

*The Pennsylvania State University  
College of Education*

**ECE 451**  
**INTRODUCTION TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**  
FALL 2011  
Wednesdays 1:25 – 4:25pm  
121 Chambers Building

**Contact Information**

Instructor: Joe Valente

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 4:25 – 6:25pm or by appointment

**Course Overview**

As one of the introductory courses to early childhood education for undergraduate students, this class presents a foundational base of the early childhood education field, including the study of children/childhood, current practices, various roles of practitioners, environments for learning, and approaches to teaching.

This course provides an historical overview of influential thinkers and the roots of early childhood education, multidisciplinary perspectives of development of the young child (for example, perspectives on children/childhood from anthropology, behaviorism, developmental psychology, neuroscience, postmodernism and post-structuralism, psychoanalysis, etc.), and resources for planning curriculum and instruction.

**Our Mission – Building Classrooms and Schools**

On the first day, everyone in the class will be randomly assigned to a team of five. For weeks one through twelve, teams will work together on building classrooms that reflect readings. During this time, each team will be tasked with creating classrooms that reflect key ideas and thinkers from weekly course readings.

For instance, during week two, teams will be tasked with creating a classroom based on the ideas of maturationism and key thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Arnold Gesell. Teams will also be tasked with in-class activities such as small and large group discussions, model lessons, study group presentations, multi-week projects, and activities that emerge from team interests.

Everyone in the class will get to choose new teams for the final project phase of the course between weeks thirteen through sixteen. For the final project, each team will build a school based on their shared beliefs about children and teaching.

## Required Readings

MacNaughton, G. (2003). *Shaping early childhood: Learners, curriculum and contexts*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Ayers, W., & Alexander-Tanner, R. (2010). *To teach: The journey, in comics*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Paley, V. G. (2004). *A child's work: The importance of fantasy play*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Course readings on Angel (see schedule for details)

## Requirements

1. *Attendance, Participation, and In-Class Team Exercises (20 percent of grade)*

### **DUE: Every week**

During this course students will reflect on their personal beliefs as they relate to children and teaching, discuss current events in education, and engage with the instructor and classmates in ongoing dialogue. Therefore attendance is crucial and required. I understand that during the semester many of you will undoubtedly get sick and need to miss class. If this is the case please email or call me when you know you will not be able to make it to class. Absences due to illness or emergencies will be excused. More than one unexcused absence will result in a deduction of participation points.

I will rarely lecture. This class will be interactive and includes in-class team exercises. There will be opportunities for group work with your team, one-on-one discussions with peers and instructor, and individual time to reflect on a writing sample, personal experience, etc. You are expected to participate in the class discussions and take an active part of your education. You are also expected to be a contributing member of your team. I will do everything in my power to create engaging discussion topics and activities but ultimately the decision to become a member of the classroom community and your team is yours. Participation points will awarded/deducted based on your participation and artifacts of learning (e.g. class exercises).

2. *Observations and Field Notes of ECE Programs (20 percent of grade)*

### **DUE: Week 2, 5, & 9**

Three required observations and written field notes need to be done in early childhood settings. Observations and field notes are designed to apply the information learned through text and class discussions. Observations will take place in one of the State College area preschools. Each observation should be two hours in length. Additional guidelines will be provided in class.

3. *Individual Philosophy Statement (20 percent of grade)*

**DUE: Weeks 8 & 16**

The first paper will be 3 to 5 double-spaced typewritten or word-processed pages using Times New Roman and a 12 point font. The second paper will be 8 to 10 pages. For due dates see the course schedule. These papers will be a summary of the students' curriculum Philosophy Statement in relation to the major philosophical and curricular schools of thought encountered in the course. The papers should also document any changes or refinements of the student's platform that occurred as a result of course-related experiences. A grading rubric will be provided in advance and directions will be elaborated upon during class.

4. *Virtual Classrooms—Weekly Wikis with Team (20 percent of grade)*

**DUE: Every week**

For weeks one through twelve, teams will be using wikis as a platform to document and take notes on key topics and ideas based on weekly readings. There will be a class discussion and workshop on how to use wikis.

In short, each team will be responsible for building a virtual classroom that reflects key ideas and thinkers from weekly readings (for instance, teams will build a classroom as if they were Maturationists or as if they were Rousseau or Gesell). Teams will use weekly readings and supplementary artifacts (readings, movies, images, music, websites, etc.) culled from a variety of academic and popular sources to build wikis in class. For each weekly topic, teams will ask and answer:

1. How does \_\_\_\_\_ philosophy drive?

- Vision of child and childhood
- Purpose of schooling
- Daily structure
- Environmental design
- Classroom management
- Diversity and inclusive classrooms
- Curriculum and academics (math, science, language arts, history, art, music, etc.)
- Social and emotional development
- Play
- School and family relations
- Assessment

2. What are the assumptions, strengths, limitations, and histories of this philosophical model? What does this model do well? What does this model not do well? Who benefits from this model? Who gets left out with this model?

*5. Virtual Schools—Charter and Portfolio for Developing School (20 percent of grade)*

**DUE: Week 16**

For weeks thirteen through sixteen, each newly formed team will develop a new virtual school with an accompanying wiki portfolio and a charter that outlines the school's philosophy and mission. Specifically the charter will include:

- Mission statement
- Rationale for school
- Sample schedule
- How classes are organized/run/setup (mix-aged grouping, reverse inclusion, centers, etc.)
- Plan for being responsive to diverse learners
- Curriculum and academics
- Play
- Assessment
- Teacher professionalism and skills
- Physical environment
- Social and emotional development
- Relationships with families and community

Further explanation of this assignment will be provided in class.

**Grades**

Letter grades will be given for all assignments.

**Grading Policy**

|    |   |                      |               |
|----|---|----------------------|---------------|
| A  | = | 95 percent and above | 95-100 points |
| A- | = | 90 to 94 percent.    | 90-94 points  |
| B+ | = | 85 to 89 percent     | 85-89 points  |
| B  | = | 80 to 84 percent     | 80-84 points  |
| B- | = | 75 to 79 percent     | 75-79 points  |
| C+ | = | 70 to 74 percent     | 70-74 points  |
| C  | = | 65 to 69 percent     | 65-69 points  |

**Course Evaluation**

In a professional degree program, my assumption is that you are emerging professionals who are taking this course because you have goals and purposes that are important to you. I further assume that you will take seriously the opportunities this course offers to further your own important purposes. Put as blatantly as possible, the things that I most

want to see are signs that you are making strong efforts to make this course work for you. I measure this through the following:

- Coming to each class and on-time
- Completing readings carefully and on-time
- Responding thoughtfully and collegially in postings
- Responding thoughtfully and collegially in class discussions
- Engaging with course authors and issues in your speaking and writing
- Engaging privately with me to further develop your academic and professional knowledge and skills, including theoretical thinking, writing, and leadership
- High quality leadership of seminar discussions
- Competent completion of your final project

I reserve the right to assign a grade other than “A” in the event that I have reservations about your performance in the class (as outlined above) throughout the semester or in your final project. If I have reservations about your course involvement, I will email or talk to you. You will also have my feedback to your work. If you have any questions about my assessment of your performance in the class, it is your responsibility to talk to me.

### **Course Expectations**

1. Weekly, on-time attendance. PSU Policy: *It is the policy of the University that class attendance by students be encouraged and that all instructors organize and conduct their courses with this policy in mind. A student should attend every class for which the student is scheduled and should be held responsible for all work covered in the courses taken. In each case, the instructor should decide when the class absence constitutes a danger to the student's scholastic attainment and should make this fact known to the student. A student whose irregular attendance causes him or her, in the judgment of the instructor, to become deficient scholastically, is at risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower grade than the student might have secured had the student been in regular attendance.* You are expected to be in communication with me about absences. All students have one excused absence, no questions asked. After that, we need to talk.

2. This is a seminar class, heavily dependent upon discussion. You must complete the reading prior to class and be prepared to participate. If you feel that the classroom dynamics are not giving you a structure that allows you to participate effectively, please discuss it with me. This is information I want to receive.

### **Diversity Statement**

Within our classroom, there is tremendous diversity of life, cultural and emotional experience, some that might seem obvious and some that might be subtler. I expect each member of the class to demonstrate respect for persons from shared and different backgrounds and perspectives. I intend that all students will be well served by this course, that each students' reasonable learning needs will be addressed in and out of

class, and I will treat the diversity of experiences and strengths each person brings to class as a resource, strength, and benefit. Having said this, I know that it not possible to know ahead of time how to serve each person and I am resistant to making assumptions about anyone's experiences, interests, or needs. Therefore, it is important that 1) each member of the class accepts responsibility for the creation of an environment that addresses our diverse interests and need; and 2) that anyone who feels that personal or general diversity concerns are not being adequately addressed by me or by any members of the class makes those concerns known to me. If you require special accommodation, please make this known to me.

#### *Statement of Compliance with ADA*

In order to address the special request to facilitate learning of any students with disabilities, including those with hearing and sight loss, it is necessary for those students to inform the course instructor who will bring these requests to the attention of the Administrative Assistant.

#### **Penn State Academic Integrity Policy (Senate policy 49-20)**

Plagiarism, cheating, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, tampering with the academic work of others and other forms of academic dishonesty may lead to lowered grades, failure of the course or more severe measures, depending on judgments of the gravity of the individual case.

#### **College of Education Academic Integrity Policy**

<http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/current-students/academic-integrity/>

The Academic Integrity Committee addresses unresolved cases of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information or citations, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of examination, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, and tampering with the academic work of other students.

**Tentative Schedule** \*\**Students are responsible for all changes to the syllabus.*

| <i>Date</i>   | <i>Class Objective(s)</i>  | <i>Key Ideas</i>   | <i>Assignment(s) Due:</i>  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Introduction: Mission Possible</b>               |  |  |  |
| Week 1<br>August 24                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction</li> </ul>                               | <u>KEY IDEAS:</u><br>Critical Reflection,<br>Conforming (Technical),<br>Reforming (Practical),<br>and Transforming<br>(Critical) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review syllabus</li> <li>Familiarize Self with ANGEL</li> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Introduction and Chapter 1</li> </ul>   |
| <b>PART 1: Conforming Children &amp; Curriculum</b> |  |  |  |
| Week 2<br>Aug. 31                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rousseau &amp; Gesell (Maturationism)</li> </ul>      | <u>KEY IDEAS:</u><br>Conforming, Nature &<br>Culture, DAP vs. DCAP   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 2 (pp. 14-24)</li> <li>Thelan &amp; Adolph (1992)</li> <li>O'Loughlin (1992)</li> <li>Ayers (2010) Chapters 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>Due: Observation # 1</li> </ul>  |
| Week 3<br>Sept. 7                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pavlov, Watson &amp; Skinner (Behaviorism)</li> </ul> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 2 (pp. 24-31)</li> <li>Kohn (1999) Chapters 1 &amp; 6</li> <li>Ayers (2010) Chapters 3 &amp; 4</li> <li>SUPPLEMENTAL READ – Thomas (1992) Chapter 8</li> </ul>  |
| Week 4<br>Sept. 14                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bandura (Social Learning Theory)</li> </ul>           |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 2 (pp. 32-39)</li> <li>Kohn (1999) Chapters 9 &amp; 12</li> <li>Ayers (2010) Chapters 5 &amp; 6</li> <li>SUPPLEMENTAL READ – Thomas (1992) Chapter 9</li> </ul> |

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| <p>Week 5<br/>Sept. 21</p>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tyler (Conforming)</li> <li>• Observation and Assessment (Scientivistic Observation)</li> </ul> | <p><u>KEY IDEAS:</u> Norm-&amp; Criteria-referenced, Goal-&amp; Theory-based, Cultural Transmission (Instrumentalist, Behaviorist, &amp; Scientific Education), Scientific Management Theory (Taylorism), Technical Approach (Objective &amp; Rational Approaches to Goals, Curriculum, &amp; Assessment)<br/> <u>**KEY TOOLS:</u> Anecdotal, Time-Sampling, Event Sampling, Running Records, &amp; Rating Scales</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 7 (pp. 121-154)</li> <li>• Ayers (2010) Chapters 7 &amp; 8</li> <li>• Due: Observation # 2</li> </ul>  |
| <b>PART 2: Reforming Children &amp; Curriculum</b> |  |   |   |
| <p>Week 6<br/>Sept. 28</p>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piaget, Vygotsky &amp; Bruner (Constructivism)</li> </ul>                                       | <p><u>KEY IDEAS:</u> Reforming &amp; Interaction</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 3 (pp. 40-52)</li> <li>• Paley (2005) Chapters 1-5</li> <li>• Bruner (1985)</li> <li>• Vygotsky (1978)</li> <li>• Piaget &amp; Inhelder (1969)</li> <li>• SUPPLEMENTAL READ – Thomas (1992) Chapter 10 &amp; 11</li> </ul> |
| <p>Week 7<br/>October 5</p>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freud, Bowlby &amp; Erikson (Psychodynamics)</li> </ul>   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 3 (pp. 52-60)</li> <li>• Paley (2005) Chapters 6-10</li> <li>• Anna Freud (1965)</li> <li>• SUPPLEMENTAL READ – Thomas (1992) Chapter 6 &amp; 7</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Week 8<br/>Oct. 12</p>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hubel &amp; Wiesel (Neuroscience)</li> </ul>  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 3 (pp. 60-67)</li> <li>• Neurons to neighborhoods</li> <li>• Paley (2005) Chapters 11-16</li> <li>• Due: Individual Philosophy Statement (First Draft)</li> </ul>  |

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|---|--|--|--|
| Week 9<br>Oct. 19                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dewey (Reforming)</li> <li>Observation and Assessment (Interpretivist Observation)</li> </ul>   | <p><b>KEY IDEAS:</b><br/>Organic/Responsive Curriculum, Emergent Curriculum, Integrated Curriculum, Project-based Curriculum, Child-centered, Holistic, Pedagogy of Listening, &amp; Ethno-centric</p> <p><b>**KEY TOOLS:</b><br/>Intention-based, Theory-based, Journal Writing, Videoing/Audiotaping, Learning Stories, Narratives, &amp; Collecting Artifacts (Portfolio)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 8 (pp. 155-182)</li> <li>Paley (2005) Chapters 17-21</li> <li>Due: Observation # 3</li> </ul> |
| <b>Part 3: Transforming Children &amp; Curriculum</b> |  |  |  |
| Week 10<br>Oct. 26                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burman (Social Constructivists &amp; Postmodernists)</li> </ul>                                 | <p><b>KEY IDEA:</b><br/>Transforming</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 4 (pp. 70-80)</li> <li>Burman (2010)</li> <li>Rethinking Schools #1</li> </ul>                |
| Week 11<br>Nov. 2                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkerdine &amp; Davies (Feminist Poststructuralists)</li> </ul>                                |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Chapter 4 (pp. 80-92)</li> <li>Walkerdine (1993)</li> <li>Rethinking Schools #2</li> </ul>            |
| Week 12<br>Nov. 9                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freire (Transforming)</li> <li>Observation and Assessment (Criticalists Observation)</li> </ul> | <p><b>KEY IDEAS:</b> Social Justice, Democratic Classrooms, Children's Rights, Critical Feminist Theories, &amp; Critical Multicultural Education</p> <p><b>**KEY TOOLS:</b> Critical Pedagogy, Anti-bias Curriculum, Culturally Responsive Curriculum, &amp; Cyclical (or Organic) Curriculum</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mac Naughton (2003) Chapters 9 (pp. 182-212)</li> <li>Rethinking Schools #3</li> </ul>                                    |
| <b>Part 4: Build Your Own School</b>                  |  |  |  |
| Week 13<br>Nov. 16                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team project</li> </ul>   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent reading</li> </ul>  |
| Week 14<br>Nov. 23                                    | <p><b>NO CLASS</b><br/>Happy Thanksgiving!</p>   |  |  |
| Week 15<br>Nov. 30                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team project</li> </ul>   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent reading</li> </ul>  |
| Week 16<br>Dec. 7                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Project Presentation</li> </ul>   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final project (school charters and artifacts) due</li> <li>Due: Individual Philosophy Statement (Second Draft)</li> </ul> |