- 025B

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Office Hours: Mondays (3:00-4:00) Wednesdays (6:45-7:30) or by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations:
Mode of Instruction: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: Contact Ken Tufo at ken.tufo@gse.rutgers.edu

Learning goals¹:

Teachers know and understand:

- 2.1 How students construct knowledge, acquire skills and develop habits of mind and how to use instructional strategies that promote student learning;
- 2.2 How student learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family, and community values;
- 2.3 How to identify and teach to the developmental abilities of students, which may include learning differences, visual and perceptual differences, cultural and socio-emotional differences, special physical or emotional challenges and gifted and talented exceptionalities;
- 4.1 How to plan instruction based on students' needs, developmental progress and prior knowledge;
- 4.2 Available and appropriate resources and materials for instructional planning;
- 4.3 Techniques for modifying instructional methods, materials and the environment to help all students learn;
- 4.4 A variety of instructional approaches and the use of various technologies, to promote thinking and understanding;
- 6.2 How the classroom environment influences learning and promotes positive behavior for all students;
- 8.1 The power of communication in the teaching and learning process; and
- 9.1 The importance of meaningful parent/family involvement in education in addressing the unique student needs and the perspectives to be gained from

Course Catalog Description:

¹ These can be TEAC claims or objectives from other sources.

Theories and methodologies related to the education of young children; teaching strategies and classroom environments analyzed in light of the development levels of preschool and primary school children.

Class Materials:

Required texts:

Bredekamp, S., & Copple, C. (Eds.). (2008). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs* (3rd Edition). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Epstein, A. S. (2007). *The Intentional Teacher: Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children's Learning*. Washington, Dc: NAEYC.

*****All other readings will be posted on the Sakai site for this course. *****

Expanded Course Description

This is an introductory course that examines the complex relationships between learning and teaching in early childhood classrooms. The focus will be integrating theory with practice. We will use your field placement and personal stories as well as those of teachers, children, and other theorists to examine the diverse ways young children learn and the many strategies that might be employed when teaching them. Throughout the class we will consider and practice a variety of teaching strategies, examine the curriculum content that young children might explore, and learn about the diversity of contexts in which early childhood education takes place. Attention will be paid to multiple sources for curriculum decision making -- social, historical, political, developmental, and personal. Specifically this course will enable you to:

- a. develop an understanding of the various theories, research trends, and socio-historical factors that have shaped and are shaping current early childhood practices.
- b. become familiar with a variety of early childhood curricula and the diverse contexts in which young children are educated.
- c. plan curriculum for children ages 3-8 years using strategies and materials that respond to the ways young children learn, and address an array of subject matter knowledge.
- d. become experienced with using observation techniques as a tool for planning a student-centered curriculum, refining your own teaching practices, and documenting children's learning.

Course Requirements

Attendance Policy - If you must miss a class please make sure that you talk to a fellow student who can help you catch up on what was discussed in your absence. If you miss more than one class during the semester without a bona fide medical reason (including a doctor's note) your grade for the course will automatically be reduced as follows: 2 classes - ½ grade, 3 classes - 1 full grade, 4 classes - failing grade.

Sakai Teacher Ed Portfolio - All students in teacher education classes (even if you are not a certification student) must submit certain assignments to their teacher education portfolio. We

will go over the directions for doing this in class and the assignments that must be submitted are marked with an asterix (*).

1) Class participation

Class participation is crucial to your understanding and application of course content. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and to participate in class activities. I will take note of participation in every class.

2) Class Web Postings/ Discussion Leader

Students are required to sign up in small groups to post a reflection and series of discussion questions on Sakai that deal directly with the readings assigned for that day. They will post those reflections at least one day prior to the class session (by 7:30 pm Tuesday night). During that class session, the students assigned to post, will lead a class discussion on the readings. The discussion should be participatory and last about 15 minutes. Following the in-class discussion, other students are required to respond to the initial posts on Sakai. Each student must respond to at least **FIVE** discussion threads and lead one class discussion.

3) *Philosophy of Teaching (Due September 25)

This personal statement of your philosophy of teaching should convey your ideas about how you think about teaching. You should include specific examples when you discuss your teaching (either from your own experience, observations, or actual teaching). Your statement should be between 3-4 pages and include the following elements. You may include references (in APA format), but you are not required to. **Students who are enrolled in the P-3/K-5 five year program must complete this assignment, but they do NOT need to upload it to their portfolio.**

1. Identify the age group for which you are considering this personal statement of teaching.
2. What do you think the purposes of schooling should be?
3. How do students learn?
5. How will you teach (include pedagogy, use of technology, and assessment)?
6. Why and how will you respond to differences in ability, interest, and background of your students?
7. What is your position on the questions or problems central to your discipline (subject matter). If you are focusing on elementary school, what are the central dilemmas in elementary education (i.e. standardized testing; inclusion of children with special needs; educating children for whom English is not the first language; constructivist v. traditional education)?

4) In-Class Presentation on a Teaching Technique (Due October 23)

Teaching requires using a range techniques or strategies. These strategies are derived from various theories of how children learn. This assignment will take place over several weeks and has a group and an individual component.

Group: In groups of three to five, you will research at least two strategies (using readings that will be provided) and be prepared to explain them to the rest of the class (via a jigsaw activity). The group will then prepare a lesson to present to the class that utilizes all of your assigned techniques. Remember, you are trying to teach us the lesson *and* demonstrate the teaching techniques at the same time. You can role-play the lesson, using some of your group members as students, or you may ask us to be students. The group is responsible for providing a *hard copy* of the group lesson plan presented to the class on the day of the presentation. You must also include a summary of the teaching techniques.

***Individual:** Each group member will prepare a written lesson plan that incorporates all of these techniques. (This lesson can be used for your Integrated Curriculum Unit as well.) You must also include a brief summary of what you learned from this experience. Your individual lesson plan must be submitted electronically in *two* places: the electronic portfolio and under the appropriate assignments tab on our class Sakai site.

Summary of what is getting handed in: A final written product will include a summary of the techniques (group, hard copy), the lesson plan that was presented to the class (group, hard copy), each of the group member's lesson plans (individual, electronically submitted to two places), and a brief summary of what you have learned from this experience (individual, electronically on Sakai site).

- 5) Observations of Early Childhood - Observing Children within the Cultural Context of their Classrooms (due November 22)
Being able to observe young children and their learning is a critical component of early childhood curriculum planning, enactment, and evaluation. You are to do several observations in your practicum or an assigned preschool setting. In these observations, you will take note of the physical and social environments of the school and how responsive those environments are to students' home cultures and individual needs. For example, you will look for communication with parents including languages used; what books, materials, and pictures are used; how to teachers interact with children around issues of language, culture, instruction, and socialization. You will focus on the social interactions between children and consider how issues of race, class, gender, and culture mediate those interactions; how the school environment and policy influence students' learning and socialization; and consider how the school structures opportunities for developmentally appropriate interaction. Through this, you will focus mainly on one child to better understand him/her as a learner. You will use course readings (APA format) to support your analysis. (7-10 pages) *****Please submit your paper and a PDF* of your observation notes on Sakai under class assignments (*if you cannot scan notes, please bring a hard copy of your observation notes).*****
- 6) *Integrated Curriculum Unit (Due December 18)

You will be given a class context (i.e. urban or suburban; children with special needs) and will develop an integrated unit plan on a topic or theme of your choice.

Your curriculum unit should include:

- Title of Unit
- Grade Level
- A description of the educational context will be provided for you. In all other aspects of the unit plan, you must take this contextual description into account. How will you respond to the cultural and social needs of students? How will you use the cultural and social strengths of your class and community?
- NJ content standards that are addressed
- Length of unit (days and periods)
- Resources needed. Create an annotated bibliography of resources that you could use to teach that topic.
- A description of how you will develop relationships with the community and with families and keep them involved in the unit.
- Describe what students should know and have done before the unit
- The goals of the unit
- The most important ideas to be addressed in the unit
- An explanation of how the unit integrates across curriculum areas
- Provide an overview of all lessons that comprise the unit. This overview should include the title of each lesson and the objectives of each lesson.
- Modifications for different learners. Describe alternative strategies for diverse learners (i.e. ELL students, students with disabilities, gifted students and students from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds).
- Describe your formative and summative assessments for the unit. How are your assessments linked to the goals of the unit?

(A more detailed description will be handed out in class.)

Summary of Requirements

Class participation	5 points
Web Postings	5 points
Discussion Leader	10 points
Philosophy of Teaching*	15 points
Observation Report	20 points
Teaching Technique Presentation	5 points
Teaching Technique Lesson Plan*	15 points
Curriculum Unit*	25 points

*Failure to submit portfolio requirements will result in an incomplete for the class until assignments are submitted.

Evaluation of Written Work

These qualities will be valued in your work:

- Responsiveness to the task or question: Are you fulfilling the requirements of the assignment.

- Clarity and organization of writing.
- Conciseness – try to write in a non-repetitious way.
- Completeness and depth – Present the necessary amount of detail to support your points. Write or present as though your audience is not an expert on your topic and in a way that demonstrates depth of analysis of the topic.
- Independent judgment – Go beyond the information presented by others. Be critical, seeing both strengths and weaknesses and support opinions with your own reasons.
- Relevance – Connections between your work and the content and organization of 251:578 should be clear.
- Attention to professional style – Papers should be typed or word-processed and follow APA format. You can find a good summary of how to use APA format at the following website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- On lateness – If you need an extension of time on an assignment please contact one of us before the date when the paper is due.

Letter Grade Equivalents

93-100	A
88-92	B+
83-87	B
78-82	C+
73-77	C
68-72	D+
60-67	D
Below 60	F

Course Outline

Theoretical, Philosophical, and Curricular Foundations of Early Childhood Education

September 4 Week 1	Introductions and overview of the course Personal images of early childhood teaching Defining early childhood education/curriculum: Exploring the historical foundations of the field
September 11 Week 2	Theories of children's learning as a basis of early childhood curriculum: Who are young children as learners? Working with diverse student populations Developmentally Appropriate Practice Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bredekamp and Copple, <i>“Developmentally Appropriate Practice”</i> pages 1-50• Barnes, <i>“Including everyone: A model preschool program for typical and special needs children.”</i> And ONE of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• File, <i>“The relationships between child development and early childhood curriculum”</i>• Hatch, <i>“From theory to curriculum: Developmental theory and its relationship to curriculum and instruction in early childhood education”</i> Discussion Leaders:
September 18 Week 3	Morning Meeting What are the purposes? What do they look like? What are the controversies? How do they change based on age? How do we PLAN for them? Exploring power relationships with young children Lesson Planning: Using McTigue & Rimm-Kaufman as an example Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ryan and Grieshaber, <i>“It’s more than child development: Critical theories research and teaching young children.”</i> And ONE of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bruce, et al., <i>“Making Morning Circle Meaningful”</i>• Kriete & Bechtel, <i>“Morning Meeting: An Overview”</i> Discussion Leaders:
<u>September 19</u>	<u>Orientation! 7:45 p.m. in room 124 (the lecture hall in the GSE)</u>

September 25
Week 4

Play and Learning in Early Childhood Education

What is play? What is the relationship between play, learning and development? Why is play featured in most early childhood curriculum models? What is the role of play in early childhood programs? What is the role of the early childhood teacher? What are the challenges in teaching in a playful environment?

Read:

- Van Horn, *“The development of play”*
- Brashier & Norris, *“Breaking down barriers for first year teachers: What teacher preparation programs can do”*
- Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, *“Why Play=Learning”*

Due: Philosophy of Teaching Papers

How do I Teach Young Children?

October 2
Week 5

Lesson Planning

The conceptual dimensions of the curriculum
Aims, Goals and Objectives - Lesson Plans

Read:

- Bredekamp and Copple *“Developmentally Appropriate Practice”*
Chapter 6--The Kindergarten Year
- Epstein: Chapters 1 and 2

Discussion Leaders:

October 9
Week 6

Teaching strategies that reinforce learning - Part 1

Behaviorist theories of learning and teaching techniques:
Demonstrating, modeling, feedback, encouraging, praising,
helping, telling and instructing, reinforcing (planning time)

Read: (To be assigned in class)

- Assigned Mac Naughton & Williams chapters

October 16
Week 7

Constructivist and socio-cultural views of learning and teaching
techniques: Facilitating, suggesting, describing, listening,
questioning, recalling. Specialist techniques: Co-constructing, problem
solving, and scaffolding.

Read:

- *Wondering with Children: The Importance of Observation in Early Education* by George Forman & Ellen Hall. Can be found at: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v7n2/forman.html>

Due: Bring in a draft of your individual lesson plan

October 23
Week 8

In-Class presentations on teaching techniques

Due: Teaching technique papers due

October 30
Week 9

How to observe young children and the Teacher's role in play, observation, and assessment

Assessment of young children

Read:

- Gallas, *"The Languages of Learning"*
- Krechevsky, *"Why don't you tell the other kids?"*

Discussion Leaders:

November 6
Week 10

Integrated Curriculum

Across and within content areas, DAP, Centers

Materials as the texts of the early childhood classroom

"The Lightning Post Office"

Read:

- Hurless & Gittings (2008). Weaving the tapestry: A first grade teacher integrates teaching & learning.
- Malaguzzi (Translated by Gandini), *"The hundred languages of children"*

And ONE of the following:

- Marsh, "Emergent media literacy: Digital animation in early childhood"
- *To be announced*

Discussion Leaders:

November 13
Week 11

Continuing Integrated Curriculum

Creating the physical and temporal environment

Physical and interpersonal environments

Inquiry Projects, Interviewing and experts

In-class assignment on integrated curriculum

Exploring the creative arts in the early childhood curriculum

Read:

- Bredekamp and Copple Chapter 8--The Primary Grades
- Epstein Chapter 2-5.
- Cuffaro, *"The Social Individual in an Early Childhood Setting"*

Discussion leaders:

November 20
Week 12

No class

Due: Observation Papers due by midnight November 22, 2013

November 27

No Class- Friday Classes Today (Rutgers Academic Calendar)

December 4
Week 13

Exploring the creative arts in the early childhood curriculum
Reggio Emilia, Importance of linking environments to unit planning, How to use the arts to delve into subject matter.

Read:

- Epstein, Chapter 6 & 7

And ONE of the following:

- Smith, "Painting in the lives of children"
- Loughran, "An artist among young artists: A lesson for teachers"
- Andress, "Transforming curriculum in music"

Discussion Leaders:

December 11
Week 14

Working with Families – Building Community among cultures
Exploring power relationships with young children
Classroom Management with Young Children

Read:

ONE of the following (to be assigned)

- Delpit, "*The silenced dialogue: Power & pedagogy in educating other people's children*"
- Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, "*Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms*"
- Sturm, "*Creating parent-teacher dialogue: Intercultural communication in childcare*"
- Nagel, "*Special Education: Jodie and her story*"

December 18
Week 15

Summary and conclusions
Reexamining your understandings of early childhood education

Read:

- Mosle, "*The dicey parent-teacher duet*"

Due: Final Curriculum Unit

