

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**EDSE 459/659 Curriculum and Methods: Early Childhood Special Education
EDUT 414/514 Creating Environments and Adapting Curriculum
for Diverse Learners Ages 3-5**

Spring 2006 Mondays 7:20PM – 10:00 PM Room: Rb 205/220

**Instructor: Cecelia Alvarado
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course emphasizes planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating programs for young children with special needs. Students will be provided with an understanding of developmentally appropriate programs and practices for young children with special needs. The emphasis of this course is on the actual process of planning, implementing, and monitoring programs for young children with diverse learning needs. Students will explore, plan, and implement curriculum and environments using individually responsive, age-related, and culturally appropriate methods and materials. Students will gain an understanding of the important role of play, active exploration, the construction and representation of knowledge, social interaction with peers and family members, and peers and families as significant others in children's intellectual and linguistic development.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:

This class will meet on Monday evening's from 7:20 – 10:00. The class will have a lecture format and will require active participation of all students. Guest lecturers from the community will be utilized to support content from readings.

STUDENT OUTCOMES:

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Demonstrate the ability to plan meaningful curriculum activities that are responsive to the interests, preferences, motivation, interaction styles, developmental status, learning history, and cultural variables of the child and family.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop individual and group action plans and implement strategies to facilitate functional cognitive, social, communication, motor, and adaptive development.
- Demonstrate the ability to plan and adapt curriculum activities that are respectful of family identified outcomes, preferences, interaction styles, and cultural norms.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply current research on effective developmentally appropriate practices to teaching young children from diverse backgrounds.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze and design appropriate environments and materials to include addressing developmentally appropriate practices, anti-bias curriculum, and inclusion settings.

- Demonstrate the ability to utilize problem solving strategies to address dilemmas encountered in diverse educational and community settings.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the varied theoretical frameworks guiding early childhood curriculum approaches and practices.
- Relate ongoing data collection management plans for monitoring child progress in the context of daily activities.
- Begin the process of becoming a reflective practitioner.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education area of early childhood education. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Division of Early Childhood, the major professional organization addressing Early Childhood Special Education. As such the course objectives above cover many of the competencies for assessment in Early Childhood Special Education.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Bodrova, E. & Leong, D.J. (1996). *Tools of the mind: The Vygotskian approach to early childhood education*. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill.

Bredenkamp, S. & Copple, C. (1997). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.

Gartrell, D. (2004). *The power of guidance: Teaching social-emotional skills in early childhood classrooms*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.

Hull, K., Goldhaber, J. & Capone, A. (2002). *Opening doors: An introduction to inclusive early childhood education*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

Derman Sparks, L. (1989). *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington D.C.: NAEYC.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attend all class sessions (unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor).
2. Prepare for class by completing all assigned readings.
3. Actively participate in all class discussions and activities.
4. Complete all written assignments and projects on time. Late assignments will be reduced by 10% in point total. A pattern of lateness to class will also impact your grade. **No assignments will be accepted after May 1, 2006.]**

Note: If you require accommodations or modifications due to a disability or other circumstance, please consult with the course instructor. The University is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide support and offers resources through the Disability Resource Center and the Writing Center. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course are encouraged to register with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC). See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

COURSE GRADING:

92-100 = A 89-91 = A- 86-88 = B+ 83-85 = B
 77-82 = C+ 70-76 = C Below 70 = F

<u>ECSE 459</u>		<u>ECSE 659</u>	
1. ECE Program Research	25 points	1. ECE Program Research	15 points
2. Individual Activities Plan	10 points	2. Individual Activities Plan	10 points
3. Environmental Plan	25 points	3. Environmental Plan	15 points
4. Inclusion Model	10 points	4. Inclusion Model	15 points
5. Integrated Curriculum/ Thematic Unit	25 points	5. Integrated Curriculum/ Thematic Unit	25 points
6. Class Participation	<u>5 points</u>	6. Dilemmas (3 total)	15 points
		7. Class Participation	<u>5 points</u>
Total	100 points	Total	100 points

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

All students must abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. Early Childhood Education Program Model Research (Part I. due 2/13, Part II due 2/20)

Part I. Select a program model of early childhood education to explore. Answer the following in a short, typed and double-spaced paper: What is the background of the program? Who were the key people/person involved in its development? What are the unique features of the program? What is the role of the teacher? The role of environment? The role of families/cultures? What is the program’s applicability for students with special needs? This paper is due 2/13. Keep your paper to a 5 page maximum and follow guidelines for APA format.

Part II. Collaborate with others in the class who focused on your same program model and together create a one-page ‘program at a glance’ that will be shared with your classmates. Collaboration will take place in class on 2/13. Your group will bring 15 copies of your one-page handout to class on 2/20 to share with the entire class.

2. **Environmental Analysis (3/6)**

Draw a model of your classroom or of a classroom you have observed. First, conduct an observation for 1 hour to analyze the classroom from your own socio-culture perspective, through your own lens, as if you were a child. Write down your thoughts and reflections using the following questions as guidelines:

How does the environment reflect you? Then look at it from the point of view of a child from a culture other than your own. What messages are conveyed to the child? Does the child 'see' himself or herself in the classroom? How welcoming is this environment for all children? How does this environment feel? What features support learning? What evidence is there of different cultural perspectives? What adaptations would you recommend? Why? Come to class **February 27th** with a sketch of the room arrangement and a brief reflection about what you think about this environment from the above perspectives. **Complete the paper (due March 6)** with any additional reflections and recommendations. The paper should be typed and double-spaced.

3. **Individual Activity Plan – in class activity (4/3)**

Based on a given child description (age, gender, disability, developmental level), work in small groups to identify at least one instructional objective in four different domains. Each group will describe two activities that would be appropriate in addressing these objectives across domains. For each activity, describe:

- a. the objectives and their relationship to the IEP goals
- b. the adaptations and accommodations needed for that child
- c. the environment/setting and materials needed
- d. the data collection system
- e. the way that family members could be included in the activity

4. **Inclusion Model – in class activity (4/17)**

Working in small groups, the class will design strategies for accomplishing curriculum adaptation, scheduling, class composition, grouping, and transitioning. What will a day in your program look like?

5. **Integrated Curriculum / Thematic Unit (4/3 & 5/1)**

Design a thematic curriculum appropriate for children of various ages and abilities in an early childhood special education classroom. Students will present their units to the class. **Written units will be due in class on May 1.**

You will:

- a. select a theme topic and tell why this topic was selected (**due April 3**)
- b. determine concepts, skills, and processes
- c. develop unit objectives
- d. create lesson plans with activities and projects
- e. plan for assessment of student and teacher

6. **Dilemmas (2/27, 3/27, 4/10)**

Select a situation from your classroom that has perplexed you, caused you anxiety, or made you wonder. Describe the situation using the forms provided to you. This will be used in class for discussion, for practicing problem solving strategies, and reflection.

PROVISIONAL CLASS SCHEDULE
ECSE 459/659 and EDUT 414/514

Date	Topics/Learning Experiences	Readings and Assignments DUE
1/23/06	Introductions; Course overview; Student profile	
1/30/06	Reflective practice	Handouts from instructors <i>Opening Doors</i> : Chapter 3 <i>The Power of Guidance</i> : Chapter 1
2/6/06	Theories of child development; Guidance and young children	<i>Tools of the Mind</i> : Chapters 1 & 3 <i>Power of Guidance</i> : Chapters 2 & 3
2/13/06	ECE program models; social emotional development in young children	ECE Program Research DUE
2/20/06	Understanding social and cultural contexts of learning	Each group to bring 1-page program description (15 copies) <i>Instructor handouts</i>
2/27/06	Designing a classroom environment	Bring sketch of room arrangement and brief reflection <i>Opening Doors</i> : Chapters 7 659 Students: Dilemma # 1 DUE
3/6/06	Play; Developmentally Appropriate Practice; Culturally Appropriate Practice	Environmental Analysis DUE <i>Opening Doors</i> : Chapter 6 <i>Tools of the Mind</i> : Chapter 10
3/13/06	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>
3/20/06	Language and literacy	<i>Tools of the Mind</i> : Chapter 8 <i>Instructor handouts</i>
3/27/06	Curriculum development; Thematic Unit	<i>Developmentally Appropriate Practice</i> : Parts 2 & 4 659 Students: Dilemma #2 DUE
4/3/06	Activities in the preschool classroom	Thematic Unit Concept DUE <i>Tools of the Mind</i> : Chapter 6 & 11 <i>Opening Doors</i> : Chapter 5
4/10/06	Observation, data collection	<i>Opening Doors</i> : Chapter 4 & 5 659 Students: Dilemma #3 DUE
4/17/06	IEPs; Inclusion models	<i>Opening Doors</i> : Chapters 1 & 2
4/24/06	Importance of social/emotional development to language and literacy	<i>Tools of the Mind</i> : Chapters 9
5/1/06	Partnership with Families	Thematic Unit Write-ups DUE <i>The Power of Guidance</i> : Chapter 4 <i>Instructor handouts</i>
5/8/06	Final – Thematic Unit Presentations	Thematic Unit Presentations DUE