

Spring 2003
MW, 10:10-12:05
418 Aderhold

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**EDEC 4020:
Decision Making for Planning, Teaching, and Organizing Early Childhood Classrooms**

Course description:

Reflective decision making that incorporates the major themes, concepts, and skills involved in organizing, planning, and developing instruction in early childhood classrooms.

Purpose:

This course is intended to

1. Learn important elements involved in planning, teaching and organizing early childhood classrooms
2. Practice planning, implementing, and revising lessons using the project approach
3. Understand why children find school learning difficult and what teachers can do
4. Gain insights into designing various activities for the future teaching in early childhood classrooms

Texts:

The following texts are available at UGA bookstore:

Derman-Sparks, L., & the A.B.C. Task Force. (1989). *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Donaldson, M. (1978). *Children's minds*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. (2001). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years*. New York: Teachers College.

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex.

Also, two reading packets are available at Bel-Jean (163 E. Broad St., 706-548-3648).

Requirements:

Non-graded Requirements:

1. Attendance

We have much to accomplish in a very limited amount of time. Attendance, therefore, is imperative. Please bring a documented account of any excused illness. Absences in the field must be made up. More than three absences from class or field experience can result in a failure for the course.

2. Punctuality

Prompt attendance in class and in the field is expected each day. All assignments for both class and field experience should be turned in on time.

Graded Requirements:

1. Reading notes (10)

Questions, comments, notes on readings. Minimum 1-page (hand-written) for each week. These notes must be completed not in class, but *prior to* class lectures and discussions. Begin each day's note with a date and separate comments on different readings assigned on the same day by authors' names. *Due: February 12th and May 1st.*

2. Classroom information (10)

During the 3 half-day field experience, collect the following information:

- 1) classroom schedule
- 2) a map of the classroom setting
- 3) a list of children's names and their background (e.g., ethnicity, socioeconomic class, etc.)
- 4) resources the mentor teacher uses for her lesson plans

Put this in a section on classroom information of your portfolio. Bring the portfolio with you on *March 24th and 26th.*

3. Community inquiry (20)

Starting on your first half-day Friday in the field, work with your peers at your assigned school to learn about the community surrounding the school. For this requirement, follow the guidelines below:

- 1) The neighborhood of the school: One way that you might want to learn about the community is to map the neighborhood of the school. (Remember that for some schools there are actually multiple neighborhoods.) Use descriptions from the children, school employees, and your observations to sketch the map. Note what each spot on your map represents (a particular business, church, park, library, etc.) and the activities of services provided in that area. Think about ways in which the places you visit and the people you talk to might be used for a field-trip or a guest speaker for your project work with children. What events, people, landmarks, or resources would you be able to utilize for your project? What do the children know about their community that might influence your planning and implementation?
- 2) Public life in the community: To learn about the children's life in the public arena, attend a few events (such as sporting competitions, parades, street fairs, etc.) and describe the activities. Pay special attention to the children's roles in these activities. Find out the range of activities that are held in this area. Who participates in the events? When and why are they held? Also, you might want to look at what the local radio station and newspaper say about this community. Who are the local people? What kinds of job opportunities are there for families? What do children enjoy doing away from the school?

Insert what you learned and collected from this experience in a section on the community inquiry of your portfolio. Bring the portfolio with you for class presentations on *March 24th and 26th.*

4. A mini-project plan and implementation (40)

Plan a 5 days project (20-40 minutes each day) that you will conduct with children. You may do the project either with small groups or with the whole-class, depending on your mentor teacher and your preference. For this assignment, follow the guidelines below:

- 1) Once the field placement is announced on 1/22 (W), check out *Quality Core Curriculum Standards and Resources* by Georgia Department of Education (<http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/qcc>) and find out what is expected to learn in each content area of the grade level that you will be working. Print out necessary resources and bring them to class on 1/27 (M) in order to discuss and select some content areas that you would like to work with children.
- 2) On Meet Your Teacher Day (1/28), ask the mentor teacher whether there are some specific topics that she would like you to consider for your project. Or talk about several topics in your mind and ask the teacher what she thinks about them.
- 3) During the 3 half-day field experience (1/31, 2/7, & 2/14), carefully observe and listen to children in order to find out what interests them and what is available to them. In your portfolio, make a section on project topics and insert all the materials that you collected for 1), 2), and 3).
- 4) Select one topic and write a draft plan for the project. The plan should contain your rationale for selecting that particular topic and your careful thought about what you will do with children for each of the 3 phases, which will be learned in EDEC class. You will be allowed to spend about 30 minutes to plan your project with peers at the end of every class. The final draft of the plan is *due February 12th*. Please make sure that you include all required contents listed in the project plan sheet. After getting feedback from me, share the plan with the mentor teacher and get her comments before implementing it. Put your plan in a section on the project plan in your portfolio.

You are encouraged to *integrate* this requirement with a requirement from a content area (math, social studies, reading, and language arts).

Implement the project from the 3rd week of the full-time field experience, considering the following timeline:

Phase I. Getting started: 1-2 days

Phase II. Investigating: 3-4 days

If your mentor teacher sees the value of the project and allows you to spend some time to wrap it up, spend 2-3 days during the 4th week of the full-time experience to work with children to represent and display what children learned. However, you *won't* be penalized by having only 5 days and being unable to do the final phase of your project.

Carefully document each phase of your project work with children by taking photos (with the mentor teacher's permission) and writing short descriptions of what children did. At the end of each phase, write a 1-page reflective journal about what you learned about the phase and what you would do differently in the future project. Create a section on the project implementation in your portfolio and put all materials in it. Bring the portfolio with you for class presentations on *March 24th and 26th*.

5. A plan for the future teaching (20)

Based on what you learn for the last 5 weeks of class, design mundane activities that you would like to do in your future classrooms. Explain why you think those activities are worth spending time everyday and how they will help children's learning in school. Also plan 2 special events that you wish to do with children (and their families) each year as your classroom rituals. For this requirement, you should thoughtfully synthesize important issues that arise in connection with class readings and discussions. *Due: May 5th*

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 more than 3 absences

WEEK 1

January 13 (M): Introduction

January 15 (W): Issues in curriculum and assessment

Ayers, W. (2001). *To teach: The journey of a teacher* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press. (Chapters 3, 5, & 6)

Leavitt, R. L., & Eheart, B. K. (1991, July). Assessment in early childhood programs. *Young Children*, 4-9.

WEEK 2

January 20 (M): **No class - MLK day**

January 22 (W): Introduction to and principles of the project approach

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (Prefaces, Chapters 1 - 2)

WEEK 3

January 27 (M): Features of project work

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (Chapters 3 - 4)

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. (2001). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years*. New York: Teachers College. (Chapter 1)

Due: Bring QCC resources

January 28 (Tu): Meet Your Teacher Day (1:30-3:30)

Discuss and decide a content area that you will be working for your project with the mentor teacher.

January 29 (W): Topics and planning

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (Chapters 5 - 6)

January 31 (F): Half-day field experience

Find out classroom information. Begin community inquiry with your peers. Carefully observe and listen to your classroom children in order to find out what interests them and what is available to them.

WEEK 4

February 3 (M): Phases of project work (I)

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (Chapter 7)

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. (2001). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years*. New York: Teachers College. (Chapters 2 - 3)

February 5 (W): Phases of project work (II)

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (Chapter 8)

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. (2001). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years*. New York: Teachers College. (Chapters 4)

February 7 (F): Half-day field experience

Continue to find out classroom information, to conduct the community inquiry, and to observe and listen to the classroom children.

WEEK 5

February 10 (M): Issues in doing a project with children

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (Chapter 9)

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. (2001). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years*. New York: Teachers College. (Chapters 5)

February 12 (W): Issues in doing a project with children (Cont.)

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. C. (2000). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (Chapter 10)

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. (2001). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years*. New York: Teachers College. (Chapters 6)

February 14 (F): Half-day field experience

Continue to learn about the children, classroom, school, and community.

Due: A 5-days project plan (by 5:00 pm)

WEEK 6 – WEEK 9

February 17 (M): Examples from Italy

Edwards, E., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (Eds.). (1993). *The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex. (Chapters 10 – 11)

Due: Reading notes for weeks 1-6

February 18 (Tu) – March 14 (F): Full-time field experience

Implement a 5-days project and document the process.

WEEK 10

March 24 (M): Community inquiry & project implementation presentation

Due: Portfolios

March 16 (W): Community inquiry & project implementation presentation
Due: Portfolios

WEEK 11

March 31 (M): Children's minds and exemplary teachers' practices (I)

Donaldson, M. (1978). *Children's minds*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Preface, Prologue, & Chapters 1 - 2)

Vasconcelos, T. M. (1995). "*Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land*": *The story of Ana, a public kindergarten teacher in Portugal*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (Chapter 8)

April 2 (W): Anti-bias curriculum (I) and children's play on the playground

Derman-Sparks, L., & the A.B.C. Task Force. (1989). *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC. (Introduction & Chapters 1-3).

Pellegrini, A. D., & Perlmutter, J. C. (1988, January). Rough-and-tumble play on the elementary school playground. *Young Children*, 14-17.

WEEK 12

April 7 (M): Children's minds and exemplary teachers' practices (II)

Donaldson, M. (1978). *Children's minds*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Chapters 3 - 4)

Hong, Y. (1995). *Teaching large-group time in a preschool classroom: The teacher as orchestra conductor*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (Chapter 6)

April 9 (W): Anti-bias curriculum (II) and praise

Derman-Sparks, L., & the A.B.C. Task Force. (1989). *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC. (Chapters 4 - 6).

Hitz, R., & Driscoll, A. (1988, July). Praise or encouragement? New insights into praise: Implications for early childhood teachers. *Young Children*, 6-13.

WEEK 13

April 14 (M): Children's minds and exemplary teachers' practices (III)

Donaldson, M. (1978). *Children's minds*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Chapters 5 - 6)

Hong, Y. (1995). *Teaching large-group time in a preschool classroom: The teacher as orchestra conductor*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (Chapter 8)

April 16 (W): Anti-bias curriculum (III) and self-esteem

Derman-Sparks, L., & the A.B.C. Task Force. (1989). *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC. (Chapters 7 - 9).

Katz, L. G. (1995). The distinction between self-esteem and narcissism: Implications for practice. In L. G. Katz, *Talks with teachers of young children* (pp. 11-46). Norwood, NJ: Ablex. (Chapter 2)

WEEK 14

April 21 (M): Children's minds and exemplary teachers' practices (IV)

Donaldson, M. (1978). *Children's minds*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Chapters 7 - 8)

Hong, Y. (1995). *Teaching large-group time in a preschool classroom: The teacher as orchestra conductor*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (Chapter 9)

April 23 (W): Anti-bias curriculum (IV) and insights from Japanese schooling

Derman-Sparks, L., & the A.B.C. Task Force. (1989). *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC. (Chapters 10 - 12).

Lewis, C. C. (1995). *Educating hearts and minds: Reflections on Japanese preschool and elementary education*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 5 - 6)

Kristof, N. D. (1997, August). Where children rule. *The New York Times Magazine*, 40-44.

WEEK 15

April 28 (M): Children's minds and exemplary teachers' practices (V)

Donaldson, M. (1978). *Children's minds*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Chapters 9-10)

Lee, K. (2001). *Raising the independent self: Folk psychology and folk pedagogy in American early schooling*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (Chapter 6)

April 30 (W): Children's minds and exemplary teachers' practices (VI)

Donaldson, M. (1978). *Children's minds*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Chapters 11)

Grieve, R., & Hughes, M. (1990). *Understanding children: Essays in honor of Margaret Donaldson*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell. (Forward, Chapter 1)

Lee, K. (2001). *Raising the independent self: Folk psychology and folk pedagogy in American early schooling*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (Chapter 7)

Due: Reading notes for weeks 11-15

May 5 (M): Due - A plan for the future teaching (5 pm)