

Early Childhood Curriculum and Assessment
15:251:581:A1
Summer 2021
3 Credits

Instructor Name: Dr. Randi Ostrove	Email address: randi.ostrove@gse.rutgers.edu
Phone Number: 732-690-5768 (Please text only in an emergency or use the Remind app)	Location: Online Class Meeting Times: 10 AM-12:55 PM Synchronous Class Sessions: 6/2, 6/7, 6/9, 6/14, 6/16, 6/21, 6/23
Office Hours: Online, by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: Admission to the P-3/Elementary Education GSE Teacher Education Program
Mode of Instruction: <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Contact ken.tufo@gse.rutgers.edu at the Office of Student Academic Services (OSAS) for permission

Faculty Syllabus Statement for Disability Services: (last checked on ODS 3/8/21)

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the registration form (<https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>).

Learning Goals: Participants will deepen their understanding of how to effectively engage young children in developmentally appropriate project-based learning driven by inquiry. The following professional standards will inform our work during this course:

- [NJ Professional Standards for Teachers: Foundations of Effective Practice](#)
- [Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Standards](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\) Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators](#)
- [NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards](#)

New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (2014)

- **Standard One (Learner Development):** The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- **Standard Two (Learning Differences):** Teachers shall understand how children and adolescents develop and learn in a variety of school, family and community contexts and provide opportunities that support their intellectual, social, emotional and physical development.
- **Standard Three (Learning Environments):** The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.
- **Standard Four (Content Knowledge):** The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches, particularly as they relate to the Common Core Standards and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- **Standard Five (Application of Content):** The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- **Standard Six (Assessment):** Teachers shall understand individual and group motivation and behavior and shall create a supportive, safe and respectful learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.
- **Standard Seven (Planning for Instruction):** The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (2018)

- **Standard 1.a:** Candidates use their understanding of how children grow, develop and learn to plan and implement developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences within environments that take into account the individual strengths and needs of children

- **Standard 1.b:** Candidates use their understanding of individual differences and diverse families, cultures, and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning experiences and environments that build on children's strengths and address their individual needs
- **Standard 2.a:** Candidates demonstrate and apply understandings of the elements of literacy critical for purposeful oral, print, and digital communication.
- **Standard 2.b:** Candidates demonstrate and apply understandings of major mathematics concepts, algorithms, procedures, applications and mathematical practices in varied contexts, and connections within and among mathematical domains.
- **Standard 2.c:** Candidates demonstrate and apply understandings and integration of the three dimensions of science and engineering practices, cross-cutting concepts, and major disciplinary core ideas, within the major content areas of science.
- **Standard 2.d:** Candidates demonstrate understandings, capabilities, and practices associated with the central concepts and tools in Civics, Economics, Geography, and History, within a framework of informed inquiry.
- **Standard 3.c:** Candidates plan instruction including goals, materials, learning activities and assessments.
- **Standard 3.d:** Candidates differentiate instructional plans to meet the needs of diverse students in the classroom.

NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (2019)

- **Standard 1 (Child Development and Learning in Context):** Early childhood educators (a) are grounded in an understanding of the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age 8 across developmental domains. They (b) understand each child as an individual with unique developmental variations. Early childhood educators (c) understand that children learn and develop within relationships and within multiple contexts, including families, cultures, languages, communities, and society. They (d) use this multidimensional knowledge to make evidence-based decisions about how to carry out their responsibilities.
- **Standard 3 (Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment):** Early childhood educators (a) understand that the primary purpose of assessments is to inform instruction and planning in early learning settings. They (b) know how to use observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment approaches and tools. Early childhood educators (c) use screening and assessment tools in ways that are ethically grounded and developmentally, culturally, ability, and linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child. In partnership with families and professional colleagues, early childhood educators (d) use assessments to document individual children's progress and, based on the findings, to plan learning experiences.
- **Standard 4 (Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices):** Early childhood educators understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages and characteristics and on the settings in which teaching and learning occur. They (a) understand and demonstrate positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation for their work with young children. They (b) understand and use teaching

skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories of young children and to the needs of each child. Early childhood educators (c) use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias, and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect the principles of universal design for learning.

- **Standard 5 (Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum):** Early childhood educators have knowledge of the content of the academic disciplines (e.g., language and literacy, the arts, mathematics, social studies, science, technology and engineering, physical education) and of the pedagogical methods for teaching each discipline. They (a) understand the central concepts, the methods and tools of inquiry, and the structures in each academic discipline. Educators (b) understand pedagogy, including how young children learn and process information in each discipline, the learning trajectories for each discipline, and how teachers use this knowledge to inform their practice. They (c) apply this knowledge using early learning standards and other resources to make decisions about spontaneous and planned learning experiences and about curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation to ensure that learning will be stimulating, challenging, and meaningful to each child

Course catalog description: This course examines the complex relationships between learning and teaching in early childhood classrooms (pre-K to grade 3). The focus will be integrating theory with practice. We will use urban field placements and personal stories as well as those of teachers, children, and other theorists to examine the diverse ways young children learn and the many strategies that might be employed when teaching them. We will consider and practice a variety of teaching strategies, examine the curriculum content that young children might explore, and learn about the diversity of contexts in which early childhood education takes place. Attention will be paid to multiple sources for curriculum decision-making--social, historical, political, developmental, and personal.

Other description of course purposes, context, methods, etc.: This course examines the implementation of dynamic methods of instruction that empower young children to become drivers of their learning through project-based inquiry. Specifically, this course will enable participants to do the following:

- Develop driving questions that address important issues of interest in education as well as heighten their understanding of issues of equity in education in early childhood classrooms
- Collaboratively design a project that communicates the research they have gathered, shared, and synthesized to answer their driving questions about how to effectively engage young children in learning
- Critically consider the academic, social, and emotional outcomes of engagement in student-centered instructional approaches such as inquiry-based and project-based learning
- Leverage students' lived experiences in planning instruction and assessment in ways that provide greater access to the curriculum for all students

Our work will involve 1) analyzing and applying the [NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards](#), [NJ Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts \(ELA\), K-3](#), the [NJ Student Learning Standards for Mathematics, K-3](#), the [NJ Student Learning Standards for Social Studies](#), the [NJ Science Kindergarten Model Curriculum Overview](#), and the [NJ First Through Third Grade Implementation Guidelines](#), and 2) designing project-based, inquiry-driven units of study that integrate multiple content areas.

Required Texts

Helm, J. H., Beneke, S., & Steinheimer, K. (2007). *Windows on learning: Documenting young children's work* (2nd edition). Teachers College Press. (ISBN-13: 978-0807747865)

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. G. (2016). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years* (3rd edition). Teachers College Press. (ISBN-13: 978-0807756904)

The required texts can be purchased at the [Rutgers Bookstore](#) or online. Any additional readings will be provided in class or on Canvas.

Grading & Activities

Summary of Assignments

Reflections & Connections	40 points
Learning Center Activity	20 points
Group Unit of Study/Presentation	30 points
Participation	<u>10 points</u>
TOTAL	100 points

I. Critical Reflections & Connections (40 points total, 10 points each)

You will have four opportunities to reflect and respond to our readings/viewings/discussions. These posts will give you the opportunity to think critically about what you've learned and may also be used to inform my instruction. Your responses should be informal and between 250-300 words.

II. Planning a Project for Young Learners (30 points total)

A project is an in-depth study of a topic, usually of the children's choosing, that allows them to explore knowledge from a variety of perspectives. You are to develop a project for implementation with a group of young children. Further information can be found on our Canvas site.

Part One, Due Monday, June 14th (10 points)

Working with your group, you will use your chosen topic to engage in anticipatory planning for a project. You will map possible concepts related to the topic and tie learning standards to those concepts. You will identify potential activities that address those concepts; possible site visits for further exploration; visiting experts who can extend your students' learning; and artifacts that can be shared with your students for hands-on discovery. You will also share how you might determine what your students already know about this topic.

Part Two, Due Tuesday, June 22nd (10 points)

Now that you've identified how to begin the project, you will move on to the more in-depth planning. You will think about setting up the classroom to allow for investigation. You will describe how you might involve families and/or the community in this project by including a letter written to explain about the project approach and how that applies specifically to this project and their participation. You will consider what modifications may need to be made in order to meet all students' needs. You will explain how you plan to document the project and how students might share what they've learned when the project comes to its natural conclusion.

In-Class Presentation on Wednesday, June 23rd (10 points)

III. Lesson Plan/Learning Center Activity Due Monday, June 21st (20 points)

Each group member will create a lesson plan that furthers the study of your project topic and follows the recommendations for developmentally appropriate practice, in addition to meeting NJ Learning Standards. The lesson should include the use of at least one learning center activity that provides a child-directed, meaningful, and interdisciplinary active learning experience for students. You will use the modified GSE lesson plan template which can be found on our Canvas site.

IV. Class Participation (10 points)

Class participation is crucial to your understanding and application of course content. You are expected to come to every class prepared to actively engage in and discuss assigned readings and to fully participate in class activities. In addition, lateness to class or early exits from class may result in loss of participation points as well. As we will be meeting remotely, I strongly encourage everyone to keep their cameras on during class, as it supports active engagement, in addition to helping to build trust, respect, and community amongst our group.

You are also expected to be respectful of your fellow classmates. At times, your classmates may share information about their field placements that may be sensitive so please remember that comments made in class are to be considered *confidential*.

Evaluation of written work:

As teachers, we are expected to clearly communicate information to students, parents, administrators, and colleagues. Therefore, I expect you to submit work that meets professional standards. For this course, you are expected to hand in work that has been proofread. The following qualities will be valued in your work:

- **Grammar and accuracy:** Have you proofread your work?
- **Relevance and responsiveness to the task or question:** Have you fulfilled the requirements of the assignment? Are the connections between your work and the content clear?
- **Clarity and organization of writing:** Are your ideas stated clearly and organized in a way that helps the reader understand what you are trying to say?
- **Completeness and depth:** Have you presented adequate detail to support your points? Have you written as though your audience is not an expert on your topic? Have you presented your ideas in a manner that demonstrates depth of analysis?
- **Independent judgment:** Have you gone beyond the information presented by others and demonstrated critical thinking? Have you noted both the strengths/weaknesses of your argument and the arguments of others? Have you supported your opinions with evidence and your own reasoning?
- **Conciseness:** Have you stated your ideas in a way that is brief but comprehensive?
- **Formatting:** Have you followed the formatting guidelines?
 - Typed, Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced
 - Follow APA format where appropriate. You can find a good summary of how to use APA format at the following website:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_overview_and_workshop.html
- **Punctuality:** Is your work submitted on time?
 - **If you need an extension of time on an assignment, please contact me before the due date. If you do not contact me, your grade on the assignment will be dropped one letter grade for every class period it is late.**

LETTER GRADE EQUIVALENTS:

90-100	A
85-89	B+
80-84	B
75-79	C+
70-74	C
Below 70	F

Academic Integrity Policy

Make sure that you provide proper citations for all materials that you use in all written work. Any violation of academic honesty is a serious offense and is therefore subject to an appropriate penalty. Refer to <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/> for a full explanation of policies. **All work submitted must be your own and will be reviewed through Turnitin.**

Attendance Policy

As we will only be meeting synchronously (“in-person”) seven times during this course, attendance and timeliness are mandatory. If you miss a class without a bona fide medical reason (including a doctor’s note), your grade for the course will automatically be reduced as follows: 1 class - 1/2 grade, 2 classes - 1 full grade, 3 classes - failing grade. You should come to class prepared to spend the majority of our “live” sessions actively participating in class-related activities on the days that are designated as synchronous days.

Student Success

The faculty and staff at Rutgers are committed to your success. Students who are successful tend to seek out resources that enable them to excel academically, maintain their health and wellness, prepare for future careers, navigate college life and finances, and connect with the RU community. Resources that can help you succeed and connect with the Rutgers community can be found at success.rutgers.edu, and nearly all services and resources that are typically provided in-person are now available remotely.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Date	Assignments & Readings
WEEK 1	
Tuesday, June 1 ASYNCHRONOUS	Write a one-page statement of your educational philosophy for young children (i.e. how do you believe young children learn best?). Be prepared to share during class on 6/2. Read: NAEYC. (2020). <i>Developmentally Appropriate Practices Position Statement</i> , pp. 3-28.
Wednesday, June 2 SYNCHRONOUS	Introductions & course overview How do we think young children learn best? How do we define developmentally appropriate practice? BRING YOUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY FOR YOUNG LEARNERS.

<p>Thursday, June 3 ASYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>Watch: NJDOE. (2018, April 13). <i>Setting up to support children's learning</i>. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BZ0Inge5JY&t=74s</p> <p>Read: Riley-Ayers, S. & Figueras-Daniel, A. (2018). Engaging and enriching: The key to developmentally appropriate academic rigor. <i>Young Children</i>, 73(2).</p> <p>REFLECTION POST #1 DUE TO CANVAS DISCUSSION BOARD BY MIDNIGHT</p>
<p>WEEK 2</p>	
<p>Monday, June 7 SYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>How do we make decisions about learning and teaching in EC? What informs our curricular choices? How can early childhood educators adapt their curriculum to their children's needs and interests? Thinking about edTPA: What is active learning? Multimodal learning? Interdisciplinary learning?</p> <p>Required Readings: Helm, J. & Katz, L. (2016). <i>Young Investigators</i>. Chapters 1-3</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE:</p> <p>Ripstein, B. (2018). "There's a story in my picture!" Connecting art, literacy, and drama through storytelling in a kindergarten classroom. <i>Young Children</i>, 73(1).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Wien, C. & Halls, D. (2018). "Is there a chick in there?" Kindergartners' changing thoughts on life in an egg. <i>Young Children</i>, 73(1).</p>
<p>Tuesday, June 8 ASYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>Read: Silveria, B. & Curtis, D. (2018). Look, listen, learn. Where does the rain go? Considering the teacher's Role in children's discoveries. <i>Teaching Young Children</i>, 11(5), 22-23.</p>

	<p>Williams, A. (2020). The power of knowledge to transform teaching and learning. <i>Young Children</i>, 5(5), 6-13.</p> <p>REFLECTION POST #2 DUE TO CANVAS DISCUSSION BOARD BY MIDNIGHT</p>
<p>Wednesday, June 9 SYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>How can early childhood educators recognize and acknowledge equity issues in their classrooms? How can early childhood educators ensure that their classrooms reflect their children’s home environments? How are families included in their young children’s education? Why is it important for early childhood educators to learn about and participate in their children’s community?</p> <p>Required reading: NAEYC. (2019). <i>Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.</i></p>
<p>Thursday, June 10 ASYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>Watch: McKinney, F. (2021). <i>Reflecting on anti-bias education in action: The early years</i> [Film]. Brave Sprout Productions. https://www.antibiasleadersece.com/the-film-reflecting-on-anti-bias-education-in-action/</p> <p>Read: Reid, J., Scott-Little, C., & Kagan, S. (2019). Diverse children, uniform standards: Using early learning and development standards in multicultural classrooms. <i>Young Children</i>, 74(5), 46-54.</p> <p>REFLECTION POST #3 DUE TO CANVAS DISCUSSION BOARD BY MIDNIGHT</p>
<p>WEEK 3</p>	
<p>Monday, June 14 SYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>How can early childhood educators create opportunities that instill children’s excitement about learning? Why is scaffolding children’s learning important?</p>

	<p>Required reading: Helm, J. & Katz, L. (2016). <i>Young Investigators</i>. Chapters 4, 5, 8</p> <p>Strasser, J. (2019). Conversations with children! Asking questions that stretch children’s thinking. <i>Teaching Young Children</i>, 12(3).</p> <p>PART ONE OF PROJECT DUE TO CANVAS BEFORE CLASS</p>
<p>Tuesday, June 15 ASYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>Read: Bates, C., Madison, S. & Hoover, H. (2019). Anecdotal records: Practical strategies for taking meaningful notes. <i>Young Children</i>, 74(3), 14-19.</p> <p>Blessing, A. (2019). Assessment in kindergarten: Meeting children where they are. <i>Young Children</i>, 74(3).</p> <p>Watch: NIEER. (2016, May 3). <i>Exploring classroom content through instructional strategies</i>. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWcjLrbKpMs&t=207s</p> <p>REFLECTION POST #4 DUE TO CANVAS DISCUSSION BOARD BY MIDNIGHT</p>
<p>Wednesday, June 16 SYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>How do we assess young children’s growth and development? Why is effective assessment of young children challenging? How can families be part of children’s assessment process?</p> <p>Required reading: Helm, Beneke & Steinheimer (2012). <i>Windows on Learning</i>, Chapters 1-3.</p>
<p>Thursday, June 17 ASYNCHRONOUS</p>	<p>Read: Helm, J., Beneke, S. & Steinheimer, K. (2012). <i>Windows on learning</i>. Chapters 4-5, 11-12.</p> <p>Groups should continue to meet to work on projects.</p>

WEEK 4	
Monday, June 21 SYNCHRONOUS	TBD Group work session LEARNING CENTER ACTIVITY DUE TO CANVAS
Tuesday, June 22 ASYNCHRONOUS	Meet with your group to prepare for presentations PART TWO OF PROJECT DUE TO CANVAS
Wednesday, June 23 SYNCHRONOUS	PROJECT PRESENTATIONS