**AUBURN UNIVERISTY**

**SYLLABUS**

1. **Course Number:** CTEC 7970/6

**Course Title:** Forest Kindergartens & Nature Preschools in the U.S. & Abroad

**Course Credit:** 3 semester hours

**Prerequisites:** None

**Corequisites:** None

**Instructor:** Angela Love, Ph.D.

[azl0009@auburn.edu](mailto:azl0009@auburn.edu)

Virtual office hours: by appointment

1. **Date Syllabus Prepared:** May 2020
2. **Texts:**

* Einarsdottir, J., & Wagner, J. T. (Eds.) (2006). *Nordic childhoods and early education: Philosophy, research, policy, and practice in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.*(Book mentioned above)
* One of the following by Richard Louv:
  + *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* (2008) - a classic
  + *[Vitamin N: The essential guide to a nature-rich life (Links to an external site.)](https://www.amazon.com/Our-Wild-Calling-Richard-Louv-audiobook/dp/B07ZTPSLX3/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Richard+Louv&qid=1590599435&s=books&sr=1-1)*[(2016) (Links to an external site.)](https://www.amazon.com/Our-Wild-Calling-Richard-Louv-audiobook/dp/B07ZTPSLX3/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Richard+Louv&qid=1590599435&s=books&sr=1-1) - more of a guidebook *[(Links to an external site.)](https://www.amazon.com/Our-Wild-Calling-Richard-Louv-audiobook/dp/B07ZTPSLX3/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Richard+Louv&qid=1590599435&s=books&sr=1-1)*[(Links to an external site.)](https://www.amazon.com/Our-Wild-Calling-Richard-Louv-audiobook/dp/B07ZTPSLX3/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Richard+Louv&qid=1590599435&s=books&sr=1-1)
  + *[Our Wild Calling: How Connecting with Animals Can Transform Our Lives - and Save Theirs](https://www.amazon.com/Our-Wild-Calling-Richard-Louv-audiobook/dp/B07ZTPSLX3/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Richard+Louv&qid=1590599435&s=books&sr=1-1)* [(2019) (Links to an external site.)](https://www.amazon.com/Our-Wild-Calling-Richard-Louv-audiobook/dp/B07ZTPSLX3/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Richard+Louv&qid=1590599435&s=books&sr=1-1)
* Sobel, D. (2016). *Nature preschools and forest kindergartens: The handbook for outdoor learning.*St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

1. **Course Description:**

The course is designed for students interested in advancing and transforming their understanding of the forest kindergartens and nature-based preschools for young children in international contexts. It examines current research in early childhood programs focused on nature as an environment for learning, from a variety of perspectives.

1. **Course Objectives:**
2. Students will gain an understanding of different perspectives on nature-based learning and forest kindergartens, exploring international perspectives and the cultural contexts for early education.
3. Students will deepen their understanding of common models of early childhood programs focused on outdoor spaces for learning.
4. Students will develop an understanding of the socio-political context of the forest school and nature-based preschool movements.
5. Students will examine current practices related to the outdoors as the environment for learning in early childhood education.
6. **Course Content and Schedule:**

Distance education students will have access to the Auburn University libraries by utilizing the library’s online databases for materials that will support the completion of assignments. Students may also have materials e-mailed directly to them upon request. Distance education students will have access to course materials through Canvas (or other AU accessible and available LMS) and electronic mail.

**7. Course Requirements/Evaluation**:

Distance learning: Students in the distance education section of this course will access class lectures through the use of audio and video streaming media using computer-based technologies. Links to the lectures will be posted in Canvas. Assignments will be submitted electronically via Canvas (or electronic mail, as a backup), allowing for timely delivery and subsequent instructor response. The technology used is appropriate for this program as it provides distance education students with identical lectures and equal access to both the instructor and other students.

1. Book Review 35 points

Choose a book from a provided list. Write a 4-5 page book review that presents the results of your learning, reviews its contents, and recommends to readers the application of knowledge learned.

1. Oral Presentation of Research 35 points

Read a book or series of articles related to a nation, its cultural context for early education, and approaches to forest kindergartens and nature-based preschools. These nations may include Australia, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Sweden, Norway, S. Korea.

1. Online Discussion 30 points

Contribute one or more news articles for class discussion each week, and write weekly on the discussion board describing your reactions to these news articles and other readings, the things you are learning, anything you think you may be using in your teaching, and ideas from other projects in this course or others you are taking. On Canvas we will utilize the discussion board as an interactive forum, to which each student should respond and contribute fully to the discussion.

For the distance-learning environment, this assignment can be completed and posted online by the due date.

Each assignment should make reference to the readings for class.

1. Book Review 35 pts.
2. Oral Presentation 35 pts.
3. Blog & Discussion 30 pts.

The grade ranges for advanced grad students are:

**93 - 100 = A**

**82 - 92 = B**

**71 - 81 = C**

**60 - 70 = D**

**00 - 60 = F**

**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.

Attendance/Absences: Attendance is required at each class meeting. 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

**9. Justification for Graduate Credit:**

This course provides an in-depth examination of issues that are critical to the evaluation of early childhood programs. Readings from a broad selection of journal articles, books, and the text provide the basis for students to critically analyze theoretical and methodological approaches to the evaluation of early childhood programs and practices. Further, the course challenges students to transform and coordinate earlier ideas with current research and theory for its potential to inform future policy and practice in early childhood education. This course is part of the Master's program approved by the Alabama State Department of Education that qualifies the graduates for the Advanced Level A Certificate in the State of Alabama. Additionally, this course meets the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Standards for Master's, Specialist's and Doctoral Candidates.