The Connecting Link

**Early Childhood Education:
Curriculum in Early Childhood**

Course Description

This course prepares participants for success in planning and teaching in the early childhood classroom for students from birth through 8 years. Emphasis is placed on appropriate content knowledge and teaching strategies that incorporate information related to child development, learning theories, and the use of assessment and standards in the early childhood years. Participants will explore various models of instruction as they develop lesson plans and activities that are appropriate for young children.

Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites for this course are required.

System Requirements

- Computer with word processing software
- Internet access connection
- Online video viewing capabilities/Adobe flash player
- Software capable of reading PDF files

Operating Systems	Browsers
Windows XP	Firefox, Chrome
Windows 7 and 8	IE9, IE10, Firefox, Chrome
Windows Vista	IE9, IE10, Firefox, Chrome
Mac OSX	Safari, Firefox, Chrome
iOS devices (tablets and phones)	Safari
Android devices (tablets and phones)	Chrome

NOTE: Additional software will be used, but will either be free and open-source or trial versions, and will be based on the individual needs of each teacher's Web site development and deployment needs. The instructor will work closely with each teacher to assist in determining the appropriate software.

Text Books/Supplemental Reading
Critical reading of assigned articles and text is embedded throughout the course.

Global Goals of the Course
Upon completion of the course, the learner will be able to:
1. Analyze how theories, models, government programs, and standards affect curriculum.
2. Create a plan to establish reciprocal relationships with families and other educational constituents.
3. Design developmentally appropriate learning environments and integrated learning experiences for children ages 0-8 years of age.
4. Evaluate different teaching techniques in relation to children's development and various forms of assessment with respect to their use for planning, documenting, communicating, and reflecting.
5. Design developmentally appropriate learning experiences in math, science, technology, physical education, creative arts, literacy, and social studies.

Instructional Objectives
The learner will deepen existing knowledge of content and apply professional expertise to the skills and strategies contained in this course by meeting the following instructional objectives:

Lesson 1: Developmentally Appropriate Practice
1.1   Recognize the relationship between developmentally appropriate practices and quality
1.2   Explain the three areas of knowledge (age-related expectations, individual differences, and social and cultural contexts) that form the core of developmentally appropriate practice
1.3   Explain the role of active child engagement in developmentally appropriate practice
1.4   Analyze stages of play in relation to developmentally appropriate practice

Lesson 2: Curriculum Foundations, Models, and Standards
2.1   Compare the major early childhood theories
2.2   Compare ECE program models
2.3   Describe how federal- and state-based programs have impacted early childhood
2.4   Explain the benefits and concerns of using standards in early childhood education
2.5   Describe what standards might affect curriculum development in the early years
2.6   Explain how early learning guidelines and state standards can be used in curriculum development

Lesson 3: Family Partnerships
3.1   Describe the benefits of establishing reciprocal relationships with families
3.2   Critique different communication strategies for establishing reciprocal relationships with families

3.3   Compare ways of involving families in curriculum development and implementation

Lesson 4: Environments–Physical and Emotional
4.1   Evaluate a child-teacher relationship for children 0-8 to determine if it is warm and caring within a developmentally appropriate environment
4.2   Describe appropriate guidance techniques for a given situation
4.3   Critique a schedule for learning opportunities
4.4   Critique a physical environment for learning opportunities

Lesson 5: Curriculum Planning
5.1   Describe the different elements a teacher must consider in developing curriculum plans
5.2   Plan appropriate learning topics for young children
5.3   Critique plans for learning experiences with young children

Lesson 6: Curriculum Implementation
6.1   Analyze the purpose of teacher led small group instruction
6.2   Analyze the purpose of teacher-led large group instruction
6.3   Analyze the purpose of learning centers
6.4   Analyze the purpose of outdoor learning activities
6.5   Compare the uses of various instructional strategies

Lesson 7: Assessment and Reflection
7.1   Describe the need and use for assessment in the classroom
7.2   Compare the various forms of assessment
7.3   Describe multiple uses of assessment in an early childhood classroom

Lesson 8: Math, Science, and Technology
8.1   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate mathematics curriculum
8.2   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate science curriculum
8.3   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate technology curriculum

Lesson 9: Physical Education and Creative Arts
9.1   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate physical education curriculum
9.2   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate visual arts curriculum
9.3   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate music and movement curriculum
9.4   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate drama curriculum

Lesson 10: Literacy

10.1   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate literacy curriculum

10.2   Describe how teachers support language development in children

10.3   Describe how children's literature supports developmentally appropriate curriculum

Lesson 11: Social Studies

11.1   Describe learning experiences that support children's social-emotional development

11.2   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate social studies curriculum

11.3   Describe the characteristics of a developmentally appropriate multicultural and anti-bias curriculum

Lesson 12: Integrating Curriculum

12.1   Create a lesson that integrates developmentally appropriate content from at least two different curriculum areas

12.2   Create a learning center that integrates developmentally appropriate content from at least three different curriculum areas

12.3   Create an integrated theme or project that includes developmentally appropriate content from at least three different curriculum areas

Teaching Methodology and Delivery Model

Teaching methodologies used in this course are specifically designed to maximize learning in a graduate-level, online distance-learning model. Each course facilitator is trained and/or experienced in facilitating graduate-level online courses as well as the specific content and skills of this course.

1. Online methodologies include instructor/expert presentations, directed skill practice, assignment and quiz completion, as well as the synthesis of new knowledge and skills in designing educational applications.

2. The course is taught in a supportive learning environment with teacher-participant interaction and feedback.

3. Content focuses on the presentation of advanced concepts linked to instructional strategies which accommodate learning needs of a diverse student population.

4. Course content, activities, and assignments are organized into Lessons/Milestones that participants complete during the 12-week span of the course. Course content is intended to cover material equal to 45 seat hours of instructional time.

5. Class participants actively construct their own learning and make it personally relevant by acquiring and applying course knowledge/skills to their own teaching situation.

Topics Agenda

Milestone One: Developmentally Appropriate Practice

This milestone focuses on the relationship between quality and developmentally appropriate practices, active child engagement, and stages of play. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze the degree to which learning experiences reflect developmentally appropriate practices.

Milestone Two: Curriculum Foundations, Models, and Standards

This milestone focuses on the ECE program models, federal and state-based programs, benefits and concerns, and uses of standards. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to explain how theories, models, government programs, and standards impact curriculum.

Milestone Three: Family Partnerships

This milestone focuses on the benefits of reciprocal relationships, effective communication, and family involvement. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to create a plan to establish reciprocal relationships with families.

Milestone Four: Environments–Physical and Emotional

This milestone focuses on child-teacher relationships, guidance techniques, transition times, and physical environments. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to plan developmentally appropriate learning environments for children ages 0-8 years of age.

Milestone Five: Curriculum Planning

This milestone focuses on the considerations in curriculum planning, preparing for learning plan topics, and developing plans for learning. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to plan developmentally appropriate learning experiences for young children.

Milestone Six: Curriculum Implementation

This milestone focuses on small and large group instruction, individual learning centers, outdoor learning, and instructional strategies. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to compare different teaching techniques in relationship to children's development and learning.

Milestone Seven: Assessment and Reflection

This milestone focuses on the purpose of assessment, types of assessment, and the multiple uses of assessment. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to compare various forms of assessment with respect to their use for planning, documenting, communicating, and reflecting.

Milestone Eight: Math, Science, and Technology
This milestone focuses on the characteristics of developmentally appropriate math, science, and technology curriculum. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to design developmentally appropriate math, science, or technology learning experiences.

Milestone Nine: Physical Education and Creative Arts
This milestone focuses on the characteristics of developmentally appropriate physical education, visual arts, music and movement, and drama curriculum. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to design developmentally appropriate physical education or creative arts learning experiences.

Milestone Ten: Literacy
This milestone focuses on literacy, language development, and children's literature. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to design developmentally appropriate literacy learning experiences.

Milestone Eleven: Social Studies
This milestone focuses on social-emotional development, social studies strands, and multicultural and anti-bias education. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to design developmentally appropriate social studies learning experiences.

Milestone Twelve: Integrating Curriculum
This milestone focuses on the integration of content through themes, environments, and lessons. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to design integrated learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate for young people.

Assessments and Grading

In keeping with best instructional and assessment practices, this course requires participants to demonstrate synthesis and application of course knowledge linked to the instructional objectives of this course. Assessment of the projects should not be limited to the quantity of work submitted but should carefully consider the quality and intellectual value of the work. Assessments are due and will be submitted to the instructor within the 12 weeks of the allotted class time. Unless the instructor states otherwise, all papers are expected to be properly formatted electronically.

Graded Assessment Types	Weights (%)
Writing Assignments	80%
Quizzes	20%
Total:	100%

Copies of performance assessment rubrics are included in the course. Points are assigned based on a four-point criterion rubric specifically delineated for each assessment that can be further defined as follows:

Distinguished: The assessment is highly imaginative; demonstrates critical thought; is unique; shows substantial application to one's own teaching or professional position; *goes above and beyond requirements;* is creative; demonstrates both breadth and depth of knowledge of transition-related subject matter; shows individual's personality; is professional in presentation and appearance; and demonstrates considerable effort. The assessment is exceptionally completed and demonstrates clear understanding of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Distinguished" on the course rubric.

Proficient: The assessment is well-organized and complete; is effectively and clearly presented; demonstrates clear understandings; applies what has been learned to the author's own classroom situation; clearly shows connections; is detailed; and is thoughtful and supported with ideas. A thoroughly completed assessment demonstrates that the participant shows awareness of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Proficient" on the course rubric.

Basic: This is the lowest passing grade. The assessment meets minimum requirements; includes general information but lacks descriptive detail; shows limited application to teaching/learning; and lacks originality. This denotes work that does not meet **all** aspects of standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Basic" on the course rubric.

Unsatisfactory: The assessment is missing evidence or information; is sloppy and poorly organized; demonstrates only surface understandings; shows no evidence of application to the author's own teaching situation; is poorly written; and does not meet minimum standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Unsatisfactory" on the course rubric.

Academic Honesty and Integrity
All participants are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity by doing their own work to the best of their ability. Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the participant receiving a zero for that assignment or paper.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance
In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, participants who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class, are encouraged to inform the Director of Academic Affairs prior to the first session. Reasonable academic

accommodations, aids, and adjustments may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.

Attendance

Participants will have 12 weeks from the time of their first date of login to complete the course. They will need to contact The Connecting Link at (888) 550-5465 should they not be able to complete the online class in the time given.

Late Work and Make-Up Policy

Failure to complete all work in this time frame will result in an **incomplete** or a grade of **F** for the work, depending on the reason for the delay.

University Compliance

Course content and instruction are bound by policies associated with the university granting academic credit for the course. Such polices include, but are not limited to: academic integrity and honor codes, institutional objectives and grade grievance procedures. These policies are located within the official academic catalogs which can be accessed through the university's official website.

Compliance with National Standards
Alignment to the Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching

The *Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching* is designed to provide educators with a structure for analyzing and assessing teacher practice and in constructing techniques to strengthen that practice.

Compliance with National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

The NBPTS represents the highest level of professional achievement in the continuum of teacher professional development.

Compliance with Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards for Teachers

InTASC is guided by the basic premise that an effective teacher must be able to integrate content knowledge with the specific strengths and needs of students to ensure that all students learn and perform at high levels.