

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY  
SYLLABUS**

- 1. Course Number:** CTEC 3200  
**Course Title:** A Working Theory for the Constructivist Educator  
**Course Credit:** 3 semester hours  
**Prerequisites:** Admission to Early Childhood Teacher Education  
**Corequisites:** None  
**Instructor:** Dr. Carolyn L. Keasal  
**Office:** Haley Center 5094  
**Office Hours:** by appointment  
**Phone:** 334-826-6667 (home) 334-559-2824 (personal cell)  
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- 2. Date Syllabus Prepared:** April 1998, Revised January 2010

- 3. Texts:** Labinowicz, E. (1980). The Piaget primer: Thinking, learning and teaching. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.  
Labinowicz, E. (1985). Learning from Children: New Beginnings for Teaching Numerical Thinking. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.

*Additional readings will be required.*

**4. Course Description:**

This course is designed for preservice teachers preparing to teach at the preschool and primary school level. Students build knowledge of constructivist theory.

**5. Course Objectives:**

The student will:

1. Build a personal knowledge of constructivist theory as a means for understanding principles of learning and how learning takes place, especially during the early years. [ECE 2.a.5] [ECE 2.a.6]
2. Develop techniques of the clinical interview method through which children's thinking is revealed. [ECE 2.a.5] [ECE 2.a.7] [NAEYC 4.1.2]
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the structure of natural learning as a basis for instruction and construct schemes for identifying primary realms of knowledge. [ECE 2 a 1]
4. Integrate realms of knowledge with the nature of the learner. [ECE 2.a.6]
5. Apply realms of knowledge to specific content areas. [ECE 2.a.7]
6. Demonstrate knowledge of how autonomy and social interaction provide methods of motivating children to learn including interests and everyday experiences, setting realistic goals and fostering self-esteem.[NAEYC 1.1, 1.2]
7. Demonstrate knowledge of techniques and instruments for observing, recording and assessing behavior,

development and learning. [ECE 2.a.4] [NAEYC 4.1.2]

## **6. Course Content and Schedule:**

The course content is designed to permit students to construct knowledge of principles of learning and how learning takes place; techniques and instruments for observing, recording, and assessing behavior development and learning; motivating children to learn, including interests and everyday experiences; and setting realistic goals. Because the program subscribes to a model that holds that learning is integrated, arithmetic, science, language arts, health, and social studies content are incorporated throughout the class to provide examples around which discussion takes place. Thus, while development is the focus, the content relates to development of logico-arithmetic, physical and social knowledge.

- I. Factors influencing intellectual development
  - A. Maturation
  - B. Physical/concrete experiences
  - C. Social interaction
  - D. Equilibration
- II. Stages of intellectual development
  - A. Sensori-motor
  - B. Preoperational
  - C. Concrete operational
  - D. Formal
- III. Discontinuous/continuous duality of development
  - A. Intellectual tasks and age ranges as convenient benchmarks
  - B. Integration of successive stage structures
  - C. Functional aspects of learning
- IV. Methods of investigation
  - A. Observation
  - B. Clinical method
- V. Detailed analysis of individual functions (schemes) using individual assessment techniques
  - A. Demonstrate assessment techniques
  - B. Analyze children's responses to identify schemes
  - C. Discuss possible paths for instruction.
  - D. Place in perspective of helping to delineate curriculum
  - E. Provide strategies for use in classrooms.
  - F. Cultural differences.
- VI. Distinction between the realms of knowledge and the nature of knowing
  - A. Realms of knowledge
  - B. Nature of knowing
  - C. Schemes are tied to knowing
  - D. Knowing uses processes for internalization
  - E. Curriculum should be based on knowing
- VII. Realms of knowledge and academic content.
  - A. Mathematics
  - B. Language Arts/Language Development

- C. Science
- D. Social Studies/Moral Development

## 7. Course Requirements/Evaluation:

Students are required to:

Develop and write research reports on each of 2 research questions. Each report will be graded according to the student's ability to clearly represent the research question, how the question was developed, method for collecting data, analysis of data, and conclusions and reflection on the research. Each paper represents 25% of the student's grade.

*Research Reports:* You will be given 2 problems to solve. For each problem you will write a report. The report should detail how you went about solving the problem. Your report should include: how you defined the problem, relevant information for the definition and method of solving the problem (this should include quotes and references to written material), techniques for solving the problem (including sources of information--this may involve transcripts, drawings, test results, etc.), your solution to the problem including why this solution is adequate (how it fits with the relevant information cited earlier), and your evaluation of what needs to be done next (what limitations did you perceive, what new questions were raised, what parts of the question remain unanswered). These reports will be subjectively graded based on your ability to bring the resources available to you in attempting to solve the problem. All students must collect data. Failure to collect data will result in a 5 point deduction in the points earned for a report.

*Presentation of your learning:* You will each prepare a 10 minute presentation of the learning that you have had during the semester related to the research you have done and discussion in class. These will be presented to the class near the end of the semester. Grading of these presentations will be based on clear and compelling description of how your thinking has changed during the semester, what impacted your learning, and examples of research that supported this learning, based on your experiences this semester. This presentation will represent 15% of the student's grade.

*Mid-term Comprehensive Exam:* This exam will represent 20% of the student's grade.

*Class Participation:* Students will receive a class participation grade. This grade counts for 15% of your final grade. To receive full credit for class participation, students must be prepared for class (reading all assignments prior to class and bringing notes and articles to class for discussion), engage in class discussions (provide thoughtful insight that demonstrates effort in gaining understanding prior to class), and conduct oneself in a professional manner (actively listening to peer comments, respectfully engaging in discourse).

Paper #1 = 25%  
Paper #2 = 25%  
Comprehensive Exam (short answer) = 20%  
Presentation of your learning = 15%  
Preparedness, participation, etc. = 15%

Final grades will be totaled based on the activities described above. Each course objective must be achieved to receive a grade of C or better.

**Grade Ranges are:**

90-100	= A
80-89	= B
70-79	= C
60-69	= D

## 8. Class Policy Statements:

Participation: Students are expected to participate in all class discussions and participate in 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.

Cell Phones: The use of cell phones and other electronic devices during class is strictly prohibited. Cell phones should be turned off or set to silent mode. Should you have an extenuating circumstance that merits receiving a phone call during class please notify the instructor prior to class and excuse yourself from class upon receiving the phone call. Text messaging will result in no credit for attendance. (3 point deduction from your final grade)

Attendance/Absences: Attendance is required at each class meeting. Students are expected to be at all classes on time. Each unexcused absence will result in three points being deducted from the student's final grade. Excessive tardiness (more than 3 classes) will be counted as unexcused absences. The grade for late papers will be deducted 5 points for each day the paper is late. Even if you are absent when a paper is due, the paper is considered late if not submitted on that date. If an exam is missed, a make-up exam will be given only for University-approved excuses as outlined in the Tiger Cub. Arrangement to take the make-up exam must be made in advance. Students who miss an exam because of illness need a doctor's statement for verification of sickness and should clear the absence with the instructor the day they return to class. Other unavoidable absences from campus must be documented and cleared with the instructor **in advance**.

Unannounced quizzes: There will be no unannounced quizzes.

Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked 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 alternative time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. Bring a copy of your Accommodation Memo and an Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Program for Students with Disabilities at 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

Honesty Code: The University Academic Honesty Code and the Tiger Cub Rules and Regulations pertaining to Cheating will apply to this class.

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