

George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education  
Special Education Program

**EDSE 659: Curriculum and Methods in  
Early Childhood Special Education  
Spring 2004**

**Instructor:** Dr. Krista N. Kettler

**Class Date & Time:** Mondays 7:20-10:00 PM

**Class Location:** Off Campus Location (Fairfax High School)

**Contact Information:**

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**Course Description:**

This course provides an overview of current methods and practices in the provision of services to young children with disabilities, birth through age eight, and their families. The emphasis of this course is on the actual process of planning, implementing, and monitoring programs for young children with diverse learning needs. It is expected that students will be able to link theories of learning to particular curricular approaches and demonstrate the influence of different curricular approaches on the teaching strategies they implement.

**Student Outcomes:**

Course readings and assignments, class activities and discussions will enable students to:

- Describe current trends and their implications for intervention planning for children with diverse learning needs,
- Develop and implement strategies to facilitate functional cognitive, social, communication, motor, and adaptive development,
- Adapt curricula to meet the abilities and needs of individual children,
- Analyze and design appropriate environments and materials to include addressing developmentally appropriate practices, anti-bias curriculum, and inclusion settings,
- Relate ongoing data collection management plans for monitoring child progress in the context of daily activities, and
- Develop group and individual action plans to accomplish developmental objectives addressing developmentally appropriate practices and utilizing anti-bias curriculum in inclusive settings.

## Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization

This course is aligned with the following integrated standards of the Council for Exceptional Children and National Association for the Education of Young Children as listed below:

- Describe current trends and their implications for intervention planning for children with diverse learning needs,
  - Trends and issues in early childhood education and early childhood special education; CEC ECSE Standard #1 Foundations (knowledge)
- Develop and implement strategies to facilitate functional cognitive, social, communication, motor, and adaptive development,
  - Theories and research that form the basis of curriculum development and instructional practice, CEC CORE Standard #7 Instructional Planning (knowledge)
  - Scope and sequences of general and special curricula, CEC CORE Standard #7 Instructional Planning (knowledge)
  - Integrate affective, social, and life skills with academic curricula, CEC CORE Standard #7 Instructional Planning (skill)
  - Prepare lesson plans, CEC CORE Standard #7 Instructional Planning (skill)
- Adapt curricula to meet the abilities and needs of individual children,
  - Use intervention strategies with young children and their families that affirm and respect family, cultural, and linguistic diversity; CEC ECSE Standard #3 Individual Learning Differences (skill)
  - Select, adapt, and use instructional strategies and materials according to characteristics of the individual with exceptional learning needs; CEC CORE Standard #4 Instructional Strategies (skill)
  - Use strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments; CEC CORE Standard #4 Instructional Strategies (skill)
  - Use procedures to increase the individual's self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem; CEC CORE Standard #4 Instructional Strategies (skill)
  - Use instructional practices based on knowledge of the child, family, community, and the curriculum; CEC ECSE Standard #4 Instructional Strategies (knowledge)
- Analyze and design appropriate environments and materials to include addressing developmentally appropriate practices, anti-bias curriculum, and inclusion settings,
  - Modify the learning environment to manage behaviors, CEC CORE Standard #5 Learning Environments/Social Interactions (skill)
  - Effective management of teaching and learning, CEC CORE Standard #5 Learning Environments/Social Interactions (knowledge)
  - Teacher attitudes and behaviors that influence behavior of individuals with exceptional learning needs, CEC CORE Standard #5 Learning Environments/Social Interactions (knowledge)
  - Social skills needed for educational and other environments, CEC CORE Standard #5 Learning Environments/Social Interactions (knowledge)
  - Strategies for preparing individuals to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world, CEC CORE Standard #5 Learning Environments/Social Interactions (knowledge)

- Relate ongoing data collection management plans for monitoring child progress in the context of daily activities, and
  - Evaluate instruction and monitor progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs, CEC CORE Standard #8 Assessment (skill)
- Develop group and individual action plans to accomplish developmental objectives addressing developmentally appropriate practices and utilizing anti-bias curriculum in inclusive settings.
  - Prepare lesson plans, CEC CORE Standard #7 Instructional Planning (skill)

### **Course Materials:**

Bodrova, Elena and Leong, Deborah J. (1996). Tools of the Mind: The Vygotskian Approach to Early Childhood Education. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill.

Bredenkamp, S. and Copple, C. (1997). Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children From Birth Through Age 8. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Wortham, S.C. (2002). Early Childhood Curriculum: Developmental Bases For Learning and Teaching. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

### **Course Requirements:**

#### A. Individual Activities Plan (15 points) In class activity due 3/22

Based on a given child description (age, gender, disability, developmental level), students will 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:

1. the objectives and their relationship to the IFSP/IEP goals
2. the adaptations and accommodations needed for that child
3. the environment/setting and materials needed
4. the data collection system
5. the way that family members could be included in this activity

#### B. Environmental Plan (20 points) Due 4/19

Develop a plan for an “ideal” early childhood environment based upon an existing environment, either your own or one you have observed. Submit a written description of the current environment and its strengths and limitations, based on class readings and discussions; a description of the children in the environment; a layout of the proposed environment; and a rationale for the changes. Include a sketch of the existing and proposed environments.

#### C. Ecological Inventory (20 points) Due 4/26

Complete an ecological inventory, either home or center based, and discuss the results as it relates to the ages and ability levels of the children and the type of curriculum implemented. Inventory will be provided.

- D. Inclusion Model (15 points) In class activity due 4/19  
The class will design a model preschool inclusion program. The design will include strategies for accomplishing curriculum adaptation, scheduling, class composition, grouping, and transitioning.
- E. Integrated Curriculum/Thematic Unit (30 points) due 5/3  
Working in small groups, the students will design a thematic curriculum appropriate for children of various ages and abilities in an early childhood special education classroom. Students will: 1) select a theme topic; 2) determine concepts, skills and processes; 3) develop unit objectives; 4) plan lesson activities and projects; and 5) plan for assessment of student and teacher. Small groups will present their units to the class. Written units will be due the day of presentation.

### Grading Scale:

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

1. Individual Activities Plan	15 points
2. Ecological Inventory	20 points
3. Environmental Plan	20 points
4. Inclusion Model	15 points
5. Int. Currcm./Thmtc Unit	30 points
Total	100 points

### Topics and Reading Assignments

- 1/26 Introduction / Course Overview/ Student Profiles
- 2/2 Theories of Child Development: Current Trends in Early Childhood Special Education  
Tools of the Mind: Chapter 3  
Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Parts 1 and 2  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 2 pp. 35-47
- 2/9 Models of Quality Early Childhood Programs  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 2 pp. 58-75
- 2/16 Developmentally Appropriate Intervention for Infants and Toddlers: Environment, Materials, and Programming  
DAP: Part 3  
Tools of the Mind: Chapter 5  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 5
- 2/23 Planning and Implementing Appropriate Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 6
- 3/1 Developmentally Appropriate Intervention for Preschool Age 3-5: Environment, Materials and Programming  
DAP: Part 4  
Tools of the Mind: Chapter 6  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 7

- 3/8 Spring Break
- 3/15 Planning and Implementing Appropriate Curriculum for Preschool Age 3-5  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 8-9
- 3/22 Individualized Activity Plan  
In class activity
- 3/29 Developmentally Appropriate Intervention for Children Ages 5-8: Environment,  
Materials and Programming  
DAP: Part 5  
Tools of the Mind: Chapter 10  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 10
- 4/5 Planning and Implementing Appropriate Transitional Curriculum for Ages 5-8  
Early Childhood Curriculum: Chapter 11-12
- 4/12 Evaluating and Designing Learning Environments  
Handouts from instructor  
Tools of the Mind: Chapter 11
- 4/19 A Model Preschool Inclusion Program  
Tools of the Mind: Chapters 5 and 6  
In class activity
- 4/26 Tactics for Promoting Development  
Tools of the Mind: Chapters 7, 8, and 9
- 5/3 Integrated Curriculum/Thematic Unit Presentations
- 5/10 Final Exams

### **Honor Code**

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or Website at [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu).