



EEC 4303

Creative & Affective Experiences for Young Children

90662 001

Fall 2026

Instructor Name

Jolyn Blank

University Course Description

Develops students' understandings of young children's creative expression through art, music, movement, play and drama. Emphasizes how to plan, implement, and evaluate appropriate learning experiences as well as selection of appropriate instructional materials.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

Class sessions are designed to be interactive, collaborative, and closely connected to your developing practice as an early childhood educator. While each class includes focused instructor-guided learning, we will also engage in discussions, analysis of classroom examples, group activities, and opportunities to apply course ideas through planning, practice, and reflection. Many learning experiences are intentionally connected to your companion field experience placement, allowing you to make meaningful

connections between course concepts and children's learning in authentic classroom contexts.

Most class meetings will be held in person, with some synchronous online sessions conducted via Teams. Outside of class, students are expected to complete assigned readings, prepare for class activities, and engage in independent work that deepens and extends our shared learning. These varied learning experiences are designed to help you develop both a strong understanding of early learning and the confidence to thoughtfully apply that knowledge in practice.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Describe the relationship between play and development.
2. List strategies used to foster learning through play.
3. Describe aspects of children's creative development.
4. List strategies used to foster creativity in early learning.
5. Create lesson plans that align concepts from human development and state standards.
6. Implement lessons that promote creativity and representation through play.
7. Use technology to document children's learning.
8. Conduct an analysis of an early childhood classroom environment that focuses on elements that foster play and learning.
9. Conduct an analysis of an early childhood classroom environment that focuses on elements that foster creativity.

Course Objectives

This course has the following objectives:

1. Describe the relationship between play and development.
2. Identify a variety of teaching strategies utilized to foster learning through play.
3. Describe aspects of children's creative and artistic development.
4. Identify a variety of teaching strategies utilized to foster creative and artistic development.
5. Develop and implement lesson plans that align concepts from human development and learning with state/national learning standards.
6. Develop and implement lesson plans that incorporate teaching strategies and learning activities to promote children's symbolic thought and representation.
7. Apply technology to document aspects of children's development and illustrate progress toward learning goals.

8. Analyze characteristics of a learning environment that supports learning through play.
9. Analyze characteristics of a learning environment that supports the many ways children communicate.

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

No course text is required. Course readings will be available online, via the USF library, on in Canvas.

Dodge, D. T., Heroman, C., & Colker, L. J. (2016). *The learning environment*. In Dodge et al. (Eds.) *Creative curriculum for preschool (6th ed., Vol. 1: The foundation)*. Teaching Strategies.

Leong, D. J., & Bodrova, E. (2012). Assessing and scaffolding make-believe play. *Young Children*, 67(1), 28–35.

Marigliano, M. L., & Russo, M. J. (2011). Moving bodies, building minds: Foster preschoolers' critical thinking and problem solving through movement. *Young Children*, 66(5), 44–49.

McCormick, K. I., Uliassi, C., Barber, K., & Wieczorek, K. (2023). Creating multimodal experiences to engage all students in early grade classrooms. *Young Children*.

Mulcahey, C. (2009). Why teach through art? In *The story in the picture: inquiry and art-making with young children*. Teachers College Press.

National Art Education Association. (2025). *Position statement on early childhood art education*.

Thelen, P., & Klifman, T. (2011). Using daily transition strategies to support all children. *Young Children*, 66(4), 92–98.

Seitz, H. (2012). The power of documentation in the early childhood classroom. *Young Children*, 63(2), 88-93.

Topal, C. (1992) *Children and painting*. Davis Publications.

Zosh, J. M., Gaudreau, C., Golinkoff, R. M., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2022). The power of playful learning in the early childhood setting. *Young Children*.

Grading Scale

Grading Scale			
94-100	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D
80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	0-59	F

Grade Categories and Weights

Assignments

Graded Items	Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Attendance/Class Participation	20	10%
Classroom Environment Study	50	25%
Guided Dramatic Play Plan	40	20%
Guided Dramatic Play Reflection	50	25%
Guided Dramatic Play Documentation	40	20%

Instructor Feedback Policy & Grade Dissemination

You can access your scores at any time using "Grades" in Canvas. For guidance on how to do this, please visit the [Canvas Guide on How to View Grades](#).

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Course Schedule*		
Date	Topics	Readings and Assignments Due
8/27	Welcome and Course Overview	Read: Course Syllabus
9/3	Play, Development, and Learning	Read: The Power of Playful Learning in the Early Childhood Setting
9/10	Assessing and Interpreting Children's Play; Pedagogical Documentation	Read: Assessing and Scaffolding Make-Believe Play; The Power of Pedagogical Documentation

Course Schedule*		
9/17	Guided Dramatic Play	Submit: Guided Dramatic Play Plan
9/24 No Class Meeting	<i>To do in field experience:</i> Discuss Guided Dramatic Play plan with mentor teacher.	
10/1	Multimodal Communication	Read: Creating Multimodal Experiences to Engage all Children in Early Grades Classrooms
10/8	Visual Thinking Strategies	Read: Why Teach Through Art Read: Talking to Children About Art
10/15	Designing and Analyzing Classroom Environments	Read: The Learning Environment; Using Daily Transition to Support all Children Submit: Classroom Environment Study
10/22	Symbolic Representation	Read: TBA
10/29	Integrating Visual Arts	Read: Art Activities for Young Children
11/5	2D-3D Representation (Painting and Sculpting)	Read: Children and Painting
11/12	Integrating Music and Movement	Read: Moving Bodies, Building Minds
11/19	Documenting Children's Learning	Submit: Guided Dramatic Play Documentation
11/26	No Class—USF Closed for the Thanksgiving holiday	
12/3	Course Review	Submit: Guided Dramatic Play Reflection

*This is a tentative schedule. It is subject to revision.

USF Core Syllabus 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, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

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

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

First Day Attendance Policy:

Students must attend the first in-person class meeting and complete a required activity in class in order to confirm their presence in the course. This will count as first day attendance. Students who don't complete the first day activity run the risk of being dropped from the course.

Late Work Policy:

All assignments must be uploaded to Canvas by the due date/time indicated in this syllabus. Assignments that are late for any reason will have a 10% deduction of the total points for each late day (24-hour cycle). Late assignments will not be accepted more than 3 days past the original due date unless approval was provided in writing by the instructor before the due date.

Extra Credit Policy:

There are no extra credit assignments in this course.

Attendance Policy:

Because this is a participation-dependent course, excessive absences from the in-person/synchronous online meetings (3 or more) will result in a substantial portion of the

course expectations not being fulfilled and may result in a failing grade.

Grades of "Incomplete"

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. For undergraduate courses: An "I" grade may be awarded to a student only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor of the course. For undergraduate students, this time limit may not exceed two academic semesters, whether or not the student is in residence, and/or graduation, whichever comes first. For graduate students, this time limit may not exceed one academic semester. "I" grades not removed by the end of the time limit will be changed to "IF" or "IU," whichever is appropriate.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Canvas:

This course is offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please consult the [Canvas Student Guides](#). You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Laptop Usage:

Laptops and tablets may be used during class for course-related purposes (e.g., accessing Canvas materials, readings, or notes). Students are expected to use devices in ways that support their engagement and learning.

Phone Usage:

Phones should be silenced and used only for course-related purposes during class.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your

message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.

- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

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.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional

information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website.](#)

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)