Title of Course: Essentials of Preschool Education
New: Fall 2000

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours of Course:

An introduction to professional/preparation for early childhood teachers and care-givers; including theories and practices developmentally appropriate to promote young children’s development. 3 credit hours. [Required for individuals who are interested in applying for the Child Development Associate (CDA) Certification.]

II. Prerequisite(s):

CF119: Child Growth and Development

III. Purposes or objectives of the Course:

Students will:
A. Identify the various types of early childhood programs; their history and goals.
B. Assess the developmental theories and their implications for early childhood professionals;
C. Understand the value of child's play, types of play and how play can facilitate child's learning and development;
D. Develop skills in observing and recording young children's behaviors;
E. Identify and explore the strategies for understanding and guiding children’s behaviors;
F. Describe methods for facilitating physical, cognitive, language, social/emotional development and creative expression of young children;
G. Gain the knowledge to manage an effective early childhood program and maintain commitment to professional development and leadership;
H. Describe strategies for establishing productive relationships with families and community resources.

IV. Expectations of Students

A. Demonstrate comprehension of the course content on examinations.
B. Satisfactory completion of all course projects.
C. Participation in class projects and discussions.
V. Course Content or Outline

A. A Historical Overview--------------------------------------------------------------- 1 hour
2. Major factors influencing the evolution of today's early childhood programs.

B. Types of Programs----------------------------------------------------------------------1 hour
1. Nursery School
2. Day Care
3. Family Day Care
4. Employer Sponsored Day Care
5. Laboratory Schools
6. Church Sponsored Programs
7. Parents as First Teachers
8. School-Age
9. Head Start

C. Major theoretical bases for early childhood programs-----------------------------4 hours
1. Behaviorist Viewpoint (Skinner)
2. Constructivist Viewpoint (Piaget)
3. Maturational Viewpoint (Gesell)
4. Applying Theory to Practice

D. Goals and Educational Philosophy in Early Childhood-----------------------------6 hours
1. Goals of early childhood education
2. Quality Indicators, NAEYC
3. Types of curriculum models
   a. Montessori School
   b. Project Construct
   c. High/Scope
   d. Creative Curriculum
   e. Reggio Emilia

E. The Role of Play in Learning--------------------------------------------------------2 hours
1. Theories
2. Values and Types of Play
3. Facilitating Play
F. Methods of Recording and Evaluating Behavior----------------------5 hours
1. Purpose of observation
2. Appropriate evaluation measures used in early childhood settings
   a. observation
   b. portfolio
   c. parent interview
   d. anecdotal record
   e. checklist
   f. rating scales
   g. commercial tests
3. How to observe and record

G. Creating Learning Environment and Curriculum---------------------- 3 hours
1. What is curriculum?
2. Critical consideration in planning
3. Selecting, organizing and presenting curriculum
4. The planning process

H. Planning for Physical Development-----------------------------------3 hours
1. Types of physical/motor skills in early childhood
2. Developmental activities and the role of early childhood educator
3. Supporting physical development in children with special needs

I. Planning for Cognitive Development----------------------------------4 hours
1. Cognitive skills in early childhood
2. Developmental activities and the role of early childhood educator

J. Planning for Language and Communication Development-------4 hours
1. Language skills in early childhood
2. Developmental activities and the role of early childhood educator

K. Planning for Social/Emotional and Creative Growth--------------------------4 hours
   1. Emotional and social skills in early childhood
   2. Developmental activities and the role of early childhood educator

L. Parents, Teachers and Community----------------------------------------4 hours
   1. Teacher-parent interactions
   2. Involving families in early childhood programs
   3. Use of community resources

M. Professional Development and Leadership------------------------4 hours
   1. Establishing and evaluating a quality child care program
   2. Personnel and financial management
   3. Ethical and professional principles

Total 45 hours

VI. Textbook(s)

VII. Basis for Students Evaluation
    A. Performance in exams 50%
    B. Quality of observation of children 25%
    C. Curriculum planning projects 25%