

EDEC 4010/EDEC 4010L
Orientation to Early Childhood Education/
Orientation to Early Childhood Education Laboratory
Fall 2007
Tuesday 8:00-9:55
(Room 417) Aderhold Hall

Instructor

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Overview

This course examines the issues of understanding children and building meaningful learning environments. We will consider how teacher beliefs, teacher knowledge, and teacher practices support or fail to support student learning and well-being in the classroom. We will examine the relationship between teacher practices and student learning. Through this course, we will reconstruct our vision of teaching by taking an inquiry stance.

The guiding questions we will use in this inquiry are as follows:

1. What have our experiences been as learners and teachers?
2. What are our experiences as learners and teachers?
3. Where do we want to be as learners and teachers?

The course topics will be considered within the socio-cultural, psychological, and political issues of schooling, with consideration of diversity and learning. We will work towards articulating our beliefs about teaching and learning as we consider these issues through reading, discussions, field experiences, and class projects.

Goals

Through this course we will

- Consider how the past shapes the present, investigate the beliefs we bring into our work with young children by examining our own stories as learners and teachers.
- Formulate understandings of young children's learning and development by examining our past experiences, participating in field experiences, and engaging in class readings.
- Learn the importance of students' perspectives and exploring ways in which the students' voices can be included in our thinking about teaching and learning.
- Develop a community of learners and teachers, collaborating to expand meaningful understandings of what it means to be a learner and teacher. In addition, we will collaborate to support each other and refine our procedures and products.
- Recognize the importance of diversity and work towards developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students.

Required Texts

1. Neito, S. (2005). *Why we teach*. New York: Teachers College.
2. Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher*. New York: Teachers College.
3. Bel-Jean Packet (163 E. Broad St., 706-548-3648)

Text for Book Club (Select any ONE)

1. Ashton-Warner, S. (1986). *Teacher*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
2. Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
3. Codell, E. R. (1999). *Educating Esme: Diary of a teacher's first year*. New York: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.
4. Intrator, S. & Scribner, M. (Ed) (2003) *Teaching with fire: Poetry that sustains the courage to teach*. WA: Jossey Bass
5. Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journey of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
6. Paley, V. (1989). *White Teacher*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Course Expectations

- Notify me **BEFORE** class (by 7:00 am) if you cannot attend a class. Be punctual for class.
- Remember to turn off your cell phone.
- Laptops can be used for taking class notes but not used for checking e-mails or doing other work during class time.
- Complete all readings and other preparations for each class in a timely manner.
- Participate thoughtfully and constructively in class discussions and activities. Active participation is essential to your learning in the course. Please be sensitive to turn-taking issues.
- "Take charge" of your own learning through pursuing projects which meet personal educational needs and interests.
- Be familiar with UGA Academic Honesty Policy and be consistently fair and honest in representing your work to others.

Honor Code

Be familiar with UGA Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy and be consistently fair and honest in representing your work to other

“Students at The University of Georgia are responsible for maintaining and adhering to the strictest standards of honesty and integrity in every aspect of their lives. Honesty in academic matters is a large part of this obligation. Specific regulations governing student academic conduct are contained in the Student Handbook and these should avoid misunderstanding.” – Undergraduate Bulletin

Requirements for 4010

- **Attendance and punctuality:**

You are required to attend all sessions. No unexcused absences. Class begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 9:55 a.m. Students who miss 4 or more classes with unexcused absences will receive a failing grade. Being tardy to class 2 times will equal 1 unexcused absence.

- **Establishing a respectful learning community:**

We are a community of learners where every one is a teacher and a student. A meaningful learning community is built on trust, respect, care, appreciation, and support. Within a caring and an ethical environment, we will engage in a collaborative exchange of ideas and understandings. The goal is to create a psychologically safe space where members of the learning community feel free to express their perspectives and at the same time feel safe to be challenged and stretched. We believe that there are no right and wrong perspectives; our goal is to understand and not to judge others. Therefore, remember to be sensitive, appreciative, and respectful as we participate in shared conversations.

Please Note: Turn off cell phones or pagers during class. Do not check email during class time.

- **Participation and Preparation:**

We will be actively participating in all class discussions and activities. Come to each class prepared to participate thoughtfully and critically. Occasionally, I will assign additional readings which you will be responsible for copying from the reserve files in OIT on the second floor of Aderhold. All work is to be turned in on the day it is due in class. Ten points will be deducted for every late day.

- **Web CT/Email:**

We will often use electronic methods for communication. Be sure to check Web CT and email regularly. You are responsible for all information distributed in emails and Web CT. Please respond to emails within two days of when they were sent. Failure to respond affects your participation grade.

- **Assessment:**

Each day at the end of class you will be required to fill out a daily assessment sheet in which you will comment on the quality of both your work during the class session and your preparation work for that session. The primary purpose of this assessment is to help support your professional and personal growth. I will check your self assessment log periodically. In addition, you will receive feedback from me on assignments which will be intended to help you more clearly demonstrate what you know and inspire you to continue being a learner.

Grades will be determined on the point system as described below:

Class Participation (15)
 Dual Entry Journals/Book Club (20)
 Weekly Noticing (20)
 Learner's Autobiography (15)
 Final Presentation (10)
 Community Building (5)
 Final Exam (15)
 Total: 100 points

A = 4.0 (95-100 points)
A- = 3.7 (90-94)
B+ = 3.3 (87-89)
B = 3.0 (83-86)
B- = 2.7 (80-82)
C+ = 2.3 (77-79)
C = 2.0 (73-76)
C- = 1.7 (70-72)
F = 0.0 (0-69)

Assignments for 4010

Weekly Noticing:

Each week outside of class, you will be asked to take note of various ways in which teachers, children, and learners are represented on television, in the newspaper, in schools, etc. These “noticings” will be artifacts or experiences that made you stop and think about the teaching profession and/or how a “teacher” or a “student” is being defined in multiple ways by various people. Each week, you must bring in at least one noticing (a written description of an experience, a photograph, a description of a movie, an article you read, etc.) and a brief typed (one paragraph to one page) description of how this particular artifact led you to think differently about the teaching profession.

Dual Entry Diary:

This is a journal that you will bring each day to class and will use to guide your text-based conversations with your peers. Select quotes (a sentence or a short paragraph) from your readings that you feel connected to. For each diary entry type the quote with page number first and then write your response to it, explaining your connection. What did this quote stir in you? How did it influence your thinking? What memory or experience did it evoke? You could make a text-text connection, a text-self connection, and/or text-society connection. How can you connect this quote to your past, present and future as a learner and teacher?

In addition, you will choose one book from the book club list and read it completely. You must take notes throughout the book that you will use to guide your in-class discussions. In addition, you will be asked to give a short description of the book to your classmates.

Learner's Autobiography:

Write a learner's autobiography (5-10 pages, double spaced). Use your map, jotted notes, or time line as the basis for writing a memoir of your meaningful school experiences. Consider your own cultural life history as an important aspect of this. Be sure to include the main "themes" that emerge from your exploration of your learning history and how your learning history influences the kind of teacher you want to be?

Community Building:

Each week, 3 people will be responsible for designing a short (5-10 minutes) community building or learning activity designed to help us get to know one another better or think more deeply about ourselves as learners. Please post a short description of the activity to Web CT at least 2 days before you planned class session.

Final Exam:

There will be a final synthesis paper which is intended to not only synthesize the understandings you are developing about what it means to teach young children across the articles and books you are reading, but also to connect the work you are doing in your field experience with the work you are doing in the university classroom.

This syllabus contains a proposed agenda. The instructor reserves the right to make modifications throughout the semester. Additional readings will be given throughout the semester and will be available on web CT.

Week One: August 21

Topic: Introductions, Syllabus

Week Two: August 28

Topic: Why we teach?

Readings: Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (Introduction-Ch. 1)

Week Three: September 4

Topic: Why we teach?

Readings: Nieto, S. (2005). *Why we teach* (Preface-Ch. 2)

Week four: September 11

Topic: Why we teach?

Readings: Nieto, S. (2005). *Why we teach* (readings will be assigned in class)

Due: **Dual Diaries**

Week Five: September 18

Topic: Why we teach?

Readings: Nieto, S. (2005). *Why we teach* (Final chapter)

Due: **Autobiography**

Week Six: September 25

Topic: Listening, Observing and Knowing
Readings: Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (Ch. 2)
 Balaban, N. (1995). Seeing the child, Knowing the person. In W. Ayers (Ed.). *To become a teacher: Making a difference in children's lives*. (Ch. 4, pp. 49 – 57)

Week Seven: October 2

Topic: Listening, Observing and Knowing
Readings: Paley, V. (1986). On listening to what the children say. *Harvard Educational Review*, 56(2), 122- 131.
 Commeyras, M. (1995). What can we learn from students' questions? *Theory into Practice*, 34(2), 101-106

Week Eight: October 9

Topic: Listening, Observing and Knowing
Readings: Lake, R. (1990, September). An Indian father's plea. *Teacher Magazine*, 48-53.
 Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 31(2), 132-141.
Due: **Dual Diaries**

Week Nine: October 16

Topic: Listening, Observing and Knowing
Readings: To be announced

Week Ten: October 23

Topic: Listening, Observing and Knowing
Readings: To be announced

Week Eleven: October 30

Topic: Listening, Observing and Knowing
Readings: Individual choices-Where do we get the answers? What is out there? How can we find new up to date information?

Week Twelve: November 6

Topic: Listening, Observing and Knowing
Reading: Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (Ch. 7 & 8)

Week Thirteen: November 13

Topic: Student Presentations
Due: Children's Thinking Project

Week Fourteen: November 20

Topic: Book Club

Week Fifteen: November 27

Topic: Student Presentations
Due: Self-Assessment Sheet
Dual Entry Diary

Week Sixteen:

Topic: Alternate Final Exam/To be announced
Due: Final Exam

Requirements for 4010L

Field Experience:

You are required to visit Whit Davis Elementary each week. Each visit should be at least an-hour-and-15-minutes long, and *a minimum of 15 hours* (excluding the orientation meeting) across the semester should be spent at the school. Plan to go to the school at a consistent time each week. For example, if you plan to go on Tuesday and 1:00, then plan to go every Tuesday at 1:00.

You are required to be on time and to attend all field assignment observations. Any unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. If you have to miss an observation, you must contact both me by phone (706) 389 6414 and your mentor teacher before the observation time.

You are required to complete 2 assignments on your field experience (see the guidelines below) and to keep a log (attached) of your visits. You are responsible for notifying the school and me in case you may be absent. You are also responsible for making up any times you missed your field experience. *Please note:* Being on time is critical for your work with your mentor teacher(s) and children. Late arrival is *not* acceptable.

A completed log sheet and spiral note book (field observations) is due November 27. Your 4010L grade will depend on your attendance in the field and on completed field experience assignments.

Guidelines for the Field Experience Reflections

During your field experience you will be observing and writing reflections. The purpose of writing reflections is to make deliberate connections between your field experience and the class readings and assignments.

You will buy a spiral notebook and keep a record of your observations. The purpose of this notebook is to help you to be both observant and reflective. Use the four assignment prompts to guide your observations and later use these observations to write your reflections. The topics are listed below. Use pseudonyms for the names of children and teachers. You will turn in this notebook at the end of your field experience with the time log.

Assignment # 1 Knowing your mentor teacher: Plan an interview with your mentor teacher to understand her/his vision for teaching. How does she/he create the classroom environment in keeping with their vision? What roles do the students play? What roles does she/he play? What specific teaching strategies does she/he use? Write conclusions and questions for future observations and explaining how what you have learned will affect your teaching in this classroom.

Assignment # 2: Observing a classroom from a student's perspectives: Think about the experiences students in your class might be having. Sitting at the desk of the child and asking your self, "how does it feel to be this child?" may help you to engage in perspective taking. Putting yourself physically in the child's place may help.

Guidelines for observing a classroom

- How does the classroom look? Is it a student's world or a teacher's, or a merging of the two? Is it a place I want to be?
- How do things in the classroom sound? How do I characterize or interpret what the teacher says and does, and what my classmates say and do?
- What does it feel like to be a member of this class? Is it safe or scary, friendly or lonely, comfortable or rigid? Can I be myself?
- What are the rules? Who makes them? What does it mean to break them?

- What does it mean to be a good student? Is it following the rules? Knowing the right answer? Thinking carefully for myself and with my friends?
- When do I feel puzzled? Engaged? Bored? What helps me feel interested?
- What counts as knowledge? Who decides?

Write conclusions and questions for future observations and explain how what you have learned will affect your teaching and your future inquiry.

Assignment # 3: Learning from students' questions: Make a note of the questions students ask in class. Try to note the questions as verbatim as possible. Further observe the interactions that follow. What kinds of questions are asked in this class (concept building, clarification, evaluative, open-ended, close ended)? Who asks the questions (student initiated, teacher-initiated)? Who answers the questions (students, teachers, the child who posed the question)? What counts as "right" answer? Who decides? Can there be one right answer? Write conclusions and questions for future learning and explaining how what you have learned will affect your teaching.

Assignment # 4: Knowing a student: Select one child in your class. Using the methods we have discussed in class (like observing, listening, journaling, arts-based activities, or any other method you would like to explore further), take some time to know what this chosen student expects from his/her teacher, his/her peers, and self? What roles does he/she play? What activities does he/she like to do? What are the reasons? Write conclusions and questions for future observations and explain how what you have learned would affect your teaching in this classroom.

Assignment # 5: "Story of the Field" Project:

Be sure to include the following:

Knowing your mentor teacher, observing a classroom from a student's perspectives, learning from students' questions, knowing a student and a self assessment (How would you assess the quality of ideas represented in your paper? How would you assess the quality of your writing? Think about style as well as organization and mechanics. What have you learned in the process of writing this project?)

NAME: _____

EDEC 4010/4010L FIELD EXPERIENCE LOG SHEET

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Date: _____ **Time at school:** _____

Total Hours at the field _____

Mentor Teacher Signature _____

Comments (not required) _____

GSTEP Framework

The GSTEP Framework is a replicable statewide induction tool that identifies the knowledge, skills, dispositions, understandings, and other attributes of accomplished teaching. It provides a structure through which novices and their mentors are able to assess and analyze teaching practice.

GSTEP Framework Guiding Principles

The following principles guided the development of the GSTEP Framework:

- **The Process Principle:** Learning to teach is a career-long process.
- **The Support Principle:** Successful engagement in the process of learning to teach requires support from multiple partners.
- **The Ownership Principle:** Professional teachers have ownership of their careers, which they create and design.
- **The Impact Principle:** Effective teaching yields evidence of student learning.
- **The Equity Principle:** All teachers deserve high expectations and support.
- **The Dispositions Principle:** Productive dispositions affect student learning, teacher growth, and school climate positively.
- **The Technology Principle:** Technology facilitates teaching, learning, community building, and resource acquisition.

■ Content & Curriculum

Teachers demonstrate a strong knowledge of content area(s) appropriate for their certification levels.

Accomplished teachers:

- Demonstrate knowledge of content, major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the subject(s) they teach.
- Understand and use subject-specific content and pedagogical content knowledge (how to teach their subjects) that is appropriate for diverse learners they teach.
- Stay current in their subject areas as engaged learners and/or performers in their fields.
- Relate content area(s) to other subject areas and see connections to everyday life.
- Carefully select and use a wide variety of resources, including available technology, to deepen their own knowledge in the content area(s).
- Interpret and construct school curriculum that reflects state and national content area standards.

■ Knowledge of Students & Their Learning

Teachers support the intellectual, social, physical, and personal development of all students.

Accomplished teachers:

- Believe that all children can learn at high levels and hold high expectations for all.
- Understand how learning occurs in general and in the content areas (e.g., how diverse learners construct knowledge, acquire skills, and develop habits of mind).
- Are sensitive, alert, and responsive to all aspects of a child's well-being.
- Understand how factors in environments inside and outside of school may influence students' lives and learning.
- Are informed about and adapt their work based on students' stages of development, multiple intelligences, learning styles, and areas of exceptionality.
- Establish respectful and productive relationships with families and seek to develop cooperative partnerships in support of student learning and well-being.

■ Learning Environments

Teachers create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Accomplished teachers:

- Create a learning community, in which students assume responsibility, participate in decision-making, and work both collaboratively and independently.
- Organize, allocate, and manage time, space, activities, technology and other resources to provide active and equitable engagement of diverse students in productive tasks.
- Understand and implement effective classroom management.
- Recognize the value of and use knowledge about human motivation and behavior to develop strategies for organizing and supporting student learning.
- Are sensitive to and use knowledge of students' unique cultures, experiences, and communities to sustain a culturally responsive classroom.
- Access school, district, and community resources in order to foster students' learning and wellbeing.
- Use effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

■ Assessment

Teachers understand and use a range of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous development of all learners.

Accomplished teachers:

- Understand measurement theory and the characteristics, uses, and issues of different types of assessment.
- Use pre-assessment data to select or design clear, significant, varied and appropriate student learning goals.
- Choose, develop, and use classroom-based assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions.
- Involve learners in self-assessment, helping them become aware of their strengths and needs and encouraging them to set personal goals for learning.
- Develop and use valid, equitable grading procedures based on student learning.
- Use assessment data to communicate student progress knowledgeably and responsibly to students, parents, and other school personnel.
- Use resources, including available technology, to keep accurate and up-to-date records of student work, behavior, and accomplishments.
- Are committed to using assessment to identify student strengths and needs and promote student growth.

■ Planning & Instruction

Teachers design and create instructional experiences based on their knowledge of content and curriculum, students, learning environments, and assessment.

Accomplished teachers:

- Articulate clear and defensible rationales for their choices of curriculum materials and instructional strategies.
- Plan and carry out instruction based upon knowledge of content standards, curriculum, students, learning environments, and assessment.

- Understand and use a variety of instructional strategies appropriately to maintain student engagement and support the learning of all students.
- Monitor and adjust strategies in response to learner feedback.
- Vary their roles in the instructional process (e.g. instructor, facilitator, coach, audience) in relation to the content and purposes of instruction and the needs of students.
- Use appropriate resources, materials, and technology to enhance instruction for diverse learners.
- Value and engage in planning as a collegial activity.

■ Professionalism

Teachers recognize, participate in, and contribute to teaching as a profession.

Accomplished teachers:

- Continually examine and extend their knowledge of the history, ethics, politics, knowledge of the history, ethics, politics, organization, and practices of education.
- Understand and implement laws related to rights and responsibilities of students, educators, and families.
- Follow established codes of professional conduct, including school and district policies.
- Systematically reflect on teaching and learning to improve their own practice.
- Seek opportunities to learn based upon reflection, input from others, and career goals.
- Advocate for curriculum, instruction, learning environments, and opportunities that support the diverse needs of and high expectations for all students.
- Assume leadership and support roles as part of a school team