

**Early Childhood Curriculum  
UCLA Psychology 134G  
Syllabus Fall, 2008**

Class meeting time: TTh 9:30 – 10:45  
Location: A279 Franz Hall

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The goal of this course is to provide a picture of the different curriculum models used in early childhood education. Early childhood is defined as birth through eight years of age. Through reading, field observation, and lectures, students will get a sense of the educational strengths and weaknesses of different kinds of curriculum. Lectures will include curricula being used with different populations in Los Angeles, such as low-income/underserved children, developmentally delayed children, immigrant children, and middle class children. Lectures and observational sites will include the following methods and models: Bank Street, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, special education, RIE, High Scope, developmental, multiage groups, and Open Court. In many cases, through the generosity of the Office of Instructional Development, there will be guest lecturers who serve as directors at the various sites. These lecturers will provide an expert and inside view of the various models.

The organization of the quarter will be such that the reading will be concentrated before the midterm, with observations and presentations in the second half of the quarter.

**Assignments and Assessments**

Midterm: Thursday, October 29th. Short answer formats on lectures and readings to date. No multiple choice, but there may be list matching items.

Take-home final

Due Monday, December 7, by e-mail, by 4:30 pm. Each take-home exam will consist of two questions. Essays must be emailed to both the TA and instructor. Each exam should consist of two attachments, one for each question. While these are not the final exam questions, the following guidelines give you an idea of what to prepare for during the quarter.

1. Drawing on readings, lectures, and oral reports, what do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of the various approaches to early education.
2. Compare and contrast the philosophy empirical findings (where possible) and practices of the two early childhood approaches represented in field observations at your primary and secondary sites.

Observations: Each student will do two three-hour observations in two different kinds of school; schools will be visited in groups of four. Further guidance on the observations will be provided later in the quarter. Note, though that the observations each take place in a three-hour time block and you must allow time for transportation. The early childhood sites range from locations in Pasadena, Northridge, downtown, Culver City, Venice and the Westside. Due to the organization of the school day in the various sites, most observations are offered in the morning, on Mondays and Wednesdays. **In order to take this class, you must be able to free up the time for two observations during the quarter.**

One of the observations will be the *primary*; that curriculum model will be the subject of a group report. The other observation will be the *secondary* and be used for your take-home, final exam

### Observation logistics

I have received a small grant from the Office of Instructional Development that will make it possible for you to get cars from UCLA fleet services if no one in your group has a car. I suggest that everyone split gas, no matter what the source of the car. If a group needs a car, I will give you instructions on how to get a car from fleet services on the grant.

When you sign up for visits, please try to have one car in each group and not leave a group without a personal car, if at all possible, to minimize rentals.

### Reports

Each group of four students will prepare a report for the class. It is required that the slides are presented in MS Powerpoint. Presentations are stronger with some visuals. However, we are going to have to see which settings will allow photographs to be taken. Many schools will allow photographs with no children in them. There will be two reports per class period, in the last three weeks of the quarter. Once all the observation sign-ups are complete, you will be assigned a presentation day. All reports need to allow time for class discussion. Further guidance on the reports will be provided later in the quarter.

### **Readings**

The reading assignments are front-loaded before the midterm and observations. They consist of articles and chapters that are available on the class Blackboard website. The readings are due before the lecture on that topic.

## **Lectures**

Lectures/Powerpoints will not be made available on the class website. This practice will induce the deeper learning required by taking full notes.

Th 9/24 **Introduction to class.** Go over syllabus and discuss framework for classroom observations.

T 9/29 **Film: Montessori – An Inspiration.** Co-producers, **Lagis & Theo Zavros.**  
[www.montessoridvd.com.au](http://www.montessoridvd.com.au)

Th 10/1 **Development as curriculum.**

Clarke-Stewart, A. (1982). Chapter 6: Programs, places, peers. In *Daycare*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Elkind, D. (1989). Developmentally appropriate education for four-year-olds. *Theory into Practice, 28*, 47-52.

Howes, C. et al. (1992). Teacher characteristics and effective teaching in child care: Findings from the National Child Care Staffing Study. *Child and Youth Care Forum*

T 10/6 **Early education in the Montessori model.**

Guest Lecturer: Alma Cortés, Fernald Site Director, Megan Daly Infant Development Program, Department of Psychology

Lillard, A. S. (2005). *Montessori: The science behind the genius*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 5: Extrinsic rewards and motivation, pp. 152-191.

Montessori, M. (1912, new edition 2006). Chapter 5: Discipline (pp. 86-106). *The Montessori Method*. New York: Schocken Books (New edition: Cosimo Books).

Montessori, M. (1912, new edition 2006). Chapter 6: How the lessons should be given (pp. 107-118). *The Montessori Method*. New York: Schocken Books (New edition: Cosimo Books).

Th 10/8 **Details on observation sites. Sign up to observe two early childhood programs and to give one report.**

T 10/13 **Reflections on the Pikler Institute: A RIE approach to childcare** (with film)

Guest lecturer: Dr. Ani Shabazian, Children's Center Director and Assistant Professor of Education, Loyola Marymount University

Gonzales-Mena, J. (2004). What can an orphanage teach us? Lessons from Budapest. *Beyond the Journal: Young Children on the Web*, 1-6.

10/15 **The Open Court Approach to Reading.**

Guest lecturer: Gena Casillas, K/1, Overland Elementary School, LAUSD.

Reading TBA.

T 10/20 **Early education in the Reggio Emilia model** (with film)

Guest Lecturer: Alma Cortes, Fernald Site Director, Megan Daly Infant Development Program, Department of Psychology

Edwards, C., Gandini, L., Forma, G. (Eds.) (1998). *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach – Advanced Reflections*. Ablex Publishing:Greenwich, Ct. Chapter 5 and 16.

Th 10/22 **Early education in the Bank Street model**

Guest lecturer: Dr. Helen Davis, Director, Megan Daly Infant Development Program and Applied Developmental Psychology program

Zimiles, H. (1997). Viewing education through a psychological lens: The contribution of Barbara Biber. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 28.

T 10/27 **A RIE approach to childcare.**

Guest lecturer: Deborah Salomon, Executive Director, Resources for Infant Educators. [www.rie.org](http://www.rie.org)

Edwards, C. P. & Raikes, H. (2002). Extending the dance: Relationship-based approaches to infant/toddler care and education. *Young Children*, July, 10-17.

Th 10/29 **Midterm exam**

T 11/3 **Curricula for children with developmental disabilities.**

Guest lecturer: Jon Roos, M.A., Intervention therapist.

Odom, S. L. & Diamond, K. E. (1998). Inclusion of young children with special needs in early childhood education: The research base. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*,

Th 11/5 **Culture, Multiculturalism and Anti-bias curricula** (with film)

Gonzales-Mena, J. (1996). Multicultural Issues in childcare. Mayfield Pub. Co. Pages TBA.

Greenfield, P. M., Suzuki, L. K., & Rothstein-Fisch, C. (2006). Culture and human development: Implications of independence and interdependence for parenting, education, pediatrics, and mental health In W. Damon (Series Editor) & I. E. Sigel & K. A. Renninger (Vol. Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology* (Sixth Edition), vol. 4: *Child Psychology in Practice*.

Schweinhart, L. J. (2003, April). Benefits, costs, and explanation of the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program. Paper presented at the Society for Research in Child Development, Tampa.

Th 11/10 **Early education in the Waldorf model**  
Guest lecturer: Northridge Waldorf Director

Edwards, C. P. (2002). Three approaches from Europe: Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 4.

Th 11/12 **Early childhood education for the underserved: St Joseph Center, Venice**

Guest lecturer(s): Dr. Va Lecia Adams, Director, Family Services and/or Leticia Garcia Greenman, Director of Childcare Programs

Persistent effects of early childhood education on high-risk children and their mothers. *Applied Developmental Science*, 4, 2-14.

Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., Taggart, B., & Elliot, K. (2003). The Effective Provision of Preschool Education (EPPE) project: Findings from the preschool period.

Peisner-Feinberg, E. S. et al.,(2001). The relation of preschool child-care quality to children's cognitive and social-developmental trajectories, *Child Development*, 72, 1534-1553.

T 11/17 **Two reports from the field**

Th 11/19 **Two reports from the field**

T 11/24 **Two reports from the field**

Th 11/26 **Thanksgiving holiday**

T 12/1 **Two reports from the field**

Th 12/3 **Two reports from the field; hand out Final Exam**

M 12/7

**Final Exam Due**

(due Monday 12/7, 4:30 pm, via email to TA and Instructor)