

# **The Constructivist Teacher: Strategies and Techniques**

**CTEC 4200 (3); Fall 2013**

**Instructor:** Dr. Sean Durham, Assistant Professor, Curriculum and Teaching

**Office Location:** 5012 Haley Center

**Office Hours:** Mondays, by appointment; Tuesdays, 10 a.m - noon;

Wednesdays 1-3 p.m.

**Phone:** (334) 844-8274

**Email:** [rsd0007@auburn.edu](mailto:rsd0007@auburn.edu)

**Prerequisites:** Admission to Teacher Education, CTEC 3200

**Corequisites:** CTEC4200

## **Course Description:**

Students construct operational knowledge of established constructivist strategies and techniques, a set of guidelines on which to base wise curriculum decisions, and operational knowledge of the field of early childhood education, including state and national curriculum standards for the field.

## **Required Texts:**

DeVries, R., & Zan, B. (2012). *Moral classrooms, moral children: Creating a constructivist atmosphere in early education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

DeVries, R., Zan, B., Hildebrandt, C., Edmiaston, R., & Sales, C. (2001). *Developing constructivist early childhood curriculum: Practical principles and activities*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Dorfman, L. R., & Cappelli, R. (2007). *Mentor texts: Teaching writing through children's literature K-6*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Additional readings will be provided by the instructor.

## **Course Objectives:**

The Early Childhood program provides the pre-service teacher the opportunity to construct knowledge and refine their practice through experiences that support empirical and theoretical decision-making. To this end, this course will provide pre-service teachers the opportunity to observe and participate in supervised practicum experiences [NAEYC 6.1] with young children of diverse ages and reflecting diverse family systems [NAEYC 6.2 & 6.3] in order to:

1. Set goals to facilitate children's development and skills in communication, inquiry, creative expression, reasoning, and interpersonal relationships. [ECE

2.b.3] [NAEYC 5.7]

2. Develop integrated learning experiences for young children in all areas: cognitive, language, physical, social, emotional, aesthetic and technological. [ECE 2.b.3] [NAEYC 2.1.4 & 2.1.8] [TS 2.viii]
3. Plan, implement, and evaluate developmentally appropriate content and methodologies for young children that integrate all curriculum areas including biological and physical sciences, fine arts, health education, language arts, mathematics, physical education, and social studies.[ECE 2.b.4] [NAEYC 2.1.5, 4.1.1, 5.5 & 5.6]
4. Plan, implement, and evaluate strategies that foster mutual respect and understanding through verbal and nonverbal communication and that insure equitable and effective access to all instructors and materials. [ECE 2.b.3][NAEYC 2.1.2, 5.5 & 5.6] [TS 2.iii]
5. Promote and manage a positive classroom environment. [ECE 2.b.4] [PS 2.c.1 (v)]
6. Evaluate, select, and create materials based on long-range, unit, and daily objectives. [ECE 2.b.4] [NAEYC 4.1.3] [ECE 2.b.7]
7. Use manipulative materials and play as instruments for enhancing development and learning. [ECE 2.b.1] ][NAEYC 2.1.2] 2
8. Select and use appropriate equipment and technology. [PS 2.c.1 (v) & 2.c.2.(iv)] [NAEYC 2.1.6] [TS 2.v]
9. Communicate with parents/guardians for the purpose of involving them in the education of young children. [ECE 2.b.6][NAEYC 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1.5, & 5.7] [ECE 2.b.9]
10. Use shared reading experiences and the structure of natural learning as a basis for literacy instruction. [ECE 2.b.2] ][NAEYC 2.1.2]
11. Respond to and conference with children at the appropriate developmental level. [ECE 2.b.5]
12. Utilize a variety of instructional methods and materials appropriate for particular topics and situations, emphasizing student participation in hands-on activities and relate to colleagues in a professional manner. [ECE 2.b.4]
13. Implement basic health, nutrition, and safety management practices for young children, including specific procedures for infants and toddlers and procedures regarding childhood illness and communicable diseases.[NAEYC 2.4.3 & NAEYC 2.4.4 & 5.8]

14. Use reflection and self-evaluation as a basis for program planning and modification for the needs of young children, including children with special needs and children from diverse backgrounds. [NAEYC 5.1]
15. Observe, record, and assess children's behavior and development. [ECE 2.a.5]
16. Use school and/or community resources to enhance the programs for young children. [NAEYC 3.4 & 3.5]
17. Function as a member of an instructional team and relate to colleagues in a professional manner. [NAEYC 5.6]
18. Advance children's development in the use of written language [ECE 2.b.8]
19. Advance children's use of the stages of the writing process [ECE 2.b.8]

### **Course Content:**

#### **GENERAL TOPICS**

- Integrated Curriculum
- Child Guidance and Classroom Governance
- Effective Teaching Strategies for Active, Engaged Learning
- Literacy Instruction and Experiences Across the Curriculum
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice

**Apply Theory** Each student will use knowledge gained in CTEC 3200/3030 to construct materials and develop teaching strategies that will positively impact on primary grade children's learning.

**Understand and use supervising teacher strategies** Students are responsible for classroom tasks that benefit the children, such as providing materials for activities, displays, field trips, etc. Students have the opportunity to work with experienced teachers and a supervisor who will guide them within the classroom. Students will also practice the creation and management of classroom routines and rituals, such as taking children to the bathroom, supervising arrivals and departures, monitoring centers, group work, and project work, assisting with attendance, and other teaching tasks.

### **Course Requirements/Evaluation:**

1. Three formal reflections based on classroom experiences and assigned readings – **10 points (3.3 points each)**
2. Two papers (5-6 pages, double spaced, in length) written in response to specific topics – **10 points (5 points each)**
3. Classroom Management Training Resource Packet – **10 points**
4. Participation in classroom activities and discussions – **5 points**
5. Sociomoral Atmosphere Rating Template (SMART) assessment and plan – **10 points**
6. Supporting Engaged, Active Learners through Class Meetings (SEALCM) presentation (includes leading planned, video-recorded meeting) – **10 points**
7. Literacy Across the Classroom Experiences (LACE) – set of 5 plans where literacy experiences are developed that align to grade level expectations within a current curriculum unit that relate to children's interests, developmentally appropriate applications, and age-appropriate children's literature. Will include the development of 2 literacy games – **10 points**
8. Emergent curriculum case studies – group project developed during/outside of class – **5 points**
9. Presentation of 2 integrated curriculum plans linked to state standards for grades 1-3 – **10 points (5 points each)**
10. Three interviews with professional educators (may coordinate with assignment 2) – **10 points**
10. "Meet the Teacher" or other relationship building activity; PPT or other presentation – **5 points**
11. Book reflection and advocacy presentation – **5 points**
12. Other assignments responsive to the practicum experience and individual student development needs may be assigned.

Grade ranges are:

90 - 100 = A  
80 - 90 = B  
70 - 80 = C

60 - 70 = D  
00 - 60 = F

## Class Policy Statements:

Participation: Students are expected to participate in all class discussions and all exercises. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor if assignment deadlines are not met. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work. **Late work will only be accepted under special circumstances approved by the instructor in advance of the due date.**

Attendance/Absences: Professional dispositions keep absences, tardiness, and early departures from class to a minimum. It is appropriate to schedule medical appointments during times when one does not have class. If an absence cannot be avoided, kindly notify the instructor prior to class. Patterns of poor attendance impact professional performance, success in the course, and continuation in the licensure program.

Unannounced quizzes: There will be no unannounced quizzes.

Accommodations: The Tiger Cub is no longer in existence. Its replacement is the [Student Policy eHandbook](#); the URL is [www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](http://www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies).

"Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT)."

Professionalism: As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College's conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

- Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
- Contribute to collaborative learning communities
- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
- Model and nurture intellectual vitality