

# Interactions and Environments: Engaging Children in Learning

## *Syllabus: In-Person Course*

### Instructor Contact Information

Name:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Office location:  
Office hours:

### Course Description

Early childhood is a time of rapid growth and development; children's early experiences have a profound effect on their later outcomes. Early childhood education has the potential to foster children's skills and learning, and high-quality programs can influence children's long-term success. The benefit of high quality early educational experiences is even greater for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The key components of a high-quality early learning experience include culturally responsive and inclusive environments that: (1) are well organized, predictable and rich with materials that support children's learning, (2) provide a warm, responsive and emotionally safe climate, where children feel encouraged and supported to learn and explore, and 3) offer regular opportunities for children engage in instructionally supportive interactions with educators that deepen children's knowledge and thinking. This course is designed to increase participants' knowledge about the importance of high-quality early childhood education for children birth to 5, and the specific types of environments and interactions that support the development of children's social-emotional, cognitive, and early academic skills.

### Objectives

Participants will:

1. Identify and describe well-organized and materials-rich environments and ways in which they support children's growth and skill development.
2. Identify and describe warm, responsive, and instructionally supportive interactions and ways in which they support children's growth and skill development.
3. Explain how designing high quality environments and engaging in high quality interactions includes being sensitive to, and incorporating of, children's cultural and linguistic diversity.
4. Plan learning activities that reflect effective teaching practices and engaging interactions.
5. Identify effective and ineffective environments and interactions in videos of their own and other educators' early learning programs.
6. Enact and exhibit effective interactions.

## Grading

Participation/Professionalism	10%
In-Class Activities	20%
Weekly Assignments	50%
Final project	20%

## Expectations

### Participation/Professionalism (10%: Grading per Instructor)

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss any assigned readings and to actively engage during session activities and discussions.

### In-Class Activities (15% Grading per Instructor)

In-class activities may consist of, but are not limited to, discussions, observations, idea-sharing and generation, and planning exercises. Some class activities are designed as quick checks of your understanding, engagement, and application of course information. Other class activities require you to work in pairs or small groups, and present findings to the rest of the class. You are expected to participate in all in-class activities.

### Weekly Assignments (50%: Grading per assignment rubric)

Weekly assignments provide practitioner-focused time to make meaning from course readings, videos, and lectures. Assignments vary and may include lesson plan development, filming yourself engaging in activities with children, reflection, action plans, graphic organizers, and practice using skills in your daily life. You are expected to complete all assignments in a timely manner, and contact the instructor as soon as possible if you are unable to do so.

- **Reading Assignments:** In this course, you will complete required readings. At times, you will synthesize your thoughts from the readings in reflection assignments.
- **Applied Assignments:** In this course, you will complete assignments that are very practitioner-oriented. These help you build your portfolio of resources for your work as an educator. Examples include action plans, preparing visual supports and other materials, creating schedules and routines, and activity matrices. These assignments help bridge theory to practice.
- **Video and Communities of Reflection and Practice (CORP) Assignments:** In this course, you will video record yourself interacting with children. You will then share your videos in Communities of Reflection and Practice (CORP) where your peers and instructors will provide support and feedback to help you improve your practice. Your participation in this group is meant to help you form personal connections with one another, facilitate high-level collaboration, and improve your ability to provide coach quality feedback to yourself and peers.

## Final Project (20%: Grading per assignment rubric)

The final project summary gives you an opportunity to synthesize content discussed in this course and to translate key messages into meaningful guidelines for your practice as an educator. This assignment takes the place of a final exam. The summary assignment is estimated to take 2-3 hours to complete.

## Note on Filming

As noted above, in some assignments, participants will be asked to film interactions with children in an early learning setting, review video footage, and edit several small clips for the instructor and peers to view. Instructors will include guidance for this process by providing training and a detailed guide on filming and editing video clips for use with the EarlyEdU Coaching Companion.

## Time Estimations

(Note: Institutions will need to update this section as required. Initial text is provided; institutions will need to provide all of their own details here).

The estimated time commitment for each session is 5-8 hours. This estimates that you will spend a total of 3 hours working "in class" (instructor to provide specifics on their class schedule) and an additional 2-5 hours of readings and assignments out of class. These are estimations. Some sessions may include assignments that require more than 5 hours out of class (e.g., completing the planning, video, reflecting, and feedback cycles) while others may take less. Additionally, some participants may complete assignments more quickly than others. Some participants may review readings and videos multiple times and spend more time on their assignments. There is no exact time designation; you are encouraged to communicate with your instructor for any questions on due dates, extensions, and workload.

## Accommodations

(Note: Institutions will need to update this section as required. Initial text is provided; institutions will need to provide all their own details here).

We want you to have the best possible experience in this class. At the \_\_\_\_\_ (your institution) \_\_\_\_\_ we aim to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you experience barriers, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ *Insert the department or person at your institution responsible for special accommodations* \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss and address them. If you have already established accommodations with that office, please inform your instructor as soon as possible so we can discuss your needs in this course.

## Course Schedule

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
1	<p><b>Course Overview and Guiding Frameworks</b></p> <p>Introductions, Objectives, and Course Overview</p> <p>Guiding Frameworks</p> <p>Engaging Interactions and Environments</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">ECLKC website overview</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Early Head Start National Resource Center</a>.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Framework for Effective Everyday Practice: Supporting School Readiness for All Children</a> (from NCQTL).</li> <li>• U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start (HHS/ACF/OHS). (2015). <a href="#">Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework</a>.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Zero to Three</a>: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S1 Assignment Exploring Resources</i></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S1 Video Assignment Introducing Your Early Learning Program CORP</i></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S1 Assignment Consent to Film Forms</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
2	<b>Foundations for Development and Learning</b> Development in Context Early Experiences and Brain Development Equitable and Effective Caregiving and Teaching Practices	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Derman-Sparks, L., &amp; Edwards, J. O. (2020). <a href="#">Addressing inequity with anti-bias education: Learning about class and fairness</a>. <i>Teaching Young Children</i>, 13(3), 1-6.</p> <p>Dombro, A. L., Jablon, J., &amp; Stetson, C. (2011). <a href="#">Powerful interactions</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 66(1), 12-20.</p> <p>Kaiser, B., &amp; Raminsky, J. S. (2019/2020). <a href="#">Valuing diversity: Developing a deeper understanding of all young children's behavior</a>. <i>Teaching Young Children</i>, 13(2), 1-5.</p> <p>Lally, J. R. &amp; Mangione, P. (May, 2017). <a href="#">Caring relationships: The heart of early brain development</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 72(2), 17-24.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S2 Video Assignment Baseline Video and Reflection</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
3	<p><b>Well-Organized Environments : Physical Structure</b></p> <p>The Importance of Environments</p> <p>Furniture</p> <p>Room Arrangement</p> <p>Materials</p> <p>Display</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Friedman, S. (May, 2005). <a href="#">Environments that inspire</a>. <i>Young Children on the Web</i>, 1–9.</p> <p>Gerdes, J. K., &amp; Durden, T. R. (June, 2013). <a href="#">Materials and environments that promote learning in the primary years</a>.</p> <p>ZERO TO THREE. <a href="#">How to Care for Infants and Toddlers in Groups</a>. Washington, D.C. February 8, 2010.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S3 Video Assignment Assessing Your Early Learning Environment</i></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S3 Assignment Meaningful Makeover</i></p>
4	<p><b>Well-Organized Environments : Schedules and Routines</b></p> <p>Temporal Structure</p> <p>The Importance of Schedules and Routines</p> <p>Using Schedules and Routines</p> <p>Classroom Transitions</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Gillespie, L G., &amp; Seibel, N. L. (2006). <a href="#">Self-regulation: A cornerstone of early childhood development</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 61(4), 34-39.</p> <p>Ostrosky, M. M., Yung, E. Y., Hemmeter, M. L., &amp; Thomas, D. <a href="#">Helping children understand routines and class schedules</a> (What works briefs 3). <i>Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning</i>.</p> <p>Ostrosky, M. M., Yung, E. Y., &amp; Hemmeter, M. L. <a href="#">Helping children make transitions between activities</a> (What works briefs 4). <i>Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning</i>.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S4 Assignment Developing a Routine</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
5	<p><b>Well-Organized Environments : Maximizing Engagement</b></p> <p>Social Structure</p> <p>Grouping Children</p> <p>Sustaining children's involvement in learning tasks</p> <p>Staffing and Supervision</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Dinnebeil, L. A.; Boat, M., &amp; Bae, Y. (2013). <a href="#">Integrating principles of universal design into the early childhood curriculum</a>. <i>Dimensions of Early Childhood</i>, 41(1), 3-13.</p> <p>Jablon, J.R. &amp; Wilkinson, M. (2006) <a href="#">Using Engagement Strategies to Facilitate Children's Learning and Success</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 61(2), 12-16.</p> <p>Wasik, B. (2008). <a href="#">When fewer is more: Small groups in early childhood classrooms</a>. <i>Early Childhood Education Journal</i>, 35, 515–521.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S5 Assignment Multiple Modalities</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
6	<p><b>Well-Organized Environments : Guiding Children’s Behavior</b></p> <p>Proactive Management</p> <p>Providing Clear Expectations</p> <p>Redirecting Children’s Behavior</p> <p>Solving Problems in the Moment</p> <p>Review of Well-Organized Environments</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Gartrell, D. (2020). <a href="#">Instead of discipline, use guidance</a>. <i>Teaching Young Children</i>, 13(3).</p> <p>Isik-Erkan, Z. (2017). <a href="#">Culturally appropriate positive guidance with children</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 72(1), 15-22.</p> <p>Ratcliff, N. (2001). <a href="#">Use the environment to prevent discipline problems and support learning</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 56(5), 84–87.</p> <p><b>Additional Resources (Optional)</b></p> <p>Joseph, G., &amp; Strain, P. (2010) <a href="#">Teaching young children interpersonal problem-solving skills</a>. <i>Young Exceptional Children</i>, 13(3), 28–40. <b>Note:</b> This article is available only at institutions with a license for the journal database.</p> <p>Santos, R. M., &amp; Ostrosky, M. M. (n.d.). <a href="#">Understanding the impact of language differences on classroom behavior</a>. <i>What Works Briefs Series 2</i>. Urbana, IL: Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S6 Video Assignment Well-organized Environments Review</i></p>



Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
7	<p><b>Social and Emotional Support: Fostering Connections</b></p> <p>A Caring Community of Learners</p> <p>Social Conversations with Children</p> <p>Showing Enjoyment</p> <p>Being Respectful</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Ho, J., &amp; Funk, S. (2018). <a href="#">Promoting Young Children's Social and Emotional Health</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 73(1), 73-79.</p> <p>Hyson &amp; Taylor (2011). <a href="#">Caring about caring: What adults can do to promote young children's social skills</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 66(4), 74-83.</p> <p>Joseph, G. E., &amp; Strain, P. (2004). <a href="#">Building positive relationships with young children</a>. <i>Young Exceptional Children</i>, 7(4), 21- 28.  <b>Note:</b> This article is available only at institutions with a license for the journal database.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S7 Assignment Social Conversation</i></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S7 Reading Assignment Anti-Bias Reflection</i></p>
8	<p><b>Social and Emotional Support: Being Sensitive to Children's Needs</b></p> <p>Being Aware of and Responding to Children's Cues</p> <p>Noticing Difficulties and Providing Individualized Support</p> <p>Acknowledging and Responding to Emotions</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p><a href="#">Understanding Your Child's Behavior: Reading Your Child's Cues from Birth to Age 2</a>. <i>Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)</i></p> <p>Park, M. (2013). <a href="#">Nonverbal communication: A quiet path to children's engagement</a>. <i>Texas Child Care Quarterly</i>, 37(3).</p> <p><a href="#">Teaching Your Child to Identify and Express Emotions</a>. <i>Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)</i></p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S8 Assignment Emotional Regulation Teaching Plan</i></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S8 Assignment Readings Reflection</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
9	<p><b>Social and Emotional Support: Following Children's Lead</b></p> <p>Encouraging Children to Express Their Ideas</p> <p>Building on Children's Interests</p> <p>Providing Children with Opportunities to Contribute</p> <p>Review of Social and Emotional Support Practices</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Bucher, E., &amp; Pindra, S. (2020). <a href="#">Infant and Toddler STEAM: Supporting Interdisciplinary Experiences with our Youngest Learners</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 75(2), 1-11.</p> <p>Matthews, K. (2012). <a href="#">Unplanned explorations and lively minds</a>. <i>Teaching Young Children</i>, 5(3), 1–4.</p> <p>Seitz, H.J. (2006). <a href="#">The plan: Building on children's interests</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 61(2), 36-41.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S9 Video Assignment Social and Emotional Support Review CORP</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
10	<p><b>Instructional Interactions: Developing Conceptual Knowledge</b></p> <p>How Children Learn</p> <p>What are Instructional Interactions?</p> <p>Teaching Concepts</p> <p>Communicating Big Ideas</p> <p>Building on Background Knowledge</p> <p>Providing Hands-on Learning Opportunities</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Dean, A., &amp; Gillespie, L., (2015). <a href="#">Why teaching infants and toddlers is important</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 70(5), 94-96</p> <p>Deaton, C.C.M. (2017). <a href="#">Growing in STEM: From static to circuits: Inquiry-based STEM explorations of electricity</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 72(3), 89-93.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S10 Assignment Teach a Concept Part 1</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
11	<p><b>Instructional Interactions: Fostering Children's Thinking</b></p> <p>What is Thinking? Creating Opportunities for Children to Engage in Inquiry Encouraging Flexible Thinking Promoting Problem-Solving</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Luckenbill, J. (2018). <a href="#">Mathematizing with Toddlers and Coaching Undergraduates: Foundations for Intentional Math Development</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 73(3), 1-11</p> <p>Salmon, A. K. (2010). <a href="#">Tools to enhance young children's thinking</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 65(5), 26-31.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S11 Assignment Teach a Concept Part 2</i> <i>I&amp;E S11 Assignment Reading Reflection Culture of Thinking</i></p>
12	<p><b>Instructional Interactions: Supporting Language Development</b></p> <p>Language and Thinking Engaging Children in Conversations Extending Conversations Building Children's Vocabulary Supporting Dual Language Learners</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Bardige, B. &amp; Bardige, M. K., (2008). <a href="#">Talk to me, baby! Supporting language development in the first 3 years</a>. <i>Zero to Three</i>, 29(1), 1-14</p> <p>Test, J. E., Cunningham, D. D., &amp; Lee, A. C. (2010). <a href="#">Talking with young children: How teachers encourage learning</a>. <i>Dimensions of Early Childhood</i>, 38(3), 3-14.</p> <p>Nemeth, K. (2009). <a href="#">Meeting the home mandate. Strategies for all classrooms</a>. <i>Young Children</i>, 64(2), 36-42.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S12 Assignment Teach a Concept Part 3</i> <i>I&amp;E S12 Video Assignment Storybook Reading CORP</i> <i>I&amp;E S12 Assignment Reading Language Development</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
13	<p><b>Instructional Interactions: Providing Feedback</b></p> <p>How Feedback Helps Learning</p> <p>Building on Children's Responses</p> <p>Having Children Explain Their Actions and Thinking</p> <p>Encouraging Children's Efforts</p> <p>Review Instructional Interactions</p>	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Gillespie, L, G. &amp; Greenberg, J.D.(2017). <a href="#">Rocking and Rolling: Empowering infants' and toddlers' learning through scaffolding.</a> <i>Young Children</i>, 72(2).</p> <p>Lee, T. (2011). <a href="#">I did it all by myself: Scaffolding to develop problem solving and self-help skills in young children.</a> <i>Texas Child Care</i>, 36-42.</p> <p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S13 Assignment Teach a Concept Part 4</i></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S13 Assignment Reading Reflection Integrating Practices</i></p> <p><i>I&amp;E S13 Assignment Teaching Practices Video</i></p>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
14	<b>Integrating Practices</b> Key Messages Review Integrated Approaches to Teaching Development Tips Implementation and Monitoring the Plan	<b>Readings</b> One of the following: Bucher, E., & Hernandez, M. (2016). <a href="#">Beyond the bouncing ball: Toddlers and teachers investigate physics</a> . <i>Young Children</i> , 71(3), 1-10.  Gillespie, L. G. (2016). <a href="#">It's never "just play"!</a> <i>Young Children</i> , 71(3), 92-94.  Hassinger-Das, B., Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Golinkoff, R. M. (2017). <a href="#">The case of brain science and guided play: A developing story</a> . <i>Young Children</i> , 72(2), 45-50.  Leong, D. J., & Bodrova, E. (2012). <a href="#">Assessing and scaffolding make-believe play</a> . <i>Young Children</i> , 67, 28-34.  Reynolds, L. B., Gillis, M. B., Matos, C., & Carpini, K. D. (2019). <a href="#">Equalizing opportunities to learn: A collaborative approach to language and literacy development</a> . <i>Young Children</i> , 74(1), 1-11.  Stipek, D. S. (2017). <a href="#">Playful math instruction in the context of standards and accountability</a> . <i>Young Children</i> , 72(3), 1-6.  <b>Assignments</b> <i>I&amp;E S14 Assignment Program Description</i> <i>I&amp;E S14 Video Assignment Final Video</i>

Session	Topic	Readings and Assignments
15	<b>Review: Concepts and Practices</b> Well-organized Environments Social and Emotional Support Instructional Interactions Present final projects	<b>Readings</b> None for this session  <b>Assignments</b> Share final projects