

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

**15:251:578:01 Theories and Practices in the Early Childhood Classroom
Fall 2015
Wednesdays 4:50-7:30 p.m.
HH- A3**

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Office Hours: Wednesday 2:30-4:30 p.m.	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: Contact Ken Tufo at ken.tufo@gse.rutgers.edu

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Course Description

Learning goals:

New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (2014)¹:

Standard Two: Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

ii. Essential Knowledge

2) The teacher understands and identifies differences in approaches to learning and performance and knows how to design instruction that uses each learner's strengths to promote growth

¹ <http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap9.pdf>

5) The teacher understands that learners bring assets for learning based on their individual experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as language, culture, family, and community values

iii. Critical Dispositions:

- 1) The teacher believes that all learners can achieve at high levels and persists in helping each learner reach his or her full potential;
- 2) The teacher respects learners as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests;
- 3) The teacher makes learners feel valued and helps them learn to value each other; and

Standard Three: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

ii. Essential Knowledge

- 1) The teacher understands the relationship between motivation and engagement and knows how to design learning experiences using strategies that build learner self-direction and ownership of learning;
- 3) The teacher knows how to collaborate with learners to establish and monitor elements of a safe and productive learning environment including norms, expectations, routines, and organizational structures;

iii. Critical Dispositions

- 1) The teacher is committed to working with learners, colleagues, families, and communities to establish positive and supportive learning environments;
- 2) The teacher values the role of learners in promoting each other's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.
- 3) The teacher is committed to supporting learners as they participate in decision-making, engage in exploration and invention, work collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning; and
- 4) The teacher seeks to foster respectful communication among all members of the learning community.

Standard Five: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

ii. Essential Knowledge

- 6) The teacher understands communication modes and skills as vehicles for learning (for example, information gathering and processing) across disciplines as well as vehicles for expressing learning;

iii. Critical Dispositions

- 3) The teacher values flexible learning environments that encourage learner exploration, discovery, and expression across content areas.

Standard Seven: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

ii. Essential Knowledge

- 2) The teacher understands how integrating cross-disciplinary skills in instruction engages learners purposefully in applying content knowledge.
- 3) The teacher understands learning theory, human development, cultural diversity, and individual differences and how these impact ongoing planning

iii. Critical Dispositions

- 1) The teacher respects learners' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction
- 4) The teacher believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on learner needs and changing circumstances.

Standard Eight: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

ii. Essential Knowledge

- 2) The teacher knows how to apply a range of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning goals;

iii. Critical Dispositions

- 1) The teacher is committed to deepening awareness and understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.

Council for the Accreditation of Education Professionals (2013)²:

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

- 1.1 Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Knowledge
- 1.2 Instructional Practice
 - Learning Experiences
- 1.6 Learner and Learning
 - Learning Experiences
- 1.8 Learner and Learning
 - Relationships and Communication

Course catalog description:

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.

² http://caepnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/final_board_approved1.pdf

Other description of course purposes, context, methods, etc.:

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.

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. ISBN-9781928896647
- Epstein, A. S. (2007). *The Intentional Teacher: Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children's Learning*. Washington, Dc: NAEYC. ISBN-9781928896418
- All other readings will be posted on the Sakai site for this course.

Grading policy:

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 300:412 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/>) Please use Times New Roman 12pt font, 1-inch margins, and double space all of your assignments.
- On lateness – If you need an extension of time on an assignment please contact me before the date when the paper is due. If you do not contact me, your grade on the assignment will be dropped one letter grade for every class period it is late.

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

Academic Integrity Policy:

Any violation of academic honesty is a serious offense and is therefore subject to an appropriate penalty. Refer to <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml> for a full explanation of policies.

Web site:

(Specific course Sakai access will be available only to those students who have officially registered for this course.)

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.

(1) Inquiry Journal (20% of final grade)

Students are required to keep a journal that reflects their inquiries during the semester and to bring this journal to class every week. Your instructor will provide you with a blank book to use as a journal, where you will keep: class notes, reflection notes, inquiry frames, questions and comments. You will also complete required assignments in your Journal (or include a printed copy of your responses). Such assignments include:

- a) Three (3) reports: on 1 fiction book, on 1 non-fiction book and on 1 museum/exhibition/work of art related to the inquiry topic of the semester -- BEES;
- b) Three (3) observations from your practicum placement including one description

of the environment and two observations of individual children-in-context.
c) Additional assignments and work sheets, museum visit notes + visuals.
At the end of the semester, you will submit the hard copy of your Learning Journal.
The grade will reflect your participation and engagement with the course this semester.

2) Discussion Leader (20%)

Early in the semester, each student will sign up for a week when they will work with a small group of peers to post a reflection on our Sakai site and prepare a series of discussion questions that deal directly with the readings assigned for that day. The reflection will be posted at least one day prior to the class session (by 4:50 p.m. Tuesday night). During our class, the students assigned to that week will lead a class discussion on the readings. The discussion should be participatory (not a lecture or summary of the readings) and last about 15 minutes.

Keep track of the week you signed up for here: _____

3) Early Childhood Meme and Presentation (10%)

Each student is responsible for completing an assigned reading on a theorist and generating a meme that reflects one of the theorist's beliefs about early education. Students can create the meme using a number of programs (such as Word, photoshop, or <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator>, or any other program that you are comfortable with). Each student will submit a digital copy of his or her informative meme under 'assignments' on our course Sakai site. This is due Wednesday, September 8th, by 4 p.m.

5) Integrated Unit Plan (20% of final grade)

Students will create a unit plan on a given topic – Bees, Beehives, and Beekeepers. You will present your unit to the class and will receive feedback from peers. Each student will then submit the unit plan to our Sakai site. Unit plans are usually long since they cover several weeks of class. A template will be provided but expect to produce a 10-20 page document that includes references, illustrations, worksheets, and rubrics.

6) Lesson Plan (30%)

Each student will prepare a written lesson plan that answers the essential question – how do bees help us? Your lesson will incorporate performance and instructional strategies and you will teach that lesson to the class on Week 13 or 14. Each student will submit an electronic version of the lesson on Sakai. You should also include a 1-page reflection of what you have learnt from this experience, what worked and what did not work.

Summary of Requirements

Inquiry Journal	20 points
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Discussion Leader	20 points
Early Childhood Meme & Presentation	10 points
Curriculum Unit	20 point
Teaching Technique Lesson Plan	20 points
Teaching Technique Presentation	10 points

*These items may be eligible for inclusion in your Domain 4 Portfolio.

Week	Topics to be Covered	Readings	Assignments
1: Sept 2	<p>Introductions and overview of the course</p> <p>Defining early childhood education/curriculum</p> <p>Exploring the historical foundations of the field</p>	You'll be assigned readings for next week.	Early Childhood Meme Assignment handed out.
2: Sept 9	<p>Theories of children's learning as a basis of early childhood curriculum</p> <p>Who are young children as learners?</p> <p>What is the relationship between learning and development?</p> <p>Introduce the Bees and Bee Hives Topic</p>	<p>Barnes, 2004</p> <p>One of the following to be assigned: Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget, <u>or</u> Vygotsky (Mooney, 2013)</p> <p>One of the following to be assigned: File (2012) <u>or</u> Hatch (2012)</p>	Early Childhood Meme DUE
3: Sept 16	Christelle: Second Language Acquisition	Norton (2000) Orellana (1999)	
4: Sept 23	Play and Learning in Early Childhood Education	One of the following: Piaget or Vygotsky	<p>Discussion Leaders</p> <p>Inquiry Journal:</p>

	<p>What is play? What is the relationship between play, learning and development?</p> <p>Why is play featured in most early childhood curriculum models?</p> <p>What is the role of play in early childhood programs?</p> <p>What is the role of the early childhood teacher? What are the challenges in teaching in a playful environment?</p> <p>Teacher's role in play, observation, and assessment</p>	<p>Lobman, Improvising With(in) the System</p> <p>Nicolopoulo et al, Using the Transformative Power of Play to Educate Hearts and Minds.</p>	<p>Language learning memoir.</p>
5: Sept 30	<p>Christelle: Working with Bilingual families</p>	<p>Mangual Figueroa (2011) Auerbach (1989)</p>	<p>Inquiry Journal:</p>
6: October 7 th	<p>The Conceptual Dimensions of Curriculum</p> <p>Aims, Goals, and Objectives</p> <p>How do we think about planning?</p> <p>Observation: How to observe young children</p>	<p>Epstein, 2001. Choose to read either chapters 3, 4, 5, OR 6 based on your interest.</p> <p>Curtis & Carter, 2008, Coach Children to Learn about Learning</p> <p>Forman & Hall, Wondering with Children: The Importance of Observation in Early Education. Can be found: http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v7n2/for</p>	<p>Discussion Leaders</p> <p>Inquiry Journal: Select one specific practice to promote parental involvement and discuss how you would integrate it into your own teaching.</p>

	Thinking about Difference (watch TED Talk) Discussion Leaders	man.html	
7: October 14 th	Integrated Curriculum Part I: Across and within content areas Centers Materials as the texts of the early childhood classroom Introduction to an Inquiry Based Approach	Hurless & Gittings (2008). Weaving the tapestry: A first grade teacher integrates teaching & learning. Malaguzzi (Translated by Gandini), <i>“The hundred languages of children”</i> Egan, Learning In Depth	Discussion Leaders Inquiry Journal Assignment on Observation
8: Oct 21	Integrated Curriculum Part II: Creating the physical and temporal environment Physical and interpersonal environments Inquiry Projects cont: Interviewing and experts	Bredenkamp and Copple Chapter 8--The Primary Grades Tennenbaum et. Al Children’s Learning about Water in a Museum and in a Classroom Cuffaro, <i>“The Social Individual in an Early Childhood Setting”</i>	Discussion Leaders:
9: Oct 28	Christelle – Instructional strategies with ELLs.	Please bring a copy of the unit plan you are working on.	
10: Nov 4	Instructional Teaching Techniques	Read assigned Mac Naughton & Williams’ chapters	Unit Plan Due
11: Nov 11	Lesson Planning Workshop		
12:	Exploring the	Epstein, 2001, Chapter 7	

Nov 18	creative arts	Curtis & Carter, 2008, Materials Chapter	
Nov 25	NO CLASS		
13: Dec 2	Presenting Lesson Plans Day One Building Communities Among Cultures Working with families	Mosle, <i>The Dicey Parent Teacher Duet</i> Cowhey, 193-207, Responding When Tragedy Enters the Classroom Sturm, Creating Parent Teacher Dialogue	Discussion Leaders
14: Dec 9	Presenting Lesson Plans Day Two Summary and Conclusions		Lesson Plans Due Inquiry Journals Handed In