

**CTEC 4200**

**Auburn University**

Department: Curriculum & Teaching

Program: Early Childhood Education

Course Title: The Constructivist Teacher:

Strategies and Techniques

Course Number: CTEC 4200

Course Credit: 3 hours

Semester: Summer 2025

Instructor: Lindsay Griffies

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Phone Number: Cell: 334-321-8182

Office: College of Education, 2307

Office Hours: By appointment

Schedule: T/Th 9:00-11:15

Classroom: College of Education, 1103

Prerequisites: Admission to Teacher Education

\*Not to be distributed

**1. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**Catalog 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.

**Text:**

**Required:**

Gartrell, Dan (2007) A Guidance Approach for the Encouraging Classroom 4th edition.   
ISBN 978-1418020101

Gronlund, Gaye & Rendon, Thomas (2017) Saving Play: Addressing Standards through Play-Based Learning in Preschool and Kindergarten St. Paul, MN. Redleaf. ISBN-978-1605545301

Helm, Judy, and Katz, Lilian (2011) Young Investigators: The Project Approach in the Early Years. ISBN-978-0807751534

**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:**

* Developmentally Appropriate Practice
* Integrated Curriculum
* Effective Teaching Strategies for Active, Engaged Learning
* Multiple Contexts of Early Childhood
* Child Guidance and Classroom Governance

**2. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance:**

This is a discussion-based, participation-heavy course. We will be engaging in interactive session every day so it is important that you attend every day. Even with excused absences, you may not be able to make up in class sessions missed due to the unique nature of the discussion and experiences in class. Excused absences are defined in the *AU Bulletin*: You may be excused for personal illness, a serious illness or death of someone in your immediate family, a field trip, a religious holiday (one week prior notice), or a subpoena. For a provisional excuse, please notify me on or before the day you miss by leaving a message by e-mail or telephone. For a fully excused absence (and full attendance/participation credit), you will need to provide documentation. Late assignments will not be accepted except at the discretion of the instructor.

**Grading Plan:**

**Course Assignments:**

\*Please note that this is only a plan; assignments and point totals may change during the semester.

1. Weekly Reading/Discussion Board Assignments = 100 points (avg)

\*Will be posted on Canvas

2. Philosophy Brochure = 15 points

3. Play Assignment = 25 points

4. Project Approach Presentation =50 points

5. Saving Play Presentation =50 points

6. Participation =10 points

7. Final Essay: = 100 points

Participation- This course requires high levels of active engagement in discussion, activities, observations, documentation, positive attitude toward learning, respect, etc. Attendance, professionalism, and interaction is paramount. Points will be deducted for lack of participation in the following ways: absences, tardies, lack of engagement in class activities and discussion, unprofessional behavior.

1. 315-350
2. 280-314
3. 245-279
4. 210-244

Failure- below 210

Failure to turn in key assignments may result in an “incomplete” in the course even if point requirements are met.

**3. University and College Policies**

**Participation**:

All 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 and for initiating arrangements for missed work.

**Unannounced Quizzes:**

There will be no unannounced quizzes.

**Accommodations:**

Students who need special accommodations in class, as provided for by the American Disabilities Act, should arrange a confidential meeting with the instructor during office hours the first week of classes – or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. You must bring a copy of your Accommodation Memo and an Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have these forms but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096.

**Academic Honesty Policy:**

All portions of the Auburn University student [Academic Honesty Code](https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/Policies/AcademicHonestyCode.pdf) (Title XII) will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

**Professionalism:**

Faculty, staff, and students in professional settings are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are as follows: Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices; contribute to collaborative learning communities; demonstrate a commitment to diversity; model and nurture intellectual vitality.

**Writing Center:**

The Miller Writing Center (MWC) is located on the third floor on the north side of the RBD Library. Our mission is to help you become a better writer and communicator. As a welcoming space, we value the perspectives and experiences you bring to your writing. We offer free, one-on-one appointments to anyone at Auburn University in both face-to-face and online formats. Our staff of undergraduate and graduate peer consultants can help you with any kind of writing, at any point in the writing process. To learn more about our hours and how to make an appointment, please visit our website [<https://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/university-writing/miller-writing-center/index.php>].

**Student eHandbook:**

Please refer to <http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/> for all AU student policies.

ECE=Alabama and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Standards for Early Childhood Education

PS=Alabama and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Standards for Professional Studies, Basic Programs.

NAEYC= National Association for the Education of Young Children

4. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

**Summer 2025 – 4200 Schedule**

\*This schedule is subject to change. The instructor will announce changes through Canvas announcement. Check Canvas regularly for updates and information.

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| May 20 – **Tuesday 8:30**  First day of class, Introductions, Syllabus,  A Teacher, Child, Environment is…, Rules  **Field Trip-Montessori School, 10:00-11:00** | May 22 – **Thursday 9:00**  Intro to ECE, NAEYC Position Statements, DAP  \*Philosophy Brochure Group Assignment\*  **Discussion Bd 1: NAEYC Position Statement** |
| May 27 – **Tuesday 9:00**  **Philosophy Presentations, Forest Video**  **Discussion Bd 2: NAEYC Ideals** | May 29 – **Thursday 8:30**  Field Trip: **TBA 8:30**  **Seminar: Loose Parts @ 10:00**  **Discussion Bd 3: NAEYC Ethical Principals** |
| June 3 – **Tuesday 8:30**  **Field Trip: Auburn Day School, 8:30-9:30**  **Read: A Guidance Approach Chapters 1-2**  **Discussion Bd 4: Guidance Approach** | June 5 – **Thursday 9:00**  **Read: A Guidance Approach Chapters 3-4**  **Guest Speaker**  **Discussion Board 5: Guidance Approach** |
| June 10 – **Tuesday 8:30**  **Field Trip: Woodland Wonders, 8:30-9:30** **Read: Guidance Approach Chapter 5-6**  **Discussion Bd 6: Guidance** | June 12 – **Thursday 9:00** **Guest Speaker**  **Read: A Guidance Approach Chapters 7-8**  **Discussion Bd 7: Guidance Approach** |
| June 17 – **Tuesday 9:00**  **Read: A Guidance Approach Chapters 9-11**  **Discussion Board 8: Guidance Approach** | June 19 – Thursday  **NO CLASS** |
| June 24 – **Tuesday 8:30**  **Seminar: Blocks, Bock video**  **Play Homework Assignment**  **Guest Speaker** | June 26 – **Thursday 9:00**  **Watch August to June**  **Read Young Investigators Chapters 1-2**  **Discussion Board 8: August to June** |
| July 1– Tuesday  **NO CLASS** | July 3 – Thursday  **NO CLASS** |
| July 8 – **Tuesday 9:00**  **Seminar: Drawing/Painting**  **Read: Young Investigators Chapters 3, 4, 5**  **Discussion Board 9: Field Trips** | July 10 – **Thursday 9:00**  **Read Young Investigators Chapters 6, 7, 8**  **Discuss Project Approach Presentations**  **Watch video from George Lucas Foundation** |
| July 15 – **Tuesday 9:00**  **Seminar: Clay/Playdough Play Homework Due, Discuss Prop Box**  **Work on project approach presentations** | July 17 – **Thursday 9:00**  **Project Approach Presentations**  **Guest Speaker**  **Discussion Board 10: Guest Speakers** |
| July 22 – **Tuesday 9:00**  **Seminar: Prop Box (Bring to Class)**  **Read: Saving Play Chapters 1, 2 ,3** | July 24 – **Thursday 9:00**  **Read: Saving Play Chapters 4, 5, 6**  **Work on Saving Play Presentations in class** |
| July 29 – **Tuesday 9:00**  **Saving Play Presentations Chapters 7, 8, 9**  **Philosophy Paper is due on August 6** | July 31 – **Thursday Last Class 9:00**  **Saving Play Presentations Chapters 10, 11, 12**  **Discuss Saving Play Chapters 13-14** |