

J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College
Course Content Summary

Course Prefix and Number: CHD 165

Credits: 3

Course Title: Observation and Participation in Early Childhood/Primary Settings

Course Description: Focuses on observation as the primary method for gathering information about children in early childhood settings. Emphasizes development of skills in the implementation of a range of observation techniques. Includes 40 hours of field placement in early learning setting. Lecture 2 hours (seminar). Laboratory 2 hours (field placement). Total 4 hours per week.

General Course Purpose: To present information and provide experience using various descriptive and qualitative methods of gathering and analyzing observational data on young children, with emphasis on patterns of physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.

Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites:

Students must be eligible to work with young children according to Department of Social Services requirements.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon the completion of the course, the student will be able to

- a. Identify the principles and major developmental milestones of children based on the domains of physical/motor, emotional/social, and cognitive/linguistic development;
- b. Apply various observation methods and techniques, including both formal and informal, to look at cognitive/linguistic, physical/motor, and emotional/social development;
- c. Identify and practice professional ethics and confidentiality when working with children and families;
- d. Explain the reasons for and value of conducting ongoing observations of children and programs;
- e. Articulate how one's own biases can effect observations;
- f. Critique various sources of assessment data;
- g. Produce written observations that are factual and descriptive rather than interpretive and judgmental;
- h. Articulate the relationships among child/program observations, child/program assessments, and planning for services;
- i. Explain the importance of cultural aspects and parental input in children's assessments;
- j. Analyze and describe how observation and assessment are connected to understanding behavior and situations;
- k. Identify procedures for documenting suspected child abuse
- l. Explain ways to assemble children's portfolios and use in conferencing with families; and
- m. Identify and apply appropriate learning standards as they relate to early childhood education.

Major Topics to Be Included:

- a. Informal and formal observation techniques
- b. Objectivity in observing and recording data
- c. Ethics of observation and reporting
- d. Including parents in data collection and results
- e. Developmental tasks in child development
- f. Use of assessments in planning for individual children, curriculum, and program needs
- g. Using children's interests as a basis for creating concept and skill development learning activities

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