

*George Mason University
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
Early Childhood Program—UTEEM*

**Universality and Diversity in Child and Family Development, Ages 3 to 5
EDUT 511/411, 5U1 (3 credits)**

Fall 2005

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Office Hours: Before or After class or by appointment

Course Purpose:

This course is offered as one of the strands in the Unified Transformative Early Education Model (UTEEM), a teacher education program using an integrated approach to prepare teachers to work with diverse young children and their families. Teachers are prepared to work with children with diverse learning needs in a variety of inclusive community settings. This strand focuses on the developing child and family and is offered with three other courses and an internship placement.

Course Description:

This course provides students with knowledge of child and family development from a diverse and cultural perspective. Students will explore the role of cultures and theories in providing frameworks for understanding and interpreting child and family growth and development. Factors that facilitate development and factors that may place children at developmental risk and actual disability will be examined. Students will also learn about various disabilities and the way in which risk and actual disability affect both family and child development. They will acquire appreciation for the critical role of families and their diversity in supporting the development of the child.

Course Format:

This course utilizes a seminar format requiring participation of all students. This class meets approximately every other week and is linked to an internship experience. This enables students to continuously link their experiences in their sites with the knowledge they are acquiring in the classroom. Students attend each class for 6 hours. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to engage in active dialogue, productive learning, and critical reflection. Activities will include small group discussions, presentations, guest speakers from the community, videos and whole class sharing to support course content.

Overall Student Outcomes:

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the major theories of development and demonstrate the skill to critically examine the theories as they apply to the lives of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families.
2. Examine the transactional nature of overall development in the context of the family, community, socioeconomic conditions and culture.
3. Identify typical developmental milestones of diverse children ages three through five and their cultural variations.
4. Observe and describe overall development, including the social emotional domain, as it occurs in natural environments and through play.
5. Identify environmental and biological/physical/medical at risk factors that can contribute to possible developmental risk and atypical development across domains.
6. Discuss the etiology of major disabilities and demonstrate the skill to select culturally and linguistically appropriate resources to use with diverse families and their children.
7. Identify culturally and linguistically responsive professional practices that facilitate development in various domain.
8. Plan and present a professional development session for adult learners on developmental issues that impact diverse young children and support family-centered practices.
9. Provide critical and constructive feedback to peers on issues related to development and diversity.

Relationship to Professional Standards:

This course is aligned with the following integrated standards of the Council for Exceptional Children and National Association for the Education of Young Children.

- Human growth and development (birth through adolescence):
 - +Demonstrate and understanding of the physical, social emotional and intellectual development of children and the ability to use this understanding in guiding learning experiences;
 - +Demonstrate an understanding of the nature and characteristics of major disabling and at risk conditions, including social-emotional development issues;
 - +Demonstrate an understanding that children's development occurs in the sociocultural context of family and community;
 - +Develop an understanding of medical aspects of young children with disabling and at risk conditions and the management of neurodevelopmental and motor disabilities, including emergency care and the role of health care professionals in the lives of individuals with disabilities;
 - +Develop an understanding of the theories and techniques of family-centered intervention, including the role of culture, language and disability;
 - +Develop an understanding of the role that economic, social, racial, ethnic, religious, physical and mental factors may play on development issues related to

but not limited to attention deficit disorders, substance abuse, child abuse and family disruptions;
+Develop an understanding of the linguistic, sociological, cultural, cognitive and psychological basis of language and literacy development.

Required Texts:

Berk & Winsler, (). *Scaffolding children's learning: Vygotsky and early childhood Education.* Washington, DC: NAEYC. ISBN: 0-935989-68-4

Shonkoff, J.P. & Phillips, D.A. (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early Childhood development.* Washington DC: National Academy Press.
ISBN: 0309069882

Trawick-Smith, J. (2003). *Early childhood development: A multicultural perspective* (latest edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 0-13-046576-3

Zigler, E., Singer, D & Bishop-Scott, S. (2004). *Children's play: The roots of reading.* Washington DC: Zero to three.

Course Requirements, Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

1. Earliest Memories In Class Paper (5%)

2. Written Play Observation Assignment (20%)

The play observation will take place over the course of two weeks. The focus of this observation will be on children's play skills, behavior and overall development. In addition, you are to make a class presentation of an activity that facilitates the growth of the two children you observed. In a family friendly manner, you must clearly state your learning objectives for the children you observed. Use items that can be readily found in the homes of the children. Do not use purchased/manufactured toys/games. Through the activity and adaptations you will demonstrate your knowledge of children's play and development. In your presentation, you must also demonstrate how you would adapt the activity for other culturally, linguistically and ability diverse young children.

Evaluation Criteria: Rubrics used to evaluate presentations and written assignments are developed directly from assignment descriptions found in syllabus. The grading checklist/rubric for this assignment will be distributed. Additional criteria for written assignments is included in the following section **(Outcome 1,4,7)**

3. Family and Practitioner Resource and Information Group Project (25%)

Students will work in small groups to prepare a class presentation about at risk or disabling condition that impacts development. There are two major parts to this

assignment: one focuses on what the practitioners may need to know about the condition and effective research based intervention strategies and the second focuses on what families may need to know to more effectively advocate for their children. An information file for both the practitioners and the families will be compiled, displayed and discussed. More specific guidelines are described below. **Evaluation Criteria:** Rubrics used to evaluate presentations and written assignments are developed directly from assignment descriptions found in syllabus. The rubric for this presentation will be distributed. **(Outcomes 1,2,5,6,8)**

4. Statement of Understanding (40%)

Students are expected to use the observations of young children over the course of the semester to demonstrate their understanding of cognitive, physical, social-emotional and intellectual development and the milestones. Students are expected to provide specific examples of real children and their experiences and link the observations to the readings and discussions. The assignment is also expected to help students demonstrate their understanding of the role of the sociocultural context on development and how it impacts diverse children and their families.

Evaluation Criteria: Rubrics used to evaluate presentations and written assignments are developed directly from assignment descriptions found in the syllabus. Additional criteria for evaluating written assignments are listed below. The rubric for this assignment will be distributed. **(Outcome 1,2,3,4,5,6,7)**

NOTE: THIS IS THE MAJOR PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT FOR THIS COURSE.

5. Preparation for and participation in class (10%)

Students are expected to attend ALL class sessions (unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructors). They are to be prepared for class by completing all assigned readings and actively participating in all small and large group discussion and activities. All assignments are expected to be submitted on time. Modifications needed due to disabilities or special circumstances to meet course requirements as outlined in syllabus must be discussed with the instructor.

Evaluation criteria: evidence of comments directly related to the readings, critical reflection of own assumptions, regular and thoughtful participation in in-class discussions and experiential learning activities and sharing of observations and learning connected to experiences with children, families, community and internship site. **(Outcome 1,2,3,9)**

Criteria for Evaluation of Written Assignments

All written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate level writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) style (5th edition) will be followed for all written work. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manual link at the GMU library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu> .

All written assignments must be typed and proofread carefully. The University

Writing Center (Robinson A114) 703-993-1200 is a free writing resource open to all GMU students. The English Language Institute also offers help to graduate students who are second language learners.

Grading Scale:

A+ 99-100	B+ 87-89	C 70-79
A 94-98	B 84-86	F below 70
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	

College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) Statement of Expectations:

The CEHD expects that all students abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior in class and at internship sites with professors, peers, families, community members, guest presenters and with children.
- The Virginia Department of Education and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education promote standards of professional competence and dispositions. Dispositions are values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues and all members of the learning community.
- The Graduate School of Education expects students, faculty and staff to exhibit professional dispositions through a :

Commitment to the profession
Commitment to honoring professional ethical standards
Commitment to key elements of professional practice
Commitment to being a member of a learning community
Commitment to democratic values and social justice

- Students must follow the guidelines for the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apologies/#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 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 703-993-2472 to access the DRC.

Proposed Course Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic & Learning Experience</i>	<i>Readings & Assignments</i>
Sept 2	Overview of Course/Review of syllabus Assignments	In class reading
Sept 6	History of Developmental Theory Theoretical Perspectives <i>Group Work</i>	Trawick-Smith Ch 3 Berk&Winsler Ch 2-3
Sept 20	Development in a Sociocultural Context; Development Mediated by language, Culture, Family,Community, Individual &Societal Factors <i>Reflecting on own assumptions about Children</i>	Berk &Winsler Due: In Class paper Your Early Memories
Oct 4	Play and its relationship to development; factors That influence play; preparation for play observat. Cognitive Development, Symbolic thought, Piaget, Brain Research <i>DUE: Group 1 presentation: Organic or at Risk factors & Brain or Cognitive Development</i>	Schonkoff Trawick Ch 11,12
Oct 18	Physical & Motor Development Sensory Integration/Occupational Ther. Including children with Special Needs Inclusion-Welcoming & planning for all chn <i>Guest Speaker Kim Amenabar</i>	Trawick Ch 10 Schonkoff, Ch 2,3 Due: Play Observ.
	<i>Due: Group 2 : Organic or At Risk Factors & Physical or Motor Development</i>	
Oct 25-Nov 22	Fulltime Internship	

Nov 29 Family relationships and influences on Trawick Ch 13,18
Development; parent expectations & cultural
Variations; social/emotional development;
Stressors, Abuse & poverty

Guest Speaker: Andrea Sobel

***Due Group 3: Organic or at Risk Factors &
Social-Emotional Development***

Dec 6 Developmental issues-parent and professional
Perspectives; constructive criticism and reflection; revisiting
Development from theoretical perspective

***Due Group 4: Organic or at Risk Factors &
Overall Development (malnutrition, AIDS, trauma etc)***

Due: STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

Dec 14 Final presentations

Description of Assignments

1. Earliest Memories Paper (In Class Assignment) (5 points)

The purpose of this assignment is to think about how your childhood influenced the assumptions you have of young children and their families. In an in class assignment, write a paper describing your memories and how they impacted you. Discuss how it impacted you either negatively and/or positively. Share how it influences the assumptions that you have about young children and their development. Describe how you will utilize this life experience in your work with young children.

Due: September 20, 2005

2. Child Play Observation (20 points)

The play observation will take place over the course of two weeks. The focus of this observation will be on the children's play skills, behavior and overall development. These observations may be used for the Statement of Understanding assignment.

The observation will focus on children at play and will be completed by observing two different children at the internship site. Students are expected to complete a play checklist (handout from Heidemann & Hewitt) Parten' Stage of Social Participation (Trawick-Smith) and examine sociodramatic play using Similansky's Quality Elements (Trawick-Smith p. 261). It is expected that students provide detailed summary information and examples for each child. The two children you observe should exhibit different types of play skills. (ie one who is strong in the area of play and one who may be facing challenges in this area).

The detailed summary of the 2 children should consider what each child is working on through his/her play, that is, their goal of play. Specifically, you should include the following: 1) descriptions of what you observed to validate your ratings on the checklist; 2) description of the levels and functions of play children exhibited; 3) information regarding the environment, curriculum and adult roles which may have impacted children's play and 4) examples of the children's actions/behaviors/skills related to the theoretical perspectives discussed in class. Specifically, you should comment on each theoretical perspective/theorist and how what you observed relates in some way to the theoretical models discussed in class. Use your course readings to support the information you provide in these detailed summaries.

In addition, you are to make a class presentation of an activity that facilitates the growth of the two children you observed. In a family friendly manner you must clearly state your learning objectives for the children you observed. Use items that can be found in the homes of the children you work with to develop the activity. Do not use purchased/manufactured toys/games. Through the activity and the adaptations you will demonstrate your knowledge of children's play and development. In your presentation, you must also demonstrate how you would adapt the activity for other culturally, linguistically and ability diverse young children.

DUE : October 18, 2005

3. Presentation of Family and Practitioner Resource and Information File (20 points)

There are two major parts to this assignment: one focuses on what you want your peers to know about the condition or topic; and the second focuses on what families may need to know to advocate for their children. Identify a disability that is of interest to you. In small groups (2-3) research and prepare a presentation and handout about the topic. Your research should include several sources, including books, professional journals, materials from research and advocacy organizations and national and international governmental agencies etc. Sources should be current and appropriate for culturally and linguistically diverse families and their children. Schedule a meeting with the instructor **BEFORE** beginning your research to discuss the focus of your topic and presentation. Please select a disability or risk factor that is new to you.

Develop a group presentation that reports on:

Part I,

- Research and understanding about the nature and characteristics/etiology of the disability or risk factor/special need;
- How it affects children's development across domains and stages;
- Impact that the disability/risk factor has on family's development across stages and ages;
- Cultural views and/or sociocultural factors influencing the disability or risk factor;
- Overview of various educational and intervention approaches currently applied but select one to highlight and demonstrate if possible;
- Any controversy surrounding particular intervention(s) and the research;
- Research based ideas/resources for professionals working with children with this special need; and

Part II,

- Appropriateness of select and relevant resources in Information File for diverse families
- Accessibility of materials;
- Responsiveness to issues of language, culture, poverty;
- How you evaluated and selected culturally responsive materials to support families advocacy efforts on behalf of their children and
- Your own reflections from a diverse family's and community perspective.

Prepare a display of information file that can support families in their efforts to gather information and resources to support their children's development. In your presentation, describe family centered criteria used to select relevant resources. You should bring any sample brochure or other resource materials you received/collected on your topic as well as information related to your experiences in contacting/talking with agencies while preparing your information file.

Prepare a handout that will be useful to classmates in their future work with diverse young children. At a minimum, the handout must include: 1) a description of the disability or special need 2) research on the major intervention(s) strategies used 3) information related to the role of culture, language and disability as well as on variations; 4) practical information for working with diverse children and their families and 5) a listing of appropriate resources/references for practitioners and diverse families.

Due: 10/4; 10/18; 11/29 and 12/6

5. Statement of Understanding (40 points)