

EDEC 4020

Decision Making for Planning, Teaching, and Organizing Early Childhood Classrooms

Class Schedule: Fall 2007
412 Aderhold Hall
Monday & Wednesday
8:00 a.m.-9:55 p.m.

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Course Description:

Welcome to EDEC 4020! This course aims to help future teachers develop as reflective decision makers by understanding and incorporating the major themes, concepts, and skills involved in organizing, planning, and developing instruction in early childhood classrooms.

Required Texts:

Bel-Jean packet (163 E. Broad St., Phone: 706-548-3648)

Goals and Objectives:

1. To understand teaching as intellectual and ethical work contributing to building just, equitable, and democratic society.
2. To learn about issues related to curriculum, pedagogy, learning environments, and assessment.
3. To be able to design and implement educational activities meaningful to children's lives based on knowledge about how children learn and develop.
4. To learn about methods for observing children, classroom environments, and teaching approaches.
5. To learn about what it means to be a reflective practitioner and link theory to practice.
6. To develop multiple perspectives and diverse ways of problem solving regarding classroom management dilemmas.

The course follows the conceptual framework for educator preparation programs in the College of Education, which states that the college "aspires to prepare exemplary, reflective professionals to serve a diverse global community" (see <http://ncate.coe.uga.edu/framework/>). The early childhood program shares that aspiration and seeks to prepare exemplary and reflective teachers of young children by committing itself to the standards for early childhood education of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (see 505-3-.17 at <http://www.gapsc.com/TeacherEducation/Rules/Rules.asp>). The early childhood standards addressed in EDEC 4020 are listed at <http://www.coe.uga.edu/syllabus/edec/EDEC4020PSCStandardsP.pdf>.

Expectations:

I am looking forward to a very productive course in which we will all learn a great deal about trends and issues critical to professional and reflective decision-making in early childhood classrooms. I expect you to be an active participant in class activities by doing the followings:

- Attend all class sessions and be prompt in attendance.

- Read all assigned readings *before* class and come prepared to discuss them.
- Always bring all related materials (textbooks, notes, etc.) to each class session.
- Demonstrate professionalism and respect when sharing your own perspectives and discussing other people's opinions and experiences.
- Use pseudonyms when discussing individual children, families, or teachers inside or outside of class.
- Put as much into this course as you expect to get out of it.

Note. This course contains both university and field components. Students must pass both EDEC 4020 and EDEC 4020L in order to pass the course and progress to student teaching.

Academic Honesty:

All students are expected to conform to The University of Georgia's academic honesty policy (see http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/culture_honesty.htm). Unless otherwise stated in writing by the instructor, all assignments and exams are to be completed without assistance of other students.

Attendance & Participation (10%):

Your attendance is required for each class meeting. Class begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 9:55 a.m. If you do not attend class, you are unable to participate in the important discussions and activities that will be undertaken during class time. Attendance is also a reflection of your professionalism and commitment. It is your responsibility to communicate with instructors, mentor teachers, and university facilitators regarding any absence. You should provide a documented account of any illness for an excusable absence. One unexcused absence will deduct 3 points from your total attendance and participation score; two or more absences will result in a letter grade deduction. Absences in the field must be made up. In addition, promptness is expected both in class and in the field. Being tardy to class two times will equal one unexcused absence.

Equally important is your advance preparation for each class. Please read assigned readings *before* class by reflecting on your own learning and teaching experiences. Your careful preparation and your enthusiastic and respectful participation will contribute to your and your peers' learning. Contribute to creating an earnest learning environment by turning off cellular phones and by putting away any unrelated materials (e.g., newspapers, other course materials). Lap tops can be used only for taking class notes, not for checking e-mails or doing other work during class time. Violating these expectations will affect your participation grade.

Assignments (90%):

This course has class assignments, field assignments, and a cumulative exam. Except for the cumulative exam, all other assignments should be typed (double-spaced, 1 inch margin, Times New Roman, font size 12). *No cover page* is necessary. Type your name in the upper left-hand corner and the assignment title in the upper right-hand corner of the first page. Late submissions are not acceptable.

Class Assignments

1. Group Lesson and Assessment Plan (Due: 9/26)

With your peers who will be working in the same grade level during the field experience, develop a thematic lesson that integrates at least two content areas and that includes an assessment method (or methods) discussed in class. This should be a lesson that each of your group members can teach for 20-40 minutes per day for 3-5 days during the field experience—However, you do not have to plan to teach the lesson on successive days (i.e., You can teach two afternoon sessions per week for 2 weeks). Your group plan should be no more than 5 pages and include the following information:

- Title of the activity
- Grade level
- Possible time (e.g., calendar) and group format (e.g., the large group) for the lesson
- Objectives (knowledge, skills, dispositions, and feelings to be promoted)
- Georgia performance standards met
- Materials to be used
- Brief descriptions of each day's lesson procedures
- Assessment method(s) to be utilized

Each group will present their lesson and assessment plan on September 26 and receive feedback from classmates. All group plans will be compiled to make a Cluster D lesson and assessment booklet for your cluster's future reference and to share with other cluster students and faculty. Therefore, each group's work should be high quality, creative, and informative.

2. Online Case Responses (Due: see Segment IV schedule)

During Segment IV (after the field experience), we will discuss various dilemmas early childhood teachers face when managing their classrooms. You will need to check out the case web site (the address will be announced later) to listen to each case and respond to the questions posed online *before* class. You will receive a full credit for each entry, if your responses are relevant to the questions posed and the assignments are submitted on time.

Field Assignments:

1. One Short Story or Three Poems Based on the Observation of Children (Due: 10/31)

Carefully observe a child or a group of children to learn what they say, do, care, hope, and/or fear throughout your field experience. Write one short story (no more than 6 pages) or three poems of what you learned about the child (or children) based on your observation. We will make a class book composed of each person's story or poems that will be shared with your cluster peers, future cluster students, and faculty. Your writing should be high quality without any mechanical error for this publication. Before writing your story or poems, describe the following information:

- *Child:* Who is the child (or children) you observed?
- *Background:* Why did you decide to write about this child (or children) and about this particular topic or incident? What did this topic/incident tell you about the child (or children)?

Each person will present his/her writing on either October 31st or November 5th when we reflect on the field experience.

2. Individual Lesson and Assessment Report (Due: 11/7)

During the field experience, implement the lesson and assessment that you have designed with your grade peers. This lesson must be formally approved by your mentor teacher before its implementation. Write an individual report (3-5 pages) that includes the following information:

- Title of the activity
- Grade level
- Time (e.g., calendar) and group format (e.g., the large group) used for the lesson
- ✓ Objectives (*only mention any changes made*)
- ✓ Georgia performance standards met (*only mention any changes made*)
- ✓ Brief descriptions of each day's lesson procedures (*only mention any changes made*)
- ✓ Materials used (*only mention any changes made*)
- ✓ Assessment methods utilized (*only mention any changes made*)
- Reflection: How well do you think you and the students achieved instructional objectives? How meaningful do you think the activity was for the children's learning and lives? How would you like to modify the topic or procedures of the lesson for your future implementation and why? How would you like to modify the assessment method(s) and why?
- Signature and 1-2 sentence comments by your cooperating teacher

3. Descriptions of Dilemma Situations (Due: 12/5)

For this assignment, select 3 most challenging dilemma situations that you, as a student intern and a future teacher, faced during the field experience and describe the situations in great detail (1-1.5 pages/dilemma). When describing each dilemma situation, consider the following aspects:

- When did it happen?
- How did it happen?
- Who were involved in that situation?
- How did each person (e.g., yourself, a child or children, your mentor teacher, other teachers, parents) act and react to each other?
- What happened as the result?
- How did you think about the situation at that moment? Whether and how has your thought about the situation changed since then?

Cumulative Exam:

The exam in this class will be cumulative in nature, with questions posed throughout the course. At the beginning of each class you will respond in quick writing to the questions based on your understanding about the assigned readings.

Grading:

- Attendance and Participation 10%
- Group Lesson & Assessment Plan 20%
- Online Case Responses 10%
- A Short Story or Poems 20%
- Individual Lesson and Assessment Report 15%
- Descriptions of Dilemma Situations 10%
- Cumulative Exam 15%

A:	95-100
A-:	90-94
B+:	87-89
B:	84-86
B-:	80-83
C+:	77-79
C:	74-76
C-:	70-73
D:	60-69
F:	59 or Below

Tentative Schedule:

Date	Topics & Readings	Assignments
Week 1: August 20	Course Overview	
SEGMENT I: Designing Curricula & Learning Environments		
August 22	Curriculum & Teaching (1) Ayers, W. (2005). <i>Liberating the curriculum</i> . In Author, <i>To teach: The journey of a teacher</i> (pp. 85-108). New York: Teachers College Press.	
Week 2: August 27	Curriculum & Teaching (2): Lucy Sprague Mitchell Wolfe, J. (2000). Lucy Sprague Mitchell. In Author, <i>Learning from the past: Historical voices in early childhood education</i> (pp. 351-390). Mayerthorpe, Alberta: Piney Branch Press. *Guest Speaker: Jinhee Kim	
August 29	Curriculum & Teaching (3): The Project Approach Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2005). The project approach: An overview. In J. L. Roopnarine & J. E. Johnson (Eds.), <i>Approaches to early childhood education</i> (4 th ed., pp. 296-310). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.	
Week 3: September 3	No Class: Labor Day	
September 5	Creating a Learning Environment (1) Ayers, W. (2005). <i>Creating an environment for learning</i> . In Author, <i>To teach: The journey of a teacher</i> (pp. 48-63). New York: Teachers College Press.	
Week 4: September 10	Creating a Learning Environment (2) Cooper, J. M., & Tomlinson, C. A. (2006). <i>An educator's guide to differentiating instruction</i> (pp. 1-36). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.	
September 11	Meet Your Teacher Day	
September 12	Assessment (1): What is it? Ayers, W. (2005). <i>Keeping track</i> . In Author, <i>To teach: The journey of a teacher</i> (pp. 109-121). New York: Teachers College Press. + <u>Brainstorming Lesson</u>	
September 14	Full Day in Field	
Week 5: September 17	Assessment (2): Standardized Tests Shepard, L. A. (1999). The influence of standardized tests on the early childhood curriculum, teachers, and children. In B. Spodek & O. N. Saracho (Eds.), <i>Issues in early childhood curriculum</i> (pp. 166-189). Troy, NY: Educator's International Press, Inc. + <u>Brainstorming Lesson</u>	
September 19	Assessment (3): Alternative Assessment Methods Helm, J. H., & Beneke, S., & Steinheimer, K. (1998). <i>Windows on learning: Documenting young children's work</i> (p. 36, pp. 48-71).	

	New York: Teachers College Press. +Brainstorming Lesson & Assessment	
September 21	Full Day in Field	
SEGMENT II: Lesson & Assessment Planning		
Week 6: September 24	Work Session for Lesson & Assessment Planning Work with the same grade peers to finalize lesson and assessment planning	
September 26	Sharing Lesson & Assessment Plans Present your group lesson & assessment plans in class; Evaluate your peers' lesson & assessment plans	<u>Due:</u> Group Lesson & Assessment Plans
September 28	Full Day in Field	
SEGMENT III: Field Experience		
October 1 - October 25	Implementing Lesson and Assessment Observing Children to Write about Them Reflecting on Dilemma Situations	
SEGMENT IV: Reflection & Management		
Week 11: October 29	Becoming Reflective Practitioners Zeichner, K. M., & Listorn, D. P. (1996). <i>Reflective teaching: An introduction</i> (pp. ix-xiv, 1-22). Mahwah, NJ Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.	
October 31	Reflection on Children's Learning & Life: Sharing a Story/Poem about Children (1)	<u>Due:</u> A Short Story or a Poem
Week 12: November 5	Reflection on Children's Learning & Life: Sharing a Story/Poem about Children (2)	
November 7	Reflection on Curriculum, Learning Environments, & Assessment	<u>Due:</u> Individual Lesson & Assessment Report
Week 13: Nov. 12	Case Study Orientation & Case 1: A Troubled Child (I)	
November 14	Case 1: A Troubled Child (II) Gnezda, N. (2005). <i>Teaching difficult students: Blue Jay in the classroom</i> (pp. 5-9, 51-77, 92, 97-99). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Education.	<u>Due:</u> Case Response

Week 14: Nov. 19	Case 2: Confrontation with Parents (I) Check out the case web site	
November 21	No Class: Thanksgiving	
November 26	Case 2: Confrontation with Parents (II) 1. Graham, K., & Johnson, L. (1998). What is the role of parents and community members? In J. Ferrini-Mundy, K. Graham, L. Johnson, & G. Mills (Eds.), <i>Making change in mathematics education: Learning from the field</i> (pp. 73-86.) National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. 2. Epstein, J. (1995). School/family/community partnerships. <i>Phi Delta Kappan</i> , 76(9), Retrieved March 30, 2007, From http://web.ebscohost.com	<u>Due:</u> Case Response
Week 15: Nov. 28	Case 3: Homework (I) Check out the case web site	
December 3	Case 3: Homework (II) 1. MacKenzie, R. J. (2003). Solving problems with homework. In Author, <i>Setting limits in the classroom</i> (Rev., pp. 280-306). New York: Three Rivers Papers. 2. Pellegrini, A. D., & Bohn, C. M. (2005). The role of recess in children's cognitive performance and school adjustment. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 34, 13-19.	<u>Due:</u> Case Response
December 5	Concluding 4020	<u>Due:</u> Dilemma Descriptions