

**DOMINICAN
UNIVERSITY**
of CALIFORNIA
School of Liberal Arts and Education

Early Childhood Observation Skills
EDUO 9353 3 Semester Credits/Units
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Course Syllabus

Course Overview:

Develop and put into practice observation skills that will bring you a deeper understanding of young children through their interactions with adults, peers and experiences across different environments. Strengthen your existing observation skills to ensure you are practicing responsible, effective, ethical and reflective observations and assessments as an early childhood educator. *Required Text: The Art of Awareness: How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching, 3rd Edition. Deb Curtis & Margie Carter. Available online.*

Course Learning Objectives: In this course, participants will have the opportunity to:

- Identify how one's own bias and perspective impact observation and understanding of children
- Develop reflective observation skills, including understanding goals, uses, benefits of observation and the role of the observer.
- Apply knowledge of development and other influencing factors to interpret observations and assessments
- Understand strategies and the importance of partnering with families and other professionals when completing observation and assessment.
- Demonstrate how observation and assessment are used to plan for and adjust learning experiences
- Describe the ethical and professional responsibilities for educators in observing and assessing young children's development and learning

Course Relation to CCS or other Professional Standards

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Early Childhood Generalist

Standard I: Using Knowledge of Child Development to Understand the Whole Child

Standard II: Partnering with Families and Communities

Standard III: Fostering Equity, Fairness, and Appreciation of Diversity

Standard V: Assessing Children's Development and Learning

Standard VI: Managing the Environment for Development and Learning

Standard VII: Planning for Development and Learning

Standard IX: Reflecting on Teaching Young Children

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Standard 1: Child Development and Learning in Context

Standard 2: Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections

Standard 3: Child Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Standard 4: Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

Standard 5: Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

How to Submit Coursework.

Each completed assignment in this course is submitted to the instructor for review. Follow directions at the end of each assignment on how to prepare and submit your assignments. Name each file submitted with your last name and assignment number (i.e. BrownAssignment3. Make sure you place your full name, course number and assignment number at the top of each document page. You will receive feedback from your instructor within 5 days indicating successful completion of the assignment or the need for revision. Assignment grades will be averaged for the final course grade.

Submit completed work to the corresponding Module dropboxes in Moodle

Course Modules / Assignments

Module 1 Observation in the Early Childhood Classroom	
Objective	Examine the purpose of observation in early education
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read: Chapter 1, Observation & Assessment in Early Childhood Education)● View: Observation, Screening, Assessment and Documentation● Read: Why Observe Children?● Read: NAEYC’s Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Position Statement: Observing, Documenting and Assessing Children’s Development and Learning● Explore your state’s Early Learning Standards for Young Children. What does it say about observation, documentation and/or assessment?
Assessment	<p>Write a 500 word reflection based on the Module 1 Assessment Prompts</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 1 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module 2 You as Observer - Uncovering Implicit Bias	
Objective	Develop an awareness of how you, as an educator, sees children Examine the impact of implicit bias on observing young children. Identify ethical responsibilities educators have to young children and their families
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Textbook: The Art of Awareness, Third Edition</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read: Chapter 2, The Art of Awareness ● Read: The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment, pgs. 1-4 and 9 ● Review: The Impact of Implicit Bias slide deck (download slide deck to access live links). Complete activities, read articles and view videos as indicated on the slides.
Assessment	<p>Create a presentation (i.e. Google Slides, PowerPoint, Prezi, Canva, etc.) for early education teachers that demonstrates your understanding of how implicit bias impacts observation, how educators can counteract bias when observing, and what is our ethical obligation. Provide one example of a bias you have and how you counter it. Maximum 10 slides.</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 2 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module #3 Considering the Child's Perspective	
Objective	Recognize children's perspectives and competencies Develop an awareness of children's lively minds at work
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Textbook: The Art of Awareness, Third Edition</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● View: Teacher as Researcher ● Read: Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, The Art of Awareness ● Read: Wondering with Children: The Importance of Observation in Early Education ● Explore: Schema and Children's Play
Assessment	<p>View four observation videos and respond to the Module 3 Observation Prompts for each video.</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 3 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module #4 Observation, Environment and Childhood Experiences	
Objective	Observe children in learning and exploration Deepen knowledge and skills in observing details of children’s experiences Examine environments that support children in playful learning
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Textbook: The Art of Awareness, Third Edition</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete: Choose one of the options and complete the related activities. ● Read: Part 3, The Essential Roles of Teachers & Administrators in Support Play-Based Learning, The Powerful Role of Play. Pgs. 77-150 ● Read: Designing Environments to Facilitate Observation & Documentation ● Read and Explore: Learning Environments: An Introduction. Choose the Infant/Toddler or Preschool strand. Complete the Environments Affect Behavior activity and submit responses.
Assessment	<p>Module 4 Assessment Instructions.</p> <p>Explore one of three different learning frameworks. Write a one-page paper addressing the provided prompts and create a Padlet or Pinterest board with at least 5 resources that support your paper. Include the link to your Padlet or Pinterest board at the end of your paper.</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 4 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module #5 Effective Observations: Methods, Tools and Tips	
Objective	Develop observation and documentation skills Build reflective practices to enhance observation and documentation Strengthen written documentation skills
Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Textbook: The Art of Awareness, Third Edition</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read: Chapter 3, Observation & Assessment in Early Childhood Education ● View: Documentation as Habit ● Read: Chapter 13, The Art of Awareness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● View: Documenting Children’s Learning ● Read: The Process of Documentation: Supporting a Strong Image of Children, Families, Educators and the Community
Assessment	<p>Access Module 5 Assessment Instructions: Practice using photos, work samples, and videos to create anecdotal notes and learning stories.</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 5 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module #6 Observing & Assessing Dual Language/Multilingual Learners	
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Objective	<p>Identify and develop strategies to assess dual language learners</p> <p>Examine federal/state policies and early learning standards on dual language/multilingual learners</p>
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● View: Assessing DLLs and ELs ● Read: Assessing Young Dual-Language Learners ● Review and complete: Strategies to Assess Dual Language Learners ● Explore the resources: Specific Strategies to Support Dual Language Learners (DLLs) When Adults Do Not Speak Their Language ● Read: The Policy Statement on Supporting the Development of Children Who are Dual Language Learners in the Early Childhood Classroom
Assessment	<p>Complete the table to identify five strategies or ideas that would support you in observing and assessing dual language/multilingual learners. What state/federal policies and early learning standards support these strategies?</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 6 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module #7 Sharing Observations with Others	
Objective	<p>Examine observation and its role in assessment and screening</p> <p>Develop strategies for sharing observation and documentation with families</p> <p>Explore using documentation with children</p>
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Textbook: The Art of Awareness, Third Edition</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read: Chapter 4 and 6, Observation & Assessment in Early Childhood Education ● View: Sharing Video Documentation with Families ● Read: Chapter 14, Art of Awareness ● View: Using Documentation with Children ● View: Assessing Children with Disabilities ● Read: Reframing the Assessment Discussion ● Read: Appropriate & Meaningful Assessment in Family-Centered Programs ● View: Finley's Parent-Teacher Conference ● Read: The Power of Observation, Dombro, Jablon & Dichtelmiller ● View: Collaborating with Families
Assessment	<p>Module 7 Assessment Instructions:</p> <p>Create a Documentation Board and a Learning Story.</p> <p>Identify DEC Recommended Practices and make connections to other sources.</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 7 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module #8 Observation for Planning and Assessment	
Objective	<p>Explore how observation and documentation are used for planning and assessment</p> <p>Practice developing plans using observation for learning</p>
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Textbook: The Art of Awareness, Third Edition</p>

	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read: Chapter 5, Observation & Assessment in Early Childhood Education ● View: Learning Environments and Curriculum ● Read: Chapter 15, Art of Awareness ● Read: Authentic Assessment: A Strengths-Based Approach to Making Thinking, Learning and Development Visible ● View: Assessment Planning ● Explore: Your Assessment Tools ● View: Using Documentation to Become a Better Teacher ● View: Linking Documentation and Curriculum ● View: Documentation for Intentional Teaching
Assessment	<p>Module 8 Assessment Instructions: Using observation for planning. Prepare two plans for learning possibilities.</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 8 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Module #9 Weaving Observation into Learning and Curriculum	
Objective	<p>Discover systems and practices to support observation and documentation.</p> <p>Recognize the connection between observation, learning and curriculum</p>
Assignment	<p>Materials:</p> <p>WiFi and internet access</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● View: Organizing for Assessment in Early Care and Education ● View: Responsive Observation ● Read: Chapters 1-5, Integrated Nature of Learning ● View: Creating Documentation Routines ● View: Using Documentation at Emerald Preschool: Documentation Practices ● View: The Essential Role of Observation and Documentation
Assessment	<p>Address the scenario on the Module 9 Assessment.</p> <p><i>Submit to the corresponding Module 9 dropbox in Moodle</i></p>

Course Materials:

Required Text:

The Art of Awareness: How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching, 3rd Edition. Deb Curtis & Margie Carters

Course Assessment Rubric:

EXCELLENT	ACCEPTABLE	NOT ACCEPTABLE
Meets or Exceeds Course Objectives: A to A-	Majority of Work Meets Course Objectives; B+ to B-	Needs Considerable Improvement: Resubmit Work Suggested: C or below
All work submitted reflects in-depth understanding of course objectives.	Most work submitted reflects in-depth understanding of course objectives.	Work shows little or no in-depth understanding of course objectives.
Assignment responses show evidence of new knowledge evidenced by thoughtful, detailed and accurate assignment responses.	Most assignment responses show evidence of new knowledge evidenced by thoughtful, detailed and accurate assignment responses.	Responses show little to no evidence of new knowledge as evidenced by lack of thoughtful, detailed and accurate assignment responses.
Work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor did not have to provide continual assignment clarification or request revisions.	Most work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor had to provide continual assignment clarification or ask for revisions.	Work submitted was not organized or not clearly articulated. The instructor had to provide constant clarification and ask for continued revisions.
Assignment content and required projects were original.	Assignment content and required projects were original.	Evidence that not all assignment content and required projects were original.
Work is free of spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has few spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.