

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
GENERIC SYLLABUS FOR REQUIRED COURSE

COURSE TITLE:

ECE 112 Families and Communities in Early Childhood Education

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is the study of relationship of parents and communities to early childhood programs with emphasis on parental needs for early care and education, parenting skills and need for communication with parents, challenges of dealing with diverse populations and multiple family structures using an anti-bias approach which respects diversity and encourages collaborative efforts in caring for children.

COURSE COMPETENCIES: After completing this course the student should be able to describe the importance of family and community relations including effective communication with parents and methods of parental involvement in programs. The need to respect the diverse nature of families and children within a community will be emphasized. Upon completing the course, competencies should be shown in the following:

Child development and learning:

1. Applies knowledge of cultural and linguistic diversity to create environments and experiences which affirm and respect children from diverse backgrounds, supports the home culture, and promotes anti-bias approaches and the valuing of diversity within society. (Level I, II, & III)

Curriculum development and implementation:

2. Plans and implements an integrated curriculum that focuses on children's needs and interests and takes into account culturally valued content and children's home experiences. (Level I & II, & III)

Family and community relationships:

3. Demonstrates the need to establish and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with families (Level I, II, & III)

4. Respects parents' choices and goals for children and communicates effectively about curriculum and children's progress. (Level I & II)

5. Involves families in planning for individual children, including children with disabilities, developmental delays, or special abilities. (Level I & II)

6. Demonstrates sensitivity to differences in family structures and social and cultural backgrounds. (Level I, II, III)

7. Describes the need for communicating effectively with other professionals concerned with children and with agencies in larger community to support children's development, learning, and well-being (Level I & II)

Assessment and evaluation of young children:

8. Uses informal assessment strategies to plan and individualize curriculum and teaching practices to meet the needs of individual children, and to ensure the continuous physical, social, emotional, aesthetic, and cognitive development of all children, regardless of ability. (Level I, II)

Professionalism:

9. Demonstrates an ability to reflect on practice, articulates a philosophy and rationale for decisions, and an ability to evaluate the effects of choices and actions on others as a means of professional development. (Level I, II, III)

COURSE CONTENT:

The course will cover the following topics so as to meet the competencies required. Actual time allotted to each subject will be determined by the instructor based on individual class needs and interests.

1. Importance of parent and community involvement in early care and education programs.
2. Techniques for involving parents in early childhood programs.
3. Communication skills with parents and professionals concerning needs of children and programs.
4. Dealing with diverse populations and recognizing bias in our society.
5. Following an anti-bias approach in programming with young children.
6. Diverse populations: racial, linguistic, cultural, familial, and gender diversity and their effects on programs with young children.
7. Conferencing with parents about children's development and problems.
8. Using diversity materials in the classroom curriculum.
9. Volunteers and their use in the classroom.
10. Working with community agencies and supports to aid children's development and family strengths.

CONTENT OBJECTIVES:

After completing the course, the student should be able to describe the importance of family and community relations including effective communication with parents and methods for dealing with parental involvement. The diverse nature of parents and children within society will be emphasized throughout the course. Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. state the importance of parent involvement in early care and education programs.
2. identify means for involving parents in early care and education programs.
3. describe ways to build relationships with parents.
4. describe ways in which parents influence their children and the potential for conflict with the influence of staff and programs.
5. construct ways of communicating with parents, both formally and informally, in early care and education programs.
6. describe the position of parents as decision-makers for their children and their need to influence program policy.
7. construct policies which balance the rights of parents, center, and staff for use in the center.
8. construct viable parent education components with respect to multicultural and anti-bias curriculum principles and beliefs through the use of curriculum, parent meetings, and parent conferences.
9. understand the nature of many diverse backgrounds, including but not be limited to racial, linguistic, gender, family, and cultural differences, of families and community members, and the influence of these diversities on children's needs and program development.

10. describe the use of volunteers, community resources, and governmental organizations in furthering parental involvement in programs.

CLASS METHODS:

The class will be taught using lecture, discussion, demonstration and small group activities. Films will be used to enhance topics of discussion and to illustrate actual program operation and child development and behavior. Class notes are to be taken by students for use in study and for future reference.

REQUIRED TEXT(S):

(In use as of Fall semester, 2006. Subject to change)

Each student will need to have the following required text(s) available at the Bunker Hill Community College Bookstore.

Gestwicki, C. (2007). Home, school and community relations (6th ed.). Albany, NY: ITP/Delmar.

Derman-Sparks, L. (1989). Anti-bias Curriculum: Tools for empowering young children. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.

EVALUATION TECHNIQUES:

Grades will be assessed in a number of ways to be determined by the instructor. These may include attendance and participation, exams, lab experiences and observations, project development and design, reports, research papers, and others means of evaluation. Specific methods will be outlined at the first meeting of class and will be included on a specific syllabus for the particular course section of enrollment.

ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR MEETING COURSE & CONTENT OBJECTIVES THROUGH ASSIGNMENTS:

Level II competencies : Set of study assignments and observations of program settings so as to provide the student with experience seeing actual program activities which involve parents and community activity in the program.

Level III competencies:

Three projects at a minimum are needed. An observational paper which requires the student to apply knowledge learned to analyze an actual center situation as to its effectiveness in using parents and community resources in the program. A second project which requires the student to work with others around anti-bias curriculum issues in developing appropriate materials for children to further a respect for diversity in society. A third research inquiry centered on a topic dealing with bias in society and controversial issues which might effect families and children attending an early childhood program.

NOTE: Levels of Learning within the Coursework Taught

The course competencies involve four differing levels of learning and involvement on the part of the student. These levels are outlined below.

□ Level I: Introductory and knowledge-base Formation. The student at this level of coursework will begin to develop a knowledge-base of

information around the subject area and consider his/her prior learning about children and early care and education as a means of beginning to construct a personal and professional knowledge-base for professional practice. Specific knowledge-based content areas will be delineated for each course to assure the same level of learning for all students.

□ Level II: Observation. The student will take the knowledge gained at Level I and apply this knowledge at a deeper level by observing children and/or early care and education programs so as to understand the "real" world meaning of theories and concepts when applied to child growth, development and behavior in working programs. This level implies that Level I has begun prior to observation occurring and analysis of observed information being attempted. Specific observations will be required in each course to assure this level of learning.

□ Level III: Demonstrated Application of Knowledge Gained. The student will apply the knowledge-base gained and the observations completed and be able to apply this knowledge to demonstrate that the theories, concepts, and skill development expected in the course are in fact understood and able to be applied to practice. Specific assignments will be developed for each course to assure this level of learning.

□ Level IV: Practice and Demonstration of Competency. The student will be required to apply the knowledge gained, the understanding from observations, and learning from applied assignments to the practicum experience which will culminate in a portfolio assessment of "best practice" using the incorporation of the program's competencies into the practice experience. All four levels are implied in this demonstration of competency and specific learning experiences will be built into the practicum experience to assure this level of learning.

PREREQUISITE(S).

Prerequisite for this course is one course in Child Growth and Development (ECE 103 or its equivalent) and three (3) other courses in Early Childhood Education.