

*George Mason University*  
*College of Education and Human Development*  
*Early Childhood Education Program*

**EDUT 514**

**Curriculum and Instruction for Diverse Learners (3:3:0)**

**October 9, 2009 – May 28, 2010**

**August 31, September 1, October 9, February 1, April 16, May 28 from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
and Monthly Community Meetings from 3:00 – 5:00 pm  
Alexandria City**

**Professor:** Deepa Aier, PhD

**Office phone:** 703-993-5076

**Office location:** Robinson A 103A

**Office hours:** by appointment

**Email address:** [daier@gmu.edu](mailto:daier@gmu.edu)

### **Course Description**

Explores principles of learning, curriculum development, and relationship between assessment and instruction. Examines role of play and active exploration in learning. Addresses guiding children's behavior and the role of families and culture in children's learning. *Field Experience Required.*

### **Nature of Course Delivery**

The class will have lecture, discussion, group work formats and will require active participation of all students.

### **Learner outcomes**

This course is designed to enable students to

1. 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.
2. Demonstrate how meaningful curriculum activities link to VA Foundations of Learning Standards for Early Childhood Education.
3. Develop individual and group activity plans and implement strategies to facilitate functional cognitive, social, communication, motor, and adaptive development.
4. Plan and adapt curriculum activities that are respectful of family-identified outcomes, preferences, interaction styles, and cultural norms.
5. Develop and reflect on various behavior management strategies for culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families.
6. Apply current research on effective developmentally appropriate practices to teaching young children from diverse backgrounds and varying abilities.
7. Analyze and design appropriate environments and materials to include addressing developmentally appropriate practices, anti-bias curriculum, and inclusion settings.
8. Utilize problem-solving strategies to address dilemmas encountered in diverse educational and community settings.
9. Analyze and describe the varied theoretical frameworks guiding early childhood curriculum approaches and practices.

10. Describe how ongoing data collection and management of classroom plans can be used to monitor child progress in the context of daily activities.
11. Analyze one's own teaching practices and set appropriate goals for teaching change.

### **Professional standards**

This concentration is approved for licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia and it complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The course content has been designed to address the following standards and competencies.

#### ***Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)***

- Standard 7 Instructional Planning

#### ***National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)***

- Standard 4 Teaching and Learning (Planning)

#### ***Virginia Professional Endorsement Competencies***

- Curriculum and instructional procedures

#### ***Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies***

- Understanding of the methods for providing **instructional programs for early intervention**
- Understanding of **behavior management** and the application of principles of learning and child development to individual and group management using a variety of techniques that is appropriate to the age of that child

#### ***Virginia Early Childhood Education Endorsement Competencies***

- Methods
- Understanding of **behavior management** and the application of principles of learning and child development to individual and group management using a variety of techniques that is appropriate to the age of that child

### **Required Texts**

Copple, C. & Bredekamp, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth to age 8* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

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

Cowhey, M. (2006). *Black ants and Buddhists: Thinking critically and teaching differently in the primary grades*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Virginia Department of Education. *Virginia's foundation blocks for early learning: Comprehensive standards for four-year-olds*.

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Elem\\_M/FoundationBlocks.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Elem_M/FoundationBlocks.pdf)

## **Course Requirements**

### **General Requirements**

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message.
3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins. Laptops and other electronic devices are to be used for educational and learning purposes only and should not be used during class time to check email, surf the web, or communicate with people outside of the class unless part of the class activity.
4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor in a timely fashion (at least 3 days prior to the due date).

### **Attendance**

Attendance in class is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect course grades. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

### **Written Assignments**

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as undergraduate/graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>.

Students will

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

### **Grading Criteria**

A = 95 – 100

A- = 90 – 94

B+ = 87 – 89

B = 83 – 86

B- = 80 – 82            C = 70 – 79            F = < 70

A+ is possible if work is of exceptional high quality and includes work above and beyond that required for the course.

### Grading Policy

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the catalog:

<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=104>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD licensure program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

### Submission of Performance-Based Assessment

This course has a Program Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) that **MUST** be uploaded and submitted to Task Stream for evaluation when the assignment is due. **Only PBAs posted to TaskStream will be graded.** This means that **NO** final grades will be posted until all materials are on Task Stream.

### CEHD Syllabus Statements of Expectations

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12> for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html>. Click on responsible Use of Computing Policy 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 <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/> or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

### Assignments

#### Attendance and Participation (15 points)

Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3)

completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.

- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class discussions, activities, and written reflections.

### **Environmental Analysis and Optimal Design Plan (15 points)**

This assignment will be completed in two parts.

- (1) Teacher and Teacher assistant will separately complete the three environmental check lists (a) Cultural Diversity Profile (2) Checklist for Diversity (3) Inclusive Classroom Environments. Using the information gathered, discuss your findings & reflections in the September community group meeting – How they worked? What would you do differently? Why? Reflect on how you needed to change you room once children were in the room & interacting or not interacting in the space?
- (2) As a teaching team, assess each area of the classroom and list two areas that you would like to modify to improve its effectiveness. Reflect separately on how the modifications worked. Discuss your reflections in the October community meeting

### **Reflective Video Analysis (RVA) Teacher Research (15 points)**

Teachers & teacher assistants will separately video tape, watch as a team and analyze their teaching. These will include teaching in 2 settings: small group (10 minutes) & large group (10 minutes). You will use the video tape to reflect critically on (1) intentionality (2) cultural responsiveness / individualization (3) teaching strategies used (4) effective implementation of planned activity. Reflection guide will be provided. Note down times on the videotape for 3 segments (of atleast 3 minutes) to present at the April community meeting.

### **Integrated Curriculum Unity (35 points)**

*This is the NCATE 3 Instructional Planning Performance-Based Assessment that shows evidence of meeting CEC Standard 7 Instructional Planning*

As a group, teachers at each site will plan together an integrated curriculum unit for January 2010. You will design a 2 week lesson plan using the theme identified from the DLM that will be coming up for the month of January. The plan should reflect – intentionality, culturally responsive practices, individualization. At least these three resources should be used while planning: (1) DLM curriculum – teacher’s edition (2) Copple & Bredekamp (3) Hull text books. This assignment is to be completed in the following steps:

Step 1 (10 points) – Observation of children’s interests and strengths in your classroom. Using the Appendix K on diversity, Appendix I on classroom profile, & your personal anecdotal notes & observations of the children over the past 4 months – write a 2 page reflection on what you have observed so far, the interests & strengths of the children in your classroom. This is due in the December Community meeting

Step 2 (10 points) – Make the weekly lesson plan for 2 weeks in January– based on the 3 books recommended above. This is due in the December community meeting

Step 3 (10 points) – Each teaching team will use choose 2 activities to further analyze using the lesson plan analysis guide provided – to clearly delineate intentionality, individualization,

teaching strategies assessment & culturally responsive practices. This is due in the January community meeting

Step 4 (5 points) – Implement the lesson plans & the 2 activities chosen by the teaching team & write a 4 page reflection (2 pages per activity) on how what worked well and what could be changed for the next time.

Also prepare to present (10 minutes) as a team at the February 1 all day institute - one activity that you analyzed & implemented & your reflections. Bring any materials that you think relevant for this presentation.

### **Critical examination of the DLM curriculum (20 points)**

Teachers will take a closer look at the DLM curriculum and critically examine each section of the curriculum using an assessment rubric. Select and research one curriculum content area & resources to share with your classmates. You will develop an easy to understand handout for the content area that contains (a) a brief statement of the significance of this area and the associated HS learning outcomes for children (b) an annotated list of at least 4 activity (i.e. exact page & activity name from the curriculum) from a theme of your choice that in your opinion reflects intentionality, cultural responsiveness & individualization. If it does not, then what would you add to activity to make it all the above.

### **Course Schedule and Topics**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings &amp; Assignments</b>
August 31 All Day Institute	LEARN model Intentional teaching	
September 1 All Day Institute	Intentional teaching strategies Developmentally appropriate practice and intentional teaching Creating an intentional environment	Reading: “To Be an Excellent Teacher” (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) <b>Due: Reflection guide assignment</b>
September Comm Mtg	Analyzing and changing the classroom environment Review: Intentionality & LEARN model	<b>Due: Environmental Analysis Part 1 assignment</b>
October 9 All Day Institute	Intentionality and the classroom environment with a focus on learning centers Culturally responsive practice (CRP)	“Empowering Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Children & Families” (Kirmani, 2007)
October Comm Mtg	Intentionality in learning centers (Environmental Analysis - continued) Review: CRP & DAP teaching strategies	<b>Due: Environmental Analysis Part 2 &amp; Reflection guide assignment</b>
November Comm Mtg	Lesson Plan - Using observations as an assessment guide for planning; Intentionality during lesson planning;	
December Comm Mtg	Lesson Plan - analyzing one activity from the lesson plan in detail (one activity lesson plan)	Reading: TBA
January Comm Mtg	Using assessment to plan curriculum and instruction that meets the interests, abilities & needs of all children	<b>Due: Integrated Curriculum assignment (Step 1, 2, &amp; 3)</b>

February 1	Bridging assessment, curriculum, and instruction Including all children	<b>Due: Integrated Curriculum assignment (Step 4) &amp; presentation at the institute</b>
February Comm Mtg	Inclusion & Individualization (including all children)	Reading: TBA
March Comm Mtg	Relationship with families Review: including all children	Reading: TBA
April Comm Mtg	Review video analysis Using videos to reflect on: intentionality, CRP, assessment & individualization	Reading: TBA <b>Due: Reflective Video Analysis Assignment</b>
April 16	Children's planning and reflection	Reading: TBA
May Comm Mtg	Children's planning and reflection	Reading: TBA <b>Due: Critical reflection on DLM curriculum assignment</b>
May 28	Sustaining professional development	