

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Education
Spring 2005

EDCI 614 Curriculum and Assessment in Early Childhood Education II (3.3.0)
Wednesday 6:00 – 8:40

Instructor: Dr. Karen Banks
Office Hours: By appointment
Phone number: (703) 620-1297 email: kbanks@gmu.edu

I. Course Description

This is the second of a two-course sequence which addresses current thinking about curriculum and assessment in programs for children preschool through third grade. It will review mathematics, science, social studies, literacy, the arts, and technology to facilitate integration of these subjects into the students' ongoing curriculum project. Students are expected to articulate emerging understandings of an aspect of educational practice through the continuation of an action research project.

II. Course Objectives (spring semester)

1. Describe appropriate curriculum implementation expectations for children PK through third grade in the content areas of mathematics, literacy, science, social studies, the arts, and technology.
2. Explain the conceptual base of the K-3 Virginia Standards of Learning and the National Standards for literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, and the visual and performing arts.
3. Describe differentiation strategies for curriculum and assessment for children from diverse cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds and for children with special needs.
4. Reflect on the connections between personal knowledge, academic knowledge, and knowledge of the field of early childhood education through reflective journals and discussions with peers.
5. Design and pilot an action research project to explore appropriate curriculum/assessment implementation.
6. Demonstrate competence in exploring professional, research-based literature to support action research design, implications for research outcomes and effective teaching practices.

III. Relationship of EDCI 614 to Early Childhood Program Outcomes and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

EDCI 614 addresses the GSE priorities of high standards and research-based practice and the following guidelines of the NAEYC Guidelines for all advanced degree candidates (NAEYC,1996):

2. Extend and further develop student knowledge and understanding of theories and content of curriculum and instruction and alternative models and methodologies.
3. Extend student knowledge and ability to develop and use a variety of procedures for assessment of child development and learning, and appropriateness of various assessment procedures and instruments.
5. Develop and evaluate programs for children from diverse cultural and language backgrounds, as well as for children of different age and developmental levels, including children with disabilities, children with developmental delays, and children with special abilities.

EDCI 614 also addresses the following standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for Early Childhood Generalist Certificate:

- I. Knowledge of Young Children
- II. Knowledge of Integrated Curriculum
- III. Multiple Teaching Strategies
- IV. Reflective Practice
- VI. Assessment

IV. Required Texts

Durkin, Dolores. *Teaching them to read.* (2004) Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Harlan, Jean and Renkin, Mary. (2004) *Science Experiences for the early childhood years, and integrated, affective approach, 8th ed.* Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Hart, C.H., Burts, D.C. & Charlesworth, R.C. (Eds.). (1997) *Integrated curriculum and developmentally appropriate practice: Birth to age eight.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Holly, M.L., Arhar, J, M. & Kasten, W.C. (2004) *Action Research for Teachers: Traveling the Yellow Brick Road.* Upper Saddle, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Kamii, Constance. *Children reinvent arithmetic.* (1999) New York: Teachers College Press.

Meisels, Samuel, Harrington, Helen, et al. *Thinking like a teacher: Using observational assessment to improve teaching and learning*. (2000) Boston, MA: Pearson, Allyn and Bacon.

Selected Readings

V. Course Requirements and Assignments

ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT 40%

- Literature review of question
- Draft design of action research methodology
- Implementation of action research design
- Collection of data
- Explore implications of results
- Prepare written description of research project

ACTION RESEARCH LOG 15%

Weekly (15) entries to describe insights related to the project, literature reviewed, methodology implemented and issues arising from implementation, process of collecting and analyzing data and implications of results of the research project. At least one page in length, typed and due weekly.

PRESENTATION OF ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT OUTCOME 15%

- Use of Poster, Power Point, or Transparencies to present project
- Involve peers in discussion of project
- Describe implications of project for peers

CLASS PARTICIPATION 30%

- Co-lead curriculum and assessment in-class activities
- Timely completion of readings and assignments
- Thoughtful* class participation during discussions
- Regular attendance

Class Calendar

- 1/26 Overview of semester
Begin to explore potential research topics
Ch 1 and 2 YBR
- 2/2 Conduct literature review
YBR Ch 8 and 9
Begin submitting Journal Entries-Weekly
- 2/9 Refining research questions
Instructional practices—Reading
YBR Ch 3, 4 and 10
Durkin, Ch
Selected research article
- 2/16 Planning methodology for action research
Instructional practices---Visual and Performing Arts
YBR Ch 11 and 12
Hart, Ch
Selected research article
DUE: Draft Literature Review
- 2/23 Planning for data collection
Instructional practices---Science
YBR Ch 13
Harlan, Ch
Meisels, Ch
Selected research articles
- 3/2 Refining methodology used in research
Instructional practices---Social Studies
Hart, Ch
Selected research articles
- 3/9 Writing research results
Use of Technology to support instruction
YBR Ch 16 and 17
Selected research articles
DUE: Draft Methodology
- 3/16 SPRING BREAK

- 3/23 Sharing research results
 Instructional practices---Math
 YBR Ch 18
 Kamii, Ch
 Selected research articles
- 3/30 Integrating instructional practices around Reading
 Durkin, Ch
 Selected research articles
- 4/6 Integrating instructional practices around Science
 Harlan, Ch
 Selected research articles
- 4/13 Integrating instructional practices around Social Studies
 Hart, Ch
 Selected research articles
DUE: Draft Results
- 4/20 Integrating instructional practices around Math
 Kamii, Ch
 Selected research articles
DUE: Draft Discussion and Implications for Further Research
- 4/27 Assessing instructional outcomes in integrated formats
 Meisels, Ch
- 5/4 **DUE: Action Research Project**
DUE: Presentation of Action Research Project
- 5/11 Summing it Up-Implications for Further Research

Action Research Project

This semester you will carry out an action research project. You will be expected to do the following:

- Conduct a literature review relevant to your topic
- Collect data by conducting interviews, observations, and/or document analysis
- Submit each piece of the action research project for feedback throughout the semester

- Meet with other members of the class during class time to ask questions about your project and give feedback about theirs
- Write up your study

- Present your final paper to the group

Your final paper should be about 20 pages in length. It should consist of the following components:

- An introduction which presents your question and why your question is important. (About 2 pages)
- A literature review of other work that has been done on your question. (About 5 pages)
- A description of your methodology, population, materials/instruments used, process of data collection. (About 5 pages)
- An analysis and discussion of your data which shows the reader what you found out about your question in the setting you were in. (About 3 pages)
- A discussion of the implications of your findings for your practice and for the field of education in general. (About 5 pages)

Criteria for evaluation of the written paper are:

Organization of paper

Clarity of writing

All of the sections are covered

Literature review

Has the student

Found themes in the literature

Supported the need to research the question asked

Integrated the research reviewed in an organized manner

Used APA format in citing sources in the text and in the bibliography

Methodology

Has the student

Fully described the population, setting, and schedule of activities

Fully described how the research was conducted

Fully described materials/instruments used to collect the data

Data analysis

Has the student

Found themes in the data

Done a thorough analysis of the data by taking all of the data into account

Discussed data that doesn't conform to his/her theory as well as the data that does

Made a persuasive case for his/her analysis

Implications

Has the student reflected on how the action research will affect his/her teaching practice?

Has the student made connection of their research to the field by reconnecting to the articles discussed in the literature review section?

Action Research Project Presentation

In this research presentation you will share your findings and your experiences with the group. You will have about 20 minutes to present and 10 minutes to answer questions. You should be prepared to discuss your question, describe the setting and methodology you used and then to share pieces from your data. The emphasis of your presentation should be on your findings and the implications your study has both for your practice and the field of education.

Criteria for the presentation are:

Preparedness of the presenter
Clarity and coherence of presentation

Journals

You will be expected to write journal entries that are at least one page in length, weekly. Most topics are of your choice. However, you should include the following within the journal entries:

- What is your research question and why you are asking it. Why is it an important question for your field? Why is it important to you?
- Discuss the setting in which you are conducting your study. Why did you choose this setting? What is your role there? How long have you been there? What are the demographics of the setting (e.g. grade level, school division, public, private, urban, rural?) Be as descriptive as possible here. This will put your data in context.
- Discuss the methodology you are using to find out about your question. Describe the methods you used (e.g. interviews, observations, document analysis). For example, explain who you interviewed, how many interviews you did, if you interviewed the same people more than once, how long the interviews lasted, how many interviews you did, if the interviews were structured, semi-structured or unstructured. If you developed an interview protocol you can attach it as an appendix to your paper.

Class Participation/Co-lead class discussion on selected topics

Students will sign up for two topics to co-lead through the semester. During library research time the instructor and student(s) will select a research article to share with the class. The purpose will be to explore insights into instruction/assessment based on the research article and corresponding chapter in a text, to be shared.

Students will work with the instructor to review a research article related to one of the content areas to be covered in the course (reading, math, science, social studies, visual

and performing arts, technology) and relate it to a chapter in one of the texts. Students will need to do the following:

- Make the research article available to the class at least one week before you are scheduled to lead the discussion (via email). Identify the chapter in the text you are relating the article to, and inform the class.
- Co-lead a discussion with the instructor that explores how the research article and chapter relate to instruction/assessment. There should be no need to summarize the readings. Please lead a discussion which *extends* ideas raised in the readings. Some questions you might consider are:
 - What guidance does the research and chapter provide to improve instruction/assessment?
 - What guidance does the research and chapter provide for action research?
 - What guidance does the research and chapter provide for professional development?
- Discuss the standards which are relevant to the content area you are addressing.
- Focus on the possibilities for integration of your content area with other content areas.

Evaluation for participation will be based on the student's involvement in the selection and review of the article, and questions/comments shared with class to encourage class discussion, to include

Organization and preparation
Level of questioning
Level of discussion