



EEC 4203 Programs for Young Children
College of Education
Department of Teaching and Learning
COURSE SYLLABUS

Semester: **Fall 2025**

Class Meeting Days/Time: **Tuesdays 2:00-4:45**

Class Meeting Location: **EDU 253**

Instructor: **Dr. Sophia Han**

Office Location: **EDU 202L**

Office Hours: **Tuesdays 12:30-1:30**

Phone Number: **813-974-1028**

Email: han1@usf.edu -- **please use this one!!**

I. Welcome!

This is a required course for all Early Childhood Education majors.

As prospective teachers of young children, this course will prepare you to explore various approaches to early childhood education. You will be introduced to both historical and contemporary philosophies regarding the education of young children. You will also explore a wide variety of educational models, instructional and curricular approaches to expand your understanding of the best practices of early childhood education.

II. University Course Description

Develops students' understanding of historical and social foundations of early childhood education, establishing professional beliefs regarding teaching young children, and developing an appropriate learning environment.

III. Course Prerequisites

N/A

IV. Course Topics

Throughout the course, students will be taught about:

1. Historical and philosophical foundations of different program models for young children and their impact on children's learning
2. Developing personal and professional teaching philosophy as an early childhood educator
3. Philosophy and curriculum of the different early childhood program models
4. Major similarities and differences among early childhood program models, both nationally and internationally

5. Various ways program models modify instruction to accommodate all children and their families
6. Various ways program models involve families and communities in children's learning.

V. Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the historical and philosophical foundations of various types of program models serving young children and their impact on children's learning.
2. Articulate a personal and professional teaching philosophy as an early childhood educator.
3. Demonstrate an ability to critically examine and compare philosophy and curriculum of different early childhood program models.
4. Observe and recognize the major similarities and differences among early childhood program models, both nationally and internationally.
5. Describe the various approaches and instructional modifications used in different program models to accommodate all students and their families.
6. Recognize attempts made by different program models to involve families and communities in children's learning.

VI. Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

- Follari, L. (2019). *Foundations and Best Practices in Early Childhood Education: History, Theories, and Approaches to Learning* (4th Ed.). Pearson.
- Additional articles posted on CANVAS

VII. Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

- Articles and Online resources posted on CANVAS
- Presentation materials shared by peers

VIII. Grading Scale

Percentage	Grade
98-100%	A+
94-97%	A
90-93%	A-
88-89%	B+
84-87%	B
80-83%	B-

Percentage	Grade
78-79%	C+
74-77%	C
70-73%	C-
68-69%	D+
64-67%	D
60-63%	D-
Under 59%	F

IX. Grade Categories and Weights

Assignment	Due	Weight
(1) Class Participation and Professionalism	Every Week	20%
(2) Program Quizzes	• Foundations – 9/9 • History – 9/16 • Head Start – 9/30 • Project – 10/7 • High Scope – 10/14 • Reggio – 10/21 • Montessori – 10/28 • Waldorf – 11/4	20%
(3) Program Presentation	• Head Start – 9/30 • Project – 10/7 • High Scope – 10/14 • Bank Street – 10/14 • Reggio – 10/21 • Montessori – 10/28 • Waldorf – 11/4	20%
(4) Teaching Philosophy	• Photovoice – 9/16 • Statement – 9/23	15%
(5) Program Reflection & Proposal	11/25	25%
TOTAL		100%

X. Assignments

(1) Class Participation and Professionalism (20%)

Consistent attendance and participation are necessary to learn all information covered in the course and to contribute towards a collaborative learning community with your peers.

Therefore, the expectations are as follows:

- **There will be class meetings on every Tuesdays 2:00-4:45.**
- Each class will require your engagement and participation in various ways, and you will earn up to 5 points for each class meeting.
- If you are unable to physically attend, virtual participation (via Facetime, Teams, Zoom, etc.) can be allowed in extenuating circumstances, as long as proper arrangements are made with your peers in advance of the class period. Instructor approval will be made as a case-by-case decision. You can earn no more than 3 points via virtual participation.

- You will have one free pass throughout the semester to miss a class, if necessary, without incurring penalties.
- If you miss additional class meetings, regardless of the reason, participation points will not be made up.
- If you miss more than two classes, you may NOT pass this course. Take this seriously! An exception could be considered only with extremely extenuating and documented circumstances.
- The instructor should be notified in advance of any intended absences (i.e., religious observance, family event, etc.) or as soon as possible in the case of unavoidable or unforeseen issues.
- It is your responsibility to get the missed content from another student.
- It is expected that you will read all assignments prior to class. Your participation, and the pre-requisite preparation for participation, are essential for your success in this course. Come prepared and be ready to engage in respectful discussion.
- Additional expectations for professionalism include (but not limited to):
 - Contribution to small and/or whole group works
 - Openness to constructive feedback
 - Evidence of continuous self-reflection and improvement efforts
 - Practice of ethical, respectful, and moral professional behaviors
 - Maintaining confidentiality of classmates and case examples discussed during class

<Grading Standards for Class Participation and Professionalism>

5 points	• Students contribute regularly to the discussion and consistently improve the quality and vitality of discussion. • Students offer thoughtful analyses and summaries of texts, raise new questions, prompt new directions of inquiry, listen carefully to others, and synthesize or comment constructively on their views. • Students complete the exit ticket activity in full and on time.
4 points	• Students listen carefully to others and contribute occasionally to the discussion. • Students offer helpful insights when scaffolded. • Students complete the exit ticket activity partially on time.
3 or below	• Students arrive late or leave early. • Students hardly contribute in class. • Students exhibit disrespectful words and actions to peers and/or instructor. • Students fail to complete the exit ticket activity on time.

(2) Program Quizzes (20%)

There will be a total of **eight quizzes** aligned with each program/chapter discussed throughout the course.

- Each program quiz is based on the textbook chapter, and will include 10-15 multiple choice questions.
- All quizzes are open-book and timed for 20-30 minutes.
- Each quiz will become disabled after the timeline. Therefore, be sure to give yourself sufficient time to complete it before the due date/time.

(3) Program Presentation (20%)

There will be several educational program models/approaches we will explore throughout the course. You will work in a group of 4 to work on this assignment to conduct mini research about your group's chosen program, and prepare a 30 minute presentation to share the information and your learning with the class on a designated date. Specific presentation guidelines will be discussed during class.

****NOTE: Presentation slides will be submitted via the "Discussion" board posting, so that your peers can access the information.**

<Grading Standards for Special Issue Presentation>

5 points	• All materials for the presentation are ready. They are relevant and helpful to the understanding of the topic. • The presentation accurately and adequately addresses the topic. • The presentation is well-organized to engage the classmates in active and critical learning.
4 points	• Not all presentation materials are ready. • The presentation addresses the main topic, but with some confusion. • The presentation engages the classmates in active learning.
3 or below	• No relevant materials for the presentation are ready. • The presentation addresses some information that is not consistent with the topic. • The presentation minimally engages the classmates.

(4) Teaching Philosophy (15%)

The purpose of this assignment is for you to develop and refine your beliefs and values about young children, teachers' roles, and effective teaching. This assignment will have two parts.

- **Photovoice** – create your **photovoice product with 5 photos** highlighting why you want to become an early childhood educator in a visual slide.
- **Statement** – write your **teaching philosophy statement (500-600 words)** addressing the following prompts in a narrative (word document):
 - Opening statement – how can you intrigue the reader with a symbolic metaphor or episode, etc.?
 - 1) Your thoughts regarding young children and their capability – what comes to your mind when thinking about a child, and why?
 - 2) Your thoughts regarding teachers' roles – what do you think are the most important roles as a teacher, and why?
 - 3) Your thoughts regarding how young children learn and how you can assess it – what is your concept of learning, and what approaches can you use to assess the outcomes?
 - 4) Your thoughts regarding teaching effectiveness – what is your concept of effective teaching, and how can you know your teaching was effective?
 - 5) Your thoughts regarding specific learning theories – what learning theories best align with your overall teaching philosophy, and why?
 - 6) Your thoughts regarding responsive teaching – what is your concept of

- responsiveness, and how can you become a responsive teacher?
- Closing statement – how can you wrap up with a reflective and forward-thinking perspective?

(5) Program Reflection & Proposal (25%)

The purpose of this assignment is for you to develop your ideal early childhood program proposal reflecting on various early childhood program models/approaches discussed throughout the course. Guidelines for this report are provided below and will be discussed further during class periods. The report is expected to be 1800-2000 words (excluding references), and have the following headings and subheadings.

- **Part 1: Reflection on Existing Programs: From each program (total 8)**
 - What did you find as the most unique aspect of the program, and why?
 - What ideas are you considering for your own future classroom, and why?
 - What ideas are you not willing to consider for your own future classroom, and why?
- **Part 2: Your Program Proposal: What would you like to propose as your ideal program?**
 - **Name** – What is the name? What does it symbolize?
 - **Foundational background** – Which theory or theorist best align with your program, and how?
 - **View of a child** – What is the program's underlying view of children and/or child development?
 - **Learning environment** – What is unique about learning environment? What would you notice in this program's classroom? What is special in the daily schedule?
 - **Curriculum** – What is the instructional approach? How is students' learning assessed?
 - **Teachers' roles** – What are considered teacher's roles? How is this unique when compared to others?
 - **Responsiveness** – How responsive is the program to all students and families?

XI. Grade Dissemination

- You can access your scores at any time using "Grades" in CANVAS.
- If you wish to receive non-evaluative feedback on your draft assignment, then you must make it available to the instructor no less than a week prior to its due date. In that way, the instructor can have adequate amount of time to review and return it back to you while still allowing adequate time for you to make any necessary updates.
- All assignments are due on the day indicated in this syllabus and must be uploaded in a **word document**, unless otherwise adjusted or approved by the instructor beforehand.
- All **rubrics** for the course assignments are provided in this syllabus. Carefully review the rubric to understand how each assignment will be graded.
- Instructor feedback on all assignments will be provided via CANVAS. If you are unsure how to access the feedback, please communicate with the instructor.

XII. Course Schedule

Weeks	Course Contents	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1 (8/26)	• Course Overview	➤ Syllabus	
Week 2 (9/2)	• Teaching Philosophy	➤ CANVAS article	
Week 3 (9/9)	• Foundations of Various ECE Models and Considerations	➤ Ch. 3	✓ Foundations Quiz
Week 4 (9/16)	• History of ECE	➤ Ch. 2 & 4	✓ History Quiz ✓ Teaching Philosophy Photovoice
Week 5 (9/23)	• Universal Preschool	➤ CANVAS article	✓ Teaching Philosophy Statement
Week 6 (9/30)	• Head Start	➤ Ch. 6	✓ Head Start Quiz ✓ Head Start Presentation
Week 7 (10/7)	• Project Approach	➤ Ch. 8	✓ Project Quiz ✓ Project Presentation
Week 8 (10/14)	• High Scope • Bank Street	➤ Ch. 7 ➤ CANVAS article	✓ High Scope Quiz ✓ High Scope Presentation ✓ Bank Street Presentation
Week 9 (10/21)	• Reggio	➤ Ch. 9	✓ Reggio Quiz ✓ Reggio Presentation
Week 10 (10/28)	• Montessori	➤ Ch. 10	✓ Montessori Quiz ✓ Montessori Presentation
Week 11 (11/4)	• Waldorf	➤ Ch. 11	✓ Waldorf Quiz ✓ Waldorf Presentation
Week 12 (11/11)	NO CLASS MEETING – Veterans Day		
Week 13 (11/18)	• Program Analysis	➤ Ch. 12	
Week 14 (11/25)	NO CLASS MEETING		✓ Program Reflection & Proposal
Week 15 (12/2)	• Course Culmination [SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE]	➤ n/a	

** The instructor reserves the right to modify the course schedule and/or assign additional readings with adequate notice based on the rate of progress, student needs, and/or other unforeseen events.

XIII. USF Core Course Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, and sexual harassment that apply to all courses at USF. Be sure to review these online at:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

XIV. Course Policies: Grades

Late Work Policy: All due dates are firm. Work submitted through CANVAS **prior to the due date/time** will be considered on-time. Any late work for any reason will have a **10% deduction** of the total points for each day (24-hour cycle). **Late assignments will not be accepted more than a week past its original due date, resulting in 0 points.** Exceptions will be made only in rare circumstances, and will require at least one week advance permission from the instructor.

Extra Credit Policy: There is no extra credit assignment in this course.

Rewrite Policy: There is no assignment that will be allowed to be rewritten for a revised grade in this course.

Grades of "Incomplete": The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. An "I" grade will only be considered by the instructor for students with otherwise excellent attendance and only for documented circumstances of the greatest magnitude that are unavoidable (usually for hospitalization or immediate family tragedy). Students who find themselves in such a circumstance should petition by mail (or e-mail) within 2 days of the precipitating event explaining the circumstances. At that time a judgment will be made as to the merits of the petition, the kind of documentation to be submitted for verification will be explained, if necessary, and then the student will be informed of the required remedy. Judgments also take into account the overall quality of work and professional disposition. The time limit for removing the "I" can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. "I" grades not removed by the end of the time limit will be changed to "IF" or "IU," whichever is appropriate.

XV. Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email: **When sending an email to the instructor, please do not use CANVAS email. Instead, please email me directly to han1@usf.edu using your USF email account, and put EEC 4203 in the subject line of the email.** I check my email regularly and will respond to all emails within 24 hours Monday-Friday. Please note that I may not be available on weekends, but will respond to weekend emails no later than Monday. If you do not receive a reply within this timeframe, please contact me again, since emails sometimes get lost in delivery.

Canvas: This course will be offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), CANVAS. In other words, CANVAS will be used to share all major course related information, such as announcements, course readings, assignment rubrics, and extra resources. Please check them regularly and download materials as necessary. You are responsible for information that is emailed to your USF email account and/or is posted on CANVAS. You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Laptop/Phone Usage: All students are asked to manage their electronic equipment responsibly so that it is not a distraction for anyone in the class. While using a word processor to take class notes is acceptable, web-surfing during class sessions will not be tolerated. Additionally, cell phones must remain silent during all class periods. Answering, talking, or text messaging on cell phones during class will not be tolerated. Anyone who violates this policy repetitively may be asked to leave the class by the instructor.

End of Semester Student Evaluations: All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

XVI. Course Policy on Acceptable Use of Generative AI Tools

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to foster a dynamic learning environment that encourages technological adaptation, innovative thinking, and the ethical use of AI resources in academic endeavors.

1. **Definition of Generative AI Tools:** Generative AI tools refer to any artificial intelligence-powered software, program or application that can generate content, including but not limited to text, visuals, music, and other creative outputs. Examples of these tools include AI text generators, AI content rewriters, AI graphic generators, etc.
2. **Permitted Use:** The use of generative AI tools is permitted for overall course learning. However, students must responsibly use these tools, adhering to the guidelines outlined in this policy.
3. **Student Responsibility:** Students are responsible for appropriately using generative AI tools in their work. This includes:
 - a. Using AI tools as a supplemental resource (i.e., as an editor), not as the primary means of completing assignments.
 - b. Generative AI tools may be used for the "Program Presentation" assignment.
 - c. When used, all AI-generated content should be properly cited:
<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>
 - d. Demonstrating a deep understanding of the subject matter, not solely relying on AI-generated content. Cross-reference claims and statements with original sources and providing appropriate citations are expected.
 - e. Understanding that generative AI tools, while powerful, are not infallible and can produce misinformation or inaccurate results. Students are responsible for

the accuracy of their submissions and must cross-verify the information produced by these tools with reliable sources.

4. **Violation Consequences:** Misuse of AI tools, including use of AI that undermines the student learning objectives of the course or assignment, failing to cite AI-generated content, relying too heavily on AI for work completion, or submitting inaccurate information generated by AI tools, will be subject to academic penalties. Consequences may range from a reduction in an individual assignment grade to larger academic sanctions per USF policy, depending on the severity of the violation ([USF Regulation 3.027](#)).
5. **Exceptions:** Generative AI tools are NOT to be used for the “Teaching Philosophy” and “Program Reflection & Proposal” assignments.
6. **Questions and Clarifications:** If students are unsure whether a tool they wish to use qualifies as a generative AI tool, or if they have questions regarding the allowable use of such tools, they should consult with the course instructor before using it.

XVII. Important Dates to Remember

All important dates are shared in this syllabus and via CANVAS. The instructor reserves the right to adjust any dates with reasonable notice to students.

****Rubric for Teaching Philosophy****

Criteria	Outstanding (5)	Proficient (3)	Needs Improvement (1)
Photovoice (2 points)	Photovoice product includes relevant photos accompanied by thoughtful and compelling explanations.	Photovoice product includes photos and explanations, but leaves some questions.	Photovoice product fails to include photos and/or explanations.
Statement (2 Points)	Philosophy clearly articulates thoughtful perspectives about young children, teachers' roles, and effective teaching. Clear and well-sequenced progression of ideas, including a coherent opening and closing statement.	Philosophy articulates the perspectives about young children, teachers' roles, and effective teaching. Mostly well-sequenced progression of ideas, including an opening and closing statement.	Philosophy is vague and fails to articulate the perspectives about young children, teachers' roles, and effective teaching. Ideas are not well-sequenced. Either an opening or close statement is missing.
Writing Clarity and Mechanics (1 Point)	Very clear and appropriate use of written communication. The report has no grammatical errors.	Clear and appropriate use of written communication. The report has minor grammatical errors.	Fails to demonstrate clear written communication. The report has multiple grammatical errors.

****Rubric for Program Reflection & Proposal****

Criteria	Outstanding (5)	Proficient (3)	Needs Improvement (1)
Program Reflection (8 Points = 1 point for each program)	All prompts of the criteria are thoroughly described. Possible ideas for future considerations from each program are thoughtfully described.	All prompts of the criteria are described, but some leave questions. Possible ideas for future considerations are described.	There are missing prompts of the criteria that are not described. Little or no ideas for future considerations are described.
Name & Background (1 Points)	The proposed program name has great symbolism. It is strongly supported and aligned with the foundational background.	The proposed program name is understandable. It is aligned with the foundational background.	The proposed program name lacks symbolism. Little or no alignment is made with the foundational background.
View of a Child (1 Points)	The program's view of a child and/or child development is clearly described and compelling.	The program's view of a child and/or child development is described.	Little or no information about the program's view of a child and/or child development is described.
Learning Environment (1 Points)	The program's unique learning environment is thoroughly described.	The program's learning environment is described.	Little or no information about the program's learning environment is described.
Curriculum (1 Points)	The program's instructional and assessment approaches are thoroughly described and clearly match each other.	The program's instructional and assessment approaches are described.	Little or no information about the program's instructional and assessment approaches are described.
Teachers' Roles (1 Points)	The unique teachers' roles are clearly described.	The teachers' roles are described.	Little or no information about the teachers' roles is described.
Responsiveness (1 Point)	How the program is responsive to all students and families is clearly described and compelling.	How the program is responsive to all students and families is described.	Little or no information about how the program is responsive to all students and families is described.
Writing Clarity and Mechanics (1 Points)	Makes effective use of headings and subheadings. Very clear and appropriate use of written communication. The report has no grammatical errors. APA reference style is well-followed.	Uses some headings and subheadings. Appropriate use of written communication. The report has minor grammatical errors. APA reference style is followed with minor mistakes.	Organizational features are not used. Fails to demonstrate clear written communication. The report has multiple grammatical errors. APA reference style is not followed.