

EDEC 4010/EDEC 4010L
Orientation to Early Childhood Education/
Orientation to Early Childhood Education Laboratory
Fall 2004

Thursdays 8:00-8:55
430 Aderhold Hall

Instructor

Dr. Kyunghwa Lee
427 Aderhold Hall
Phone: 542-4294
E-mail: kyunghwa@uga.edu
Office hours: by appointment

The essence of good teaching is in the arena of human relationships. Teaching is good when a class becomes a community of honest, nurturant and mutually respectful people. Experienced teachers treasure the moments and the memories of times when laughter, compassion, and surprise described their day or year. (Christopher M. Clark, *Thoughtful Teaching*, Teachers College Press, 1995)

Course Description

Translation of theories about how children learn into ideas for application in the classroom. Bases for developmentally appropriate practices are examined in light of the students' own experiences as learners.

Objectives

This course aims to

1. Explore what it means to be a teacher of young children by relating field experience to class readings and discussions.
2. Formulate an understanding of young children's learning and development by utilizing both field experience and readings/discussions.
3. Develop insight into what and how to teach young children to make their learning meaningful.
4. Utilize computer applications, such as electronic mail and list serve, to communicate with instructors and classmates.

Texts

1. Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College. (Available at UGA bookstore)
2. Bel-Jean Packet (163 E. Broad St., 706-548-3648)

Requirements for 4010

Non-graded Requirements

- **Attendance and punctuality:**
Considering this class meets only for an hour each week, you are required to attend all sessions. Class begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 8:55 a.m. *Late arrival* will constitute an absence. *Please note:* Students who miss 2 classes will receive a grade lower than what is expected from a total point of graded requirements. Students who miss 3 or more classes will receive a failing grade.
- **Establishing a respectful learning community:**
Thoughtful reflections and honest sharing are a critical component of this course. It is important that all members feel respected and valued. I emphasize the significance of respecting all members' personal views, values, experiences, and cultural backgrounds. Please turn off cellular phones or pagers during the class.
- **Electronic Mail and Listserv:**
We will often use electronic methods for communication. Beginning the 3rd week of class, a 4010 listserv will be established. You are responsible for all messages and announcements posted on the listserv so be sure to check it regularly. Also, use the listserv to expand the class discussion or to share your thoughts that you did not have a chance to discuss in class.

Graded Requirements

- **Participation:**
You are expected to actively participate in *all* class discussions and activities. You are required to read the assigned materials *before* class. Please come prepared to participate in discussions by always bringing all necessary materials (textbooks, assignments, etc.). You will be often engaged in short writings about some of the readings during class discussions. Skimming, speed reading, etc. will not help you to be an active participant. (20%)
- **Written Exams:**
There will be two take-home *essay* exams. To prepare the exams, carefully read each week's assigned materials and take good notes of them. Each exam can be taken either individually or in small groups, depending on each person's preference. The first exam questions will be given after class on *September 30th* and the second exam on *November 11th*. (25% x 2 = 50%)
- **An Artifact and a Written Statement:**
As the final assignment, you are required to create an artifact (craft, drawing, symbol, etc.) and a written statement (e.g., poem, invocation, narrative, etc.) that reflect who you are and who you want to be as a developing teacher. The idea for an artifact and a written statement should be an integration of what you learned from the readings, discussions, and field experience. The artifact and the written

statement will be evaluated by three criteria: (a) sources of the inspiration, (b) ideas for how to use the artifact and the written statement for the future teaching, and (c) explanation and articulation of the meanings of the artifact. I encourage you to think about and work on this assignment from the beginning of the semester. Both the artifact and the written statement should be something that you would like to take with you for your future job interviews and to keep in your future classrooms. During the last two weeks (*December 2nd* and *9th*), each person will have a chance to share her artifact and written statement through a short (about 5 minutes) presentation. You must attend the two presentation sessions. (30%)

Grading:

Although non-graded requirements are not scored on the point scale below, they *will* be considered when assigning final course grades. Be sure to pay close attention to them.

- A: 90-100 points on graded requirements
- B: 80-89 points on graded requirements
- C: 70-79 points on graded requirements
- D: 60-69 points on graded requirements
- F: less than 59 points on graded requirements or 3 (or more) absences

Requirements for 4010L

Nametags:

You will be expected to wear an official UGA nametag during all field visits. The cost of the nametag is \$7.75 and is due during our second class (*August 26th*). Please make checks payable to Holly Coder.

Field Experience:

You are required to visit Whit Davis Elementary School (1450 Whit Davis Rd., ph: 706-369-1036) each week, beginning September 2nd and ending December 9th. Each visit should be at least an-hour-and-15-minutes long, and *a minimum of 15 hours* (excluding the orientation meeting on September 2nd) across the semester should be spent at the school.

You are required to write 4 reflections 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 is due *December 9th*. Your 4010L grade will depend on your attendance in the field and on complete field experience reflections.

Guidelines for the Field Experience Reflections

The purpose of writing reflections is to make deliberate connections between your field experience and the class readings. The topics and due date of each entry (at least 1 page, typed, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 Times New Roman) are listed below. Write your name on top of the left-hand corner and the entry number (e.g., reflection 1) on the right-hand corner. Immediately begin typing your thoughts without repeating and typing the question for each entry. Use pseudonyms for the names of children and teachers. In each entry, you may focus on 1-2 topics, if not all, to reflect on. Cite relevant readings whenever appropriate.

Reflection 1 (Due *September 9*):

Carefully observe the classroom(s) and the children. What did you learn about your mentor teacher(s) and the children through their actions? Did you find any myths about teaching that you realize you had during your observation in the classroom(s) or from your own interaction with the children?

Reflection 2 (Due *September 23*):

Focus on 1-2 children. Carefully observe and listen to them. Describe, first, what the children did and said and, next, write your interpretation about intentions and meanings that the children delivered and created. Did you gain any insight into who each child is, what he/she likes to do, what he/she cares about?

Reflection 3 (Due *October 14*):

What have you learned about the families of children with whom you work? Are there stereotypes that you think you had about some children with particular backgrounds? What do you think will be useful ways of communicating and working with such children's families?

Reflection 4 (Due *November 4*):

Reflecting on your field experience so far, how do you make sense of the "developmentally appropriate practice"? What kinds of activities or structures would you like to create and emphasize for children's learning in your future classrooms?

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

Mentor Teacher Signature _____

Comments (not required) _____

Week One: August 19

Topic: Introduction
Objective: We talk about the purpose and assignment of this class by reviewing the course syllabus.

Week Two: August 26

Topic: Why teach? What is it like to be a teacher?
Objective: Through reflections on the reading and pre-professional field experience, we explore the myth and challenge of teaching.
Readings: Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press. (Preface & Chapter 1)
Due: Payment for the nametag (\$7.75)

Week Three: September 2

Topic: Orientation at Whit Davis Elementary School

Week Four: September 9

Topic: Observing children
Objective: We discuss the importance of understanding a child by carefully observing him/her and by seeing through the child's perspective.
Readings: Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press. (Chapter 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* (pp. 49-57). New York: Teachers College Press.
Due: Field experience reflection 1

Week Five: September 16

Topic: Listening to children
Objective: We learn from an experienced teacher how to listen to a child to understand him/her.
Readings: Paley, V. G. (1986). On listening to what the children say. *Harvard Educational Review*, 56(2), 122-131.
Gallas, K. (1994). Sharing time: When children take the chair. In K. Gallas, *The languages of learning: How children talk, write, dance, draw, and sing their understanding of the world* (pp. 17-35). New York: Teachers College Press.

Week Six: September 23

Topic: Children with special needs
Objective: We examine children with special needs from diverse contexts: (a) a family of a child with special needs (b) social and political contexts.
Readings: Metcalf, S. D. (1998, March). Attention deficits. *Lingua Franca*, 60-64.
Berube, M. (1994, December). Life as we know it: A father, a son, and genetic destiny. *Harpers Magazine*, 41-51.
Due: Field experience reflection 2

Week Seven: September 30

- Topic:** Children from different cultures
- Objective:** We explore how to increase an understanding of children from diverse cultural backgrounds by working with their families and communities.
- 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.

Exam 1 questions will be distributed.

Week Eight: October 7

- Topic:** Children in poverty
- Objective:** We gain insight into the life of children from poor families and explore the role of school for their current and future lives.
- Readings:** Kozol, J. (1990, Winter/Spring). The new untouchables. *Newsweek Special Issue*, 48-53.
- Quint, S. (1994). *Schooling homeless children: A working model for America's public schools*. New York: Teachers College Press. (Chapters 1 & 2).

Week Nine: October 14

- Topic:** The children of fast-track families
- Objective:** We examine stresses that the children of fast-track families experience, and what school can do for both children from poor and affluent families.
- Readings:** Brooks, A. A. (1990, April). Educating the children of fast-track parents. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 71, 612-615.
- Elkind, D. (1988). *The hurried child: Growing up too fast too soon*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley. (Chapter 7)
- Due:** Field experience reflection 3

Week Ten: October 21

- Topic:** Developmentally appropriate practice
- Objective:** We explore the discourse of developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood education.
- Readings:** Walsh, D. J. (1991). Extending the discourse on developmentally appropriate practice. *Early Education and Development*, 2(2). 109-119.
- Bredenkamp, S., & Copple, C. (Eds.). (1997). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs* (revised ed.). Washington, DC: NAEYC. (Chapter 1)

Fall Break: October 28

Week Eleven: November 4

Topic: Designing learning environments
Objective: Reviewing the recent research on human development, we gain insight into what to consider in order to create effective learning environments.
Readings: National Research Council (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. (Chapter 6)
Due: Field experience reflection 4

Week Twelve: November 11

Topic: The teacher's role and pedagogy
Objective: Considering the knowledge that we gained so far, we begin to explore what and how to teach.
Readings: Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press. (Chapter 4)
Haberman, M. (1991, December). The pedagogy of poverty versus good teaching. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 290-294.

Exam 2 questions will be distributed.

Week Thirteen: November 18

Topic: Revisiting the questions: Why teach? What is it like to be a teacher?
Objective: We look at our original question again and examine both challenges and meanings of becoming a teacher.
Readings: Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press. (Chapters 7 & 8)
Featherstone, J. (1995). Letter to a young teacher. In W. Ayers (Ed.), *To become a teacher: Making a difference in children's lives* (pp. 11-22). New York: Teachers College Press.

Thanksgiving Holiday: November 25

Week Fourteen: December 2

Topic: The artifact and statement presentation
Objective: Each person shares her journey of becoming a teacher by presenting her artifact and written statement.
Due: Personal artifacts and written statements

Week Fifteen: December 9

Topic: The artifact and statement presentation (Cont.)
Objective: Each person continues to share her journey of becoming a teacher by presenting her artifact and written statement.
Due: Personal artifacts and written statements
A completed field experience log sheet