

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

M & W 10:10-12:05. 119 Aderhold

Angie Hancock
Co-Instructor
angjeff@bellsouth.net

Dr. Kyunghwa Lee
Co-Instructor
kyunghwa@uga.edu

427 Aderhold
(706) 542-4244

Office Hours: By Appointment

A large part of the work of teaching is constructing the laboratory for learning: It must be sufficiently broad and varied to challenge a range of interests and abilities, and yet focused enough to offer students some coherent rhythms and goals. The learning environment is a complex, living reflection of a teacher's values. (William Ayers, 2001, p. 48)

Course Purpose

The purpose of this Block 2 course is to explore various issues critical to teachers' decision making for planning, teaching, and organizing early childhood classrooms. The Georgia Professional Teaching Standards (www.gapsc.com) will be used to guide our work in this class (See the attached statement about the early childhood standards addressed in this class). This semester, we will focus on understanding the lives and interests of children and their families in order to develop our ability to work with socioeconomically, linguistically, and ethnically diverse learners.

Academic Honesty Policy

The academic honesty policy is in effect during this course. Please refer to the *Undergraduate Bulletin* to become familiar with this policy. "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 any misunderstanding." – Undergraduate Bulletin

Course Expectations

This course contains both a field and university component. It is your responsibility to exhibit professionalism of that required by a beginning teacher. Examples include attending all classes, timely communication via email, promptness, diligence, conveying an attitude of someone excited about becoming a teacher and a learner, and treating class participants with the utmost respect.

Texts

Each class session's readings can be downloaded from our course Web CT (<https://webct.uga.edu>). A packet of required readings is also available in the Curriculum

Materials Center (CMC, 207 Aderhold) for you to check out and make copies. If a majority of the people prefer, a packet will be also available at Bel-Jean.

Requirements

Non-graded Requirements

1. Attendance

Attendance is imperative because our time together is valuable. Communication with instructors, mentor teachers, and university facilitators regarding any absence is required. Please provide a documented account of any excused illness. Absences in the field must be made up. You will receive a letter grade deduction if you have missed 2 or more classes.

2. Punctuality

Prompt attendance in class and in the field is expected as it reflects your dedication and professionalism. All assignments for the class and field experience should be turned in on time.

Graded Requirements

1. Participation

This class will be taught through dialogue, with most of the time devoted to reaction, reflection, application, and discussion of topics. We all share responsibility to make the class session relevant and meaningful. In order for that to happen, each participant should read the assigned readings before class and contribute equally to various class activities.

2. Classroom Descriptions – Due 9/19 (M)

Describe your classroom by including information about grade level, number of students (gender, SES, ethnicity, special needs), adults in the classroom and their educational backgrounds, classroom schedules, classroom rules or management systems, your mentor teacher's predominant teaching style (e.g., use of textbooks, curriculum model, centers) and resources he or she uses for lesson plans, and a drawing of the classroom setting with the label of each area.

3. Inquiry-Based Lesson Plan – Draft due 9/29 (Th); Final version & reflection due 10/24 (M)

Plan inquiry-based lessons that you will be doing with children for 5 days. Depending on you and your mentor teacher's preference, these lesson plans can be done individually or in a small group. The lessons will be connected to and built upon each other as you and the children investigate a topic or a key concept across 5 days. Also, the lessons should incorporate at least 2 content areas (e.g., social studies and language arts, reading and math)—You will be able to do this by integrating field requirements for other courses. You are strongly encouraged to choose a topic that reflects your consideration of children's interests and their lived experiences in communities. Before planning these lessons, consult with your mentor teacher about the following:

- possible topics and materials you will use
- group size you will be working with for these lessons
- the amount of time each time and the number of days, if necessary, you will teach

We will have brainstorming and planning times for these lessons in class. On September 21 (W), each group or individual will present their ideas for inquiry-based lessons and will receive feedback from colleagues. A draft and the final version of lesson plans should be submitted via Live Text on the due dates indicated above. The final version should also include a 2-page reflection on your implementation of the lessons by addressing the following:

- How the students responded to your lessons, what did they understand and not understand, what did they learn, and what do they still need to learn?
- What might you do differently next time in teaching these lessons?
- What have you learned from planning and teaching these lessons that you would apply in future lesson planning and teaching?

*Those who design these lessons in a group can submit the same draft and final version of lesson plans. However, the reflection portion of the final version should be written individually.

4. Group Community Project Presentation – Due 10/26 (W)

For this requirement, work with your peers at your assigned school to learn about communities surrounding the school by considering the following guidelines:

The neighborhood of the school: One way that you might 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 place. What events, people, landmarks, or resources would you be able to utilize for your teaching? What do the children know about their communities that might influence your planning and implementation? How are the characteristics of the communities reflected in the school? What do children enjoy doing away from the school? What kinds of activities or events (e.g., sporting competitions, parades, street fairs, etc.) are available for children and families to attend? Who are the participants? Who are the local people? If there are minority people in the communities, how are their voices heard in the communities and in the school? What kinds of job opportunities are there for families? What hopes or concerns do they have for their lives? How was this information about communities useful for your lessons? What information or resources did you use for your teaching? What information or resources you could not utilize but you think would be worth utilizing in the future?

*The format of your group report and presentation will be determined through a class discussion.

5. Online Case Responses and Essays

During Segment III of this course, we use web-based case instruction through which you will be exposed to various dilemmas practicing teachers face when managing their classrooms. You will need to listen to each case and different stakeholders' reactions presented on a web site (The address of this web site will be announced later). You then will be asked to respond to the case and different people's reactions in short writing online before class. During the

orientation and reflection sessions of this web-based case instruction, you will be also asked to write an in-class essay. You will receive full credit by participating in these writings of online case responses and essays.

6. Synthetic Essay – Due 12/12 (M) 9:00 AM

Write a 5-page paper synthesizing the readings and class discussions done in this class. In this paper, focus on discussing the topics of understanding children and their families and the implications they hold for your future teaching. This essay should demonstrate that you have read the required readings throughout the semester and that you have tried to make sense of them in connection to the field experience.

Grading

1. Participation	50 pts
2. Classroom Descriptions	30 pts
3. Inquiry-Based Lesson Plan	100 pts
4. Group Community Project Presentation	70 pts
5. Online Case Responses and Essays	100 pts (10 pts/response or essay)
6. Synthetic Essay	100 pts

A	405-450
B	360-404
C	315-359
D	270-314
F	Below 269

Tentative Course Schedule

8/22 (M)	INTRODUCTION *Kriete, R. (2002). <i>Morning meeting</i> . Greenfield, MA: Northeast Foundation for Children. (pp. 148-217)	
SEGMENT I: Planning Lessons Based on Children’s Lives and Interests		
8/24 (W)	Inquiry-Based Teaching in Early Childhood Classrooms Katz, L., & Chard, S. (2000). <i>Engaging children’s minds: The project approach</i> (2 nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex. (pp. 1-20; 69-76)	
8/29 (M)	Inquiry-Based Teaching in Elementary Classrooms Manning, M., & Lee, K. (in press). “In the beginning I thought it was all play”: Parents’ Perceptions of the Project Approach in a Second-Grade Classroom. <i>The School Community Journal</i> . Wolk, S. (1994). Project-based learning: Pursuits with a purpose. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 52(3), 42-45.	

8/31 (W)	Differentiated Instruction Tomlinson, C.A. (2006). Part I: Introduction and Part II: Knowledge. In J. M. Cooper (Ed.), <i>An Educator's Guide to Differentiating Instruction</i> (pp. 1-25). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.	
9/5 (M)	NO CLASS – LABOR DAY	
9/6 (Tu)	Meet Your Teacher Day	
9/7 (W)	Inquiry-Based Teaching with Families and Communities Scherer, M. (1998). The shelter of each other. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 55(8), 6-11. Cavarretta, J. (1998). Parents are a school's best friend. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 55(8), 12-15. - Guest Speakers: Dr. Gayle Andrews - Guest Speakers from Schools: TBA	
9/9 (F)	Friday Field Placement	
9/12 (M)	Inquiry-Based Teaching with Families and Communities Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. <i>Theory into Practice</i> , 31(2), 132-141. - Guest Speakers from Schools: TBA	
9/14 (W)	Anti-Bias Curriculum Derman-Sparks, L., & the A.B.C. Task Force. (1989). <i>Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children</i> . Washington, DC: NAEYC. (pp. 1-9, 111-118)	
9/16 (F)	Friday Field Placement	
9/19 (M)	Brainstorming & Planning Inquiry-Based Teaching Ayers, W. (2001). <i>To teach: The journey of a teacher</i> . New York: Teachers College. (Chapter 5)	*Due: Classroom descriptions
9/21 (W)	Sharing Lesson Plans for Inquiry-Based Teaching	Group presentations on the lesson ideas
9/23 (F)	Friday Field Placement	
SEGMENT II: Field Experience		
9/26 (M) - 10/21 (F)	Full-Day Field Placements	*Due: A draft of lesson plans by 9/29 (Th) 5:00 PM
10/24 (M)	Reflection on the Inquiry-Based Teaching	*Due: Revised lesson plans & reflection
10/26 (W)	Sharing the Community Project	*Due: Group presentations on the community project

	SEGMENT III: Issues in Classroom Management and Organization	
10/31 (M)	Case Study Orientation & Pre-Essay (Rooms 227 & 228)	Individual headset
11/2 (W)	Case 1-1: Working with Challenging Students - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 1-1
11/7 (M)	Case 1-2: Working with Challenging Students - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 1-2
11/9 (W)	Case 2-1: Working with Challenging Students - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 2-1
11/14 (M)	Case 2-2: Working with Challenging Students - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 2-2
11/16 (W)	Case 3-1: Working with Families - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 3-1
11/21 (M)	Case 3-2: Working with Families - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 3-2
11/23 (W)	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
11/28 (M)	Case 4-1: Working with Families - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 4-1
11/30 (W)	Case 4-2: Working with Families - Follow guidelines on the case Web site	*Due: Online responses to Case 4-2
12/5 (M)	Case Study Reflection & Post-Essay (Rooms 227 & 228)	Individual headset
12/7 (W)	CONCLUSION	*Due: Synthetic Essay by 12/12 (M) 9:00 AM