

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**HDF/SES 441- 01: YOUNG CHILDREN'S LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**  
Spring Semester, 2006  
Monday, Wednesday 2:30 - 3:45    Stone Building 352

**INSTRUCTORS**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Using knowledge of young children's development, the course is designed to help the student identify, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate purposes and techniques for interacting with young children. Behavior and guidance principles are studied through participation in preschool and kindergarten classrooms and readings on typical and atypical child development, teacher-child interaction, and child-guidance and discipline. Practicum experience required.

**TEACHERS ACADEMY CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK MISSION STATEMENT:**

*The mission of professional education at UNCG is to prepare and support the professional development of caring, collaborative, and competent educators who work in diverse settings. This mission is carried out in an environment that nurtures the active engagement of all participants, values individual as well as cultural diversity and recognizes the importance of reflection and integration of theory and practice. UNCG's professional education programs are guided by shared commitments to: (a) equity and excellence in teaching, research, and service; (b) professional integrity and ethical deliberation in dealing with students and colleagues (university-based, school-based, and community-based); (c) the construction of a professional knowledge base through collaboration and collegiality; and (d) the dissemination of professional knowledge, skills and dispositions through the preparation and continuing professional development of teachers, principals and other school personnel.*

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Kostelnik, J.J., Whiren, A.P. & Soderman, A.K., & Gregory, K. (2006). Guiding children's social development: Theory to practice. (5th Edition). Albany, N.Y.: Delmar Publishers, Inc.

Additional readings on Blackboard under e-reserve.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and skill in creating new learning environments or adapting existing environments so that they are physically and psychologically safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate for young children with typical and atypical needs.\*
2. Demonstrate knowledge of and skill in the use of individual and group guidance and problem-solving techniques to develop positive and supportive relationships with children, to encourage positive social interaction among children, to promote positive strategies of conflict resolution, and develop personal self-control, self-motivation, and self-esteem.
3. Demonstrate use of environmental manipulations and a variety of behavior management and guidance techniques, including attention to the arrangement of the physical and psychological environment as it relates to individual children, scheduling, and transitioning.\*
4. Demonstrate knowledge of skill in the incorporation of a variety of teaching strategies including physical prompts, play intervention, direct and indirect reaching, child-initiated learning, fostering motivation in children, and using developmentally appropriate professional standards.\*
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the role of consultant to programs and persons working with young children in a variety of settings to ensure that those environments are developmentally appropriate.\*
6. Demonstrate through written critique of field work proficiency in various teaching responsibilities.
7. Identify and use developmental principles in creating or adapting indoor and outdoor learning environments and in establishing guidelines for children's behavior that maximize self-control, problems-solving, and independence.\*
8. Demonstrate skill in creating a multicultural environment, or adapt an existing one, so that it is reflective of the homes and communities of the children and consistent with the systems of care philosophy. \*
9. Demonstrate knowledge and skill in fostering high quality interactions with children during play and child-initiated activities and in guiding children's inquiry and discovery.\*
10. Demonstrate knowledge of methods for providing individual and group learning time through a variety of formats including play, environmental routines, and guided inquiry relevant to preschool and kindergarten.\*
11. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies to facilitate children's involvement in planning for their own learning. \*
12. Demonstrate competency in enhancing social interaction between typically and typically developing children and between children of varying developmental levels.\*
13. Provide an environment that clearly demonstrates knowledge-based decisions about young children and a design deliberately responsive to a wide range of individual learning and maturational needs.\*
14. Critique her/his methods of guiding young children incorporating them into a personal philosophy and style for guiding young children and managing classrooms effectively.
15. Demonstrate competency in assessing typical and atypical development of children for the purposes of providing for individual needs and guiding young children appropriately.\*

\* Birth-Kindergarten Competencies

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### 1. ATTENDANCE

80 POINTS

Class attendance is required.

Brief unannounced quizzes will be administered in class throughout the semester. Each of these quizzes will be worth 10 points. If you are not in class the day of the quiz or arrive late, the quiz points cannot be made up.

**NOTE:** Consistently arriving on time and fully attending each class meeting is required. Each absence will result in 2 points being deducted from your total course points, arriving late or leaving early will result in 1 point being deducted from your total course points.

### 2. PARTICIPATION

30 POINTS

Actively engaging in class activities and group discussions is required. Participation points will be assigned at the end of the semester based on your total participation in each class meeting throughout the semester.

### 3. RESEARCH PROJECT OR RESEARCH PAPER (CHOOSE A OR B)

100 POINTS

**Part I, II, and III must be completed for full credit.**

**Part I: Description of research project/paper** DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 27<sup>TH</sup> (10 POINTS)

Write a brief summary (1-2 paragraphs) of your research project or paper topic. This summary should include (a) the topic of your project/paper, (b) a description of your topic, (c) how your topic relates to this course, (c) whether it is a project or a paper, and (d) at least one source/reference that you have found to use for the project/paper. Topic must be approved by instructors. If late, one point will be deducted each day (24 hour period beginning at 3:46 on February 22<sup>nd</sup>). After 5 days you will receive 0 points for this assignment.

**Part II: Research Project or Paper (Choose either A or B)** DUE DATE: APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup> (70 POINTS)

**A. Research Project** - A research project on a topic related to any aspect of young children's inclusive learning environments is required. The purpose of this project is to enable each student to explore topics of interest in more depth. Be creative; however please understand this is not to be a case study!! Do you have a burning desire to observe the various guidance strategies used in preschool classrooms and present a comparison of the techniques that you observed teachers using? Do you have an interest in observing and describing how teachers attempt to include children with disabilities into ongoing activities? Would you like to compare two kindergarten classrooms with regard to their developmental appropriateness and its impact on social competence? Perhaps you would like to observe classrooms with very different classroom environments and assess how the physical environment impacts children's behavior. You will be required to do some combination of observing, researching, and writing a summary of your findings. You must include 2-3 pages of background information from at least **three original journal references** in addition to your research findings. The total length of your paper should be

5-6 double-spaced pages using APA style. Suggestions for topics will be discussed in class.

## **OR**

**B. Research Paper** - A paper on a topic related to interaction with young children, discipline or guidance, or any aspect of young children's inclusive learning environments is also acceptable. The purpose of this paper is to enable a student to explore topics of interest in more depth. The paper must involve some evaluation and interpretation of existing research and assumptions—not just summaries of the works of others. In other words, your paper must show evidence of critical thinking. Your paper should be a minimum of 8 typewritten, double-spaced pages. Papers must be supported by at least **five original journal references** using APA style. Secondary references are NOT acceptable (e.g., Redbook, Psychology Today, etc.).

If Projects/Papers are late, 5 points will be deducted per day (24 hour period beginning 3:46 on April 19<sup>th</sup>). After 7 days papers will no longer be accepted and you will receive 0 points for the assignment.

### **Part III: Power Point Presentation      DUE DATES: APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> (20 POINTS)**

You will need to make a 10-minute power point presentation on your project. Your presentation should include the following elements: (a) a clear, concise statement of the topic, (b) background information based on research sources, (c) content of project/paper, and (d) summary of findings. You will also need to discuss how this topic has related to course material and topics as well as your practicum experience using specific examples of interactions and guidance situations and strategies.

### **3. PRACTICUM PLACEMENT**

**PRACTICUM: STARTS WEEK OF JANUARY 23<sup>TH</sup> AND ENDS WEEK OF APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup> 12 WEEKS)      100 POINTS**  
**(GCS SPRING BREAK APRIL 10-14)**  
**(ASHEBORO CITY SCHOOLS SPRING BREAK APRIL 14-21 )**

Each student will be assigned to a classroom setting where she/he will participate for approximately 3 hours per week for 11 weeks and one additional week when you will be expected to spend a minimum of 6 hours on one day (total of 12 weeks). The total number of field placement hours will be 39 hours. The purpose of this practicum assignment is to provide you with the opportunity for direct experience with young children so you can personally validate and apply the information presented in class. *You will be required to meet with your cooperating teacher (approximately 30 minutes) prior to your first day of participation. Call ahead to set up this orientation meeting.* You will also be required to document your participation through an e-mail journal of your experiences in which you will record the date, times, and locations of your practicum visits, as well as a description and analysis of your interactions with the children (see the description below). You will begin your experience during the week of **January 23<sup>rd</sup>**. You will receive points for your practicum placement based in part on midterm and final evaluations from your supervising teacher in collaboration with the course instructors. Each evaluation will be worth 50 points.

### **4. JOURNALS**

**JOURNALS: DUE ON FRIDAYS BEGINNING JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>      80 POINTS**

Journals are to be sent to your assigned instructor by **5:00 PM on Friday of each week beginning January 27<sup>th</sup>**. Eight journals will be assigned, each worth 10 points. When you receive 9-10 points on four journals, you do not have to turn in the remaining journals, and will receive full credit for the remaining journals. Check with your assigned instructor to verify that you have reached this goal.

**NOTE:** If you do not go to your practicum placement during the week due to a teacher workday, a snow day, etc., you still must complete a journal entry – you will need to check Blackboard for the alternate topic - your journal is still due by 5:00 PM on Friday.

Each journal must be sent to your assigned instructor via email. To confirm receipt please use the delivery confirmation option in espartan. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that the document is readable and that the attachments are readable and attached. If the document or attachment is not readable, the journal will be considered late until corrected.

Each day (24 hour period from the due date beginning at 5:01 on Friday) your journal is late will result in the loss of one point. After 5 days, the journal will no longer be accepted and you will receive 0 points for that journal assignment.

Your journal should be organized in the following manner:

- A. **Interactions**—describe the highlights of your 3-hour session. This should not be a running record but rather a collection of anecdotes from the day. The focus should be on **you and your interactions** with a child or a small group of children. **Be specific.** What did you do and say to the children? The material in this section should be concrete, observable, factual information— what actually happened.
- B. **Analysis**—Analyze each encounter in Part A. What skills did you demonstrate in your interactions? What techniques (REFER TO AND INCLUDE IN THIS SECTION INFORMATION FROM YOUR READINGS AND CLASS DISCUSSIONS) were used? What difficulties did you experience? Why did you do and say what you did? What were your goals for the interactions you are analyzing in Part A? What would you do differently next time?
- C. **Reflection** - What were your feelings as you attempted to interact with the children?

#### **4. VIRTUAL ROLE PLAY/CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT**

**100 POINTS**

This is an applied activity to be completed via BLACKBOARD. You will assume the role of a classroom teacher in a preschool or kindergarten setting. You will be given a scenario for two children that will be your own and you will name.

One child will have a disability. The discussions will occur in your assigned group on BLACKBOARD. The discussions will reflect your experiences with your two children in the context of your virtual classroom. You will need to apply strategies from the course readings and class discussions as well as resources that you find on your own. In addition, you will respond to your group members' reflections and descriptions of strategies and resources they employ for their children. These discussions will occur **five times** throughout the semester on BLACKBOARD. Further details will be shared in class.

Your BLACKBOARD participation will be evaluated as follows—20 points for each BLACKBOARD class, 10 points for the initial posting and 10 points for your response to group members. You must respond to at least 2 group members.

The following criteria will be used to assess the quality of both responses – length (2 points); content detail (5 points); and references to assigned readings or class discussions (3 points). Discussion forums will be posted 1 week before the scheduled BLACKBOARD. Your initial response to the posted forum should be completed by **4PM** three days after the initial posting (by 4PM on Thursday for Monday Blackboard classes and by 4PM on Saturday for Wednesday Blackboard classes) the second response must be posted by **4PM on the day of the scheduled BLACKBOARD class meeting.** – No posting other than on Blackboard will be accepted. **LATE POSTINGS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Remember this is a group assignment; a goal of this project is to facilitate teamwork. Therefore, it is group members’ responsibility to ensure timely postings.**

**5. BELIEF STATEMENTS**

**DUE DATE: JANUARY 9<sup>TH</sup>  
APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup>**

**5 POINTS  
25 POINTS**

Develop a belief statement that addresses at least two aspects of the following components:

- 1) The role of the teacher as facilitator in the toddler, preschool and kindergarten classroom, and
- 2) Your beliefs about discipline and guidance.
- 3) Evidence of your statement, including descriptions of actions and reflections directly from your journal entries to support your statements of your beliefs. Examples should include **your interactions** with the children, not those of the cooperating teacher.

The belief statement due on April 26<sup>th</sup> should be typed and double-spaced and at least 2-3 pages.

**6. EXAMS**

**50 POINTS**

There will be in-class midterm exam consisting of short answer and essay questions worth 50 points. **MIDTERM EXAM: FEBRUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>.**

**GRADING CRITERIA**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Grading Scale</b>
Description of Research Project/Paper	10	
Research Project/Paper	70	
Oral Presentation of Research Project/Paper	20	512 – 570 A
Journal/Participation	80	455 – 511 B
Belief Statements	30	399 – 454 C
Midterm	50	341 – 398 D
Virtual Classrooms	100	< 341 F
Practicum Experience	100	
Quizzes	80	
Participation	30	
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>570</b>	

## CLASS POLICIES

It is expected that you will **be respectful** of your classmates and the instructors by following these guidelines:

- 1) Do not converse with others during lecture time or while other classmates are speaking.
- 2) Turn off all cell phones and pagers.
- 3) Take care of personal business before class starts, do not leave the room and return during class time.

Written assignments with multiple pages must be stapled together – no plastic folders or sheet protectors.

APA style must be followed for all written work. Consult <http://www.apastyle.org> if you have questions.

**Honor Code.** Students are expected to understand and follow the UNCG Honor Code, which is printed in your student handbook. This means that any written assignments must be in your own words, and all ideas and information taken from outside sources must be properly cited and referenced. Please ask if you ever have questions on these issues.

**Special Services.** If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. Written documentation from UNCG special services should be submitted to the instructor also.

**Confidentiality.** The course places an additional obligation on you, as a student, to maintain confidentiality and ethical treatment toward the children and families in the settings in which you are placed for your practicum experience. The parents and children with whom you will be working have the right to privacy concerning their identity and school records, just as you have the right to confidentiality of your UNCG transcripts. You may NOT discuss the information you observe and record on the children with anyone other than the staff at the school/center/program and members of this class. This means that you may not tell a child's name to your friends, or show any other person any information that includes a child's name or other clues as to her/his identity. To help ensure the children's privacy, you will need to change all children's names in any written work.

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

**NOTE:** If **BLACKBOARD** is indicated, the class will be Internet-based and we will not meet on campus but rather conduct class discussion and activities over the Internet. When class is held on BLACKBOARD, you should consider spending at least the same amount of time online as you would should we be meeting face to face. Unless otherwise indicated, all other classes will meet at the regular class time on campus. BLACKBOARD will serve as a communication mode throughout the semester so you will need to access it often (**at least weekly**).

**Tentative Course Schedule**  
(Changes will be posted on BLACKBOARD)

**NOTE: Additional Readings may be assigned during the Semester**

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS
January 9	Introductions - Course Overview Belief Statement	Complete schedule forms Liability Insurance
11	Practicum Orientation Professional Issues	Kostelnik: Chapter 1 E-reserves: Weber- <i>Patience or Understanding?</i> Assign practicum placements
16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	No class
18	Orientation Meetings with Cooperating Teachers	<b>All Practicum Forms Due in the HDF office by 01-19</b>
<b>BEGIN PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE WEEK OF JANUARY 23</b>		
23	Nonverbal Communication	Kostelnik: Chapter 3 E-reserves:
25	Verbal Interactions	Kostelnik: Chapter 4 E-reserves: Kohn- <i>Five Reasons to Stop Saying Good Job</i> Cassidy - <i>Questioning the Young Child</i> <b>Journal #1 Due 1-27</b>
30	Fostering Self-Awareness Fostering Self-Esteem	E-reserves: <i>DEC Position on Inclusion</i> ; Wesley, et al. – <i>Quicknotes Part A and B</i>
February 1	<b>BLACKBOARD CLASS</b> <b>First posting due Saturday, 01-28 by 4PM</b> <b>Response due Wednesday, 02-01 by 4PM</b>	<b>VIRTUAL CLASSROOM #1 - Multicultural Issues and Topics</b> <b>Journal #2 Due 02-03</b>
6	Facilitating Children's Play	Kostelnik: Chapter 7
8	Children and Stress	<b>KOSTELNIK: CHAPTER 6</b> E_reserves: Hopkins-Children and Grief <b>Journal #3 Due 02-10</b>
13	Building a Classroom Community	E-reserves:
15	Classroom Management School Discipline Policies	E-reserves: <b>Journal #4 Due 02-17</b>
20	<b>BLACKBOARD CLASS</b> <b>First posting due Thursday, 02-16 by 4PM</b> <b>Response due Monday, 02-20 by 4PM</b>	<b>VIRTUAL CLASSROOM #2</b>
22	Responding to Children's Emotions	Kostelnik: Chapter 5 <b>Journal #5 Due 02-24</b>
27	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	<b>Research Project/Paper Description Due</b>

<b>March 1</b>	Fostering Self-Discipline (I)	Kostelnik: Chapter 10 <b>Midterm Practicum Evaluations Due</b> <b>Journal #6 Due 03-03</b>
6	<b>Spring Break</b>	No class
8	<b>Spring Break</b>	No class
13	Fostering Self-Discipline (II)	Kostelnik: Chapter 11
15	<b>BLACKBOARD CLASS</b> First posting due Saturday, 03-11 by 4PM Response due Wednesday, 03-15 by 4PM	<b>VIRTUAL CLASSROOM #3</b> <b>Journal #7 Due 03-17</b>
20	Managing Aggressive Behavior	Kostelnik: Chapter 12 E-reserves: Bakley- <i>Through the Lens</i>
22	Managing Aggressive Behavior	E-reserves: <i>DEC Concept Paper on Challenging Behavior and ACEI Position Paper: Banning Corporal Punishment</i> <b>Journal #8 Due 03-24</b>
27	Bullying in the Preschool Classroom	E-reserves:
29	<b>BLACKBOARD CLASS</b> First posting due Saturday, 03-25 by 4PM Response due Wednesday, 03-29 by 4PM	<b>VIRTUAL CLASSROOM #4</b>
<b>April 3</b>	Supporting Children's Friendships/	Kostelnik: Chapter 8
5	Prosocial Development	Kostelnik: Chapter 13
10	Psychosexual Development	Kostelnik: pp. 414 - 421
12	<b>BLACKBOARD CLASS</b> First posting due Saturday, 04-08 by 4PM Response due Wednesday, 04-12 by 4PM	<b>VIRTUAL CLASSROOM #5</b>
17	Working with Parents	E-reserves:
19	Student Presentations	<b>Research Project/Paper Due</b>
24	Student Presentations	<b>Beliefs Statement Due</b>
26	Student Presentations	
<b>May 1</b>	Student Presentations	<b>Final Practicum Evaluations &amp; Sign-In Sheets Due</b>
<b>May 3</b>	Reading Day	
<b>May 8</b>	Final Presentations	