

Southern Oregon University

School of Education

Fall 2019

ED 538 Children Around the World (4 Credits; Online course)

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CRN: #xxxx (ED 538)

Course Overview and Description

Students will study the unique characteristics of early childhood practices from global perspectives and integrate new insights to a holistic and developmentally appropriate framework of early education. This course will explore diverse practices and philosophies around the world based on cultural, historical, societal, political, economic, geographical, and environmental conditions. Students will study multiple perspectives on raising young children in different world contexts. Students will also engage in critical inquiry of how these perspectives inform current approaches to educating young children. Students will examine their own beliefs and values in light of the rich human wisdom inherent in indigenous approaches to early education in order to support the development and potential of young children.

Diversity encompasses differences in ethnicity, race, gender, language, religion, age, socioeconomic conditions, individual culture and style, beliefs and values, exceptionalities, and time and place. In a variety of readings and media sources, students will explore the education of children through diverse examples that include: historical and societal systems of privilege and inequalities, disparity of human and natural resources, issues of access and poverty, mainstream versus marginalized life conditions, the impact of industrialization and modernization in human development, the impact of environmental and/or technology enhancement, and the role of nurture and nature in child development. An interdisciplinary framework will highlight multiple ways of knowing from the fields of anthropology, psychology, education, philosophy, indigenous studies, and the humanities. The following is a list of topics that will be included in this course:

- Cross-cultural awareness of child rearing practices;
- Intra-personal awareness of one's own cultural framework in understanding early learning experiences;
- Historical foundations of education in global perspective, including issues of social justice, access to human and natural resources, and the cultural context of beliefs and values in education;
- Constructivist learning approaches and developmentally appropriate practices;
- Creative, cooperative, and inclusive styles of learning and teaching;
- Representations of young children, parenting, and teaching in works of literature and the arts from a variety of cultures, ethnic groups, and geographic locations; and,
- Visionary international approaches to early education.

Despite well-documented, long-term benefits, early childhood education remains a neglected link in education policies around the globe. A comprehensive UN study found that roughly half of the world's countries have no policy regarding early childhood and provide woefully inadequate financing for this critical age group. Devoting more resources, especially to the most disadvantaged children, should be the first step of broader national early childhood care and education policies, said a report that was commissioned by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This class will be an opportunity for early childhood educators to be engaged in critical inquiry and to expand their understanding of the dynamics of educational change around the world. Students will be more prepared to engage in public discussion and advocacy groups that require analyzing the effects of power differences within and between cultural groups, to describe the impact of global circumstances in local community settings, and to bring larger perspectives on child development to classroom settings or elsewhere.

In a professional culture, the teacher assumes an active role in leading educational reform for the enhancement of teaching and learning. This course prepares professional educators to exercise instructional leadership through bringing their practice into alignment with their core qualities and commitments.

If we are to understand ourselves and our times, and to provide lovingly meaningful experiences for today's young children, we need to understand the web of philosophical legacies left by the pioneers and how they connect with our own. ~Tricia David

Course Objectives and Proficiencies

You will be able to:

- (1) discern influential features of the historical, geographical, cultural, and practical contexts of early childhood education through reading and online discussions;
- (2) compare and contrast societal needs with historical changes in the education of young children;
- (3) engage in weekly critical perspective dialogues and articulate global conditions leading to societal and cultural power structures and other systems of privilege and inequality in early childhood practices;
- (4) display sensitivity to communicating personal views about cultural differences;
- (5) evaluate examples of human wisdom in raising children, family and community involvement, and innovations in early childhood education (e.g., Reggio Emilia from Italy and Roong Aroon School in Thailand);
- (6) discuss the integration of culturally appropriate learning models with effective teaching or parenting strategies;
- (7) conduct research (and complete a synthesis project) on a unique international program or practice outside of the United States;
- (8) prepare a visual and written display of your research findings to share with the class where you incorporate course content on the diverse aspects of human development with your international focus area; and,
- (9) develop a professional or academic leadership plan based on this course in which you outline how your learning might be utilized in among a wider audience: for example, in a workshop or conference presentation, as an advocate on an issue in early childhood, or as a school or community leader.

Course Expectations

A Note About Online Course Delivery and Your Participation (and *Presence!*)

Class participation is an opportunity for learning as well as contributing to the learning of others. This is an intense course format. You need to be sure, up front, that you are able to devote the necessary time in order to be successful. You will be expected to: participate by logging on to the course regularly and multiple times each week and as needed; complete weekly assigned readings on schedule; and, participate in activities and discussions in a timely manner. If you are unable to participate in frequent online activities, notify the instructor immediately. It is an expectation that you will monitor and follow up on all *Moodle* discussions that you initiate.

You will be sharing many ideas, resources, and questions with other students. In all of our interactions, it is essential that we take great care that our words are constructive, affirming, sensitive to the feelings of others, and above all, *kind*. We are all learners together, and our online community will be a perfect environment for putting into practice what we know about creating conditions for others (and ourselves) to thrive.

- (1) ***Assignment due dates***: Late forum postings will result in a **substantial reduction** (usually 50%) of the earned grade. Other late assignments may be accepted at the instructor's discretion, though maximum credit possible will be reduced by at least 50%. If your work will be unavoidably delayed, please notify the instructor in advance and discuss alternative plans.

(2) ***Academic Honesty Statement***

Students are expected to maintain academic integrity and honesty in completion of work for this class. Examples of academic dishonesty include:

1. Plagiarism (using materials from sources without citations)
2. Copying the work of someone else and submitting it as your own
3. Submitting work completed for another course

The first instance of academic dishonesty will result (for all parties involved) in no credit for the assignment or exam and may result in further disciplinary action, including failure of the course.

- (3) If you are in need of ***academic support*** because of a documented disability (whether it is psychiatric, learning, mobility, health-related, or sensory), you may be eligible for academic accommodations through disability services for students. Contact the Director of DSS (552-6213) or schedule an appointment at the SOU Access Center. Consult this website for a full explanation of student rights and responsibilities: <http://www.sou.edu.studentrights>

Course Assignments

1. Class Attendance/Readings/Discussions (10 weeks x 10 points = 100 pts.)

Your regular presence online, engagement in all forums and assigned responses, and professionalism are required to qualify for full points each week in this area.

Weekly Assignments and Discussions

Topics & Activities

A document called *Topics & Activities* will be posted at the start of each new week (Monday). Review this document carefully and complete the activities in the timeline specified for each. Activities may include the following: reading topical articles, viewing a video or power point presentation, and participation in discussion forums. Other activities and projects will also be described in the weekly *Topics & Activities* document.

Weekly Discussion Forums

Discussion forums will be posted each week for your thoughtful responses. Prompts are based on the assigned readings, projects, and on-going class discussions. Access to forums is through our *Moodle* menu. Here you will have opportunities to show your understanding of course material and to reflect, comment, question, and respond to each other. I hope that sharing and hearing personal perspectives on various issues will spark lively and stimulating discussions. Over the coming weeks, your online participation will be collectively considered in terms of the depth and thoughtfulness of your comments, the connections you demonstrate to the course content, and your sensitivity in responding to the remarks of others. You are expected to:

- (a) read the assigned articles and the chapters from the texts listed in the syllabus;
- (b) record reading notes and/or create graphic organizers to help you process content; and,
- (c) actively participate in online class discussions/forums related to weekly assignments.

After reading the assigned articles or chapters each week, respond to the posted prompt(s) and identify one key insight or question one question you have about the information (this is known as your **‘primary posting’**). In addition, choose **two** other student’s postings to thoughtfully respond to; these are known as your **‘secondary postings’**. In a secondary post, you may choose to respond to someone’s questions, build on their ideas, or to provide additional resources and information. Deadlines and specific prompts for your **primary** posting will be provided for each week’s set of readings.

- The required minimum length for each *primary posting* will be specified each week; it is usually 400 words (though more is fine).
- The required minimum length for both *secondary postings* is 100 words. These responses may be in the form of questions, insights, or any observation that ‘deepens’ the discussion.

2. Watch and Analyze Film “Babies” (20 pts.)

You will individually watch the film, “Babies,” and write a 2-page analysis paper on it. More than simple recall and summary, the **analysis** paper should interpret, evaluate, and apply the key ideas obtained from the film. Specific guidelines will be provided for this assignment.

3. Reggio Emilia Book Club (30 pts.)

The Reggio Emilia Approach is an educational philosophy focused on [preschool](#) and [primary education](#). It was started by [Loris Malaguzzi](#) and the parents of the villages around [Reggio Emilia in Italy](#) after [World War II](#). The destruction from the war, parents believed, necessitated a new, quick approach to teaching their children. They felt that it is in the early years of development that children are forming who they are as an individual. This led to creation of a program based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery in a supportive and enriching environment based on the interests of the children through a self-guided (curriculum). (Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reggio_Emilια_approach)

You will be assigned selected chapters on the Reggio approach and given a forum with other members of a book club where you can share ideas or quotes from the book (Lewin-Benham, 2008 in the *Reading Sources* section below). You will be required to participate in two 1-hour meetings with your book club to share reflections on the reading and to debrief with the whole group regarding your efforts to apply insights from the book to your own vision and work with young children. Meetings may be face-to-face, or in *real-time* using various media applications (e.g., Zoom or SKYPE). Because this is a web-based course, some students may not be able to be physically present due to their location outside the region or country; therefore, time zones may be a necessary consideration for some groups. A book club self-evaluation, based on your participation and preparation, is required as part of a culminating forum post. *Please note: E-mail or Google Docs do not take the place of actual meetings.*

4. Cross-Cultural Analysis (20 pts.)

You will study the images, descriptions, and philosophies of four unique school settings in different parts of the world. Using Roong Aroon School in Thailand as our anchor site and one of the four settings, you will also use the personal photos, video clips, and other multimedia resources provided by the instructor to consider similarities and differences among the sites. You will have the chance to meet one last time with your Reggio book group to discuss your observations. You will present your analysis as an academic paper and be expected to embed course themes and content into your narrative. You will also be expected to incorporate appropriate outside references into your analysis paper. Your paper should also evaluate ideas or perspectives shared during your small group seminar meeting (your Reggio Book Club).

The required minimum length for your analysis paper narrative is 1,200 words (3-4 pages), not counting references. At least 5 references in APA format should be included.

5. Exam (40 pts.)

This will be a comprehensive review of readings and assignments through the 8th week of the course. Available anytime you are ready to take it during Week 8, you will complete the exam through the *Moodle* site; it will contain a combination of multiple choice and true-false items. More information and guidelines for how to prepare will be provided prior to Week 8.

6. Synthesis Project: Research & Presentation (40 pts.)

This assignment provides you an opportunity to investigate one early childhood setting, practice, approach, or from outside of the US in a place that you are most interested in or deeply care about (e.g., a certain country, world region, island, tribal group, or indigenous people in any location or time in history). Your research will:

- examine the setting's social, political, environmental, and economic structure;
- describe the educational issue, problem, or dilemma; and,
- characterize the typical/atypical child rearing practices or formal/informal early education systems along with cultural and familial beliefs and values that have influenced certain practices.

Proposals for your synthesis project will be submitted in Week 5. The synthesis project final draft is due in Weeks 9 and 10 in an electronic format (e.g., Power Point, e-portfolio, YouTube, e-craft book, website, PDF, Acrobat); all need to include visuals, photos, and/or any other creative display that utilizes multiple media modalities in the presentation. You also have the option to do a traditional research paper, if you are more comfortable with that format.

Presentations of your synthesis project findings should include all of the following elements:

- A rationale explaining why you chose the setting, place, practice, or program and why it is worth studying (e.g., topic, research questions, rationale);
- A description of the program or practice in historical context and current conditions or controversies (and the multiple perspectives) concerning your topic;
- An analysis of the cultural, ethical, legal, community, historical, and societal factors or values contributing to the practice;
- A discussion of strength characteristics that might highlight quality and unique aspects of the practice, program, setting, or approach; and,
- A description of the most valuable global perspectives that you drew from this research and bring to your current or future practice.

You will also explore an appropriate leadership/advocacy element as part of this research assignment. Based on your individual topic and interest, this may include: community interface or meeting attendance, presentation of findings to others beyond the classroom, “publishing” research online or other community agencies or sources, application of a research finding in an appropriate context, etc. Graduate level criteria will be agreed upon individually in consultation with the instructor, based on your topic.

Summary Table of *Course Assignments*

Course Assignments	Points	Assignments/Due Dates
1. Class attendance, <i>Topics & Activities assignments</i> , readings/forums, leadership, and general overall quality of contributions throughout the 10 weeks.	100 pts	Weekly
2. Watch and Analyze Film “Babies”	20 pts	Week 3
3. The Reggio Emilia Book Club Participation/Preparation	30 pts	Beginning Week 4
4. Cross-Cultural Analysis	20 pts	Weeks 8 & 9
5. Exam	40 pts	Week 9
6. Synthesis Project: I-Search Research & Presentation	40 pts	Weeks 9-10

Course Grade Scale (100% = 250 points)

238-250 = A	225-237 = A-	
218-224 = B+	210-223 = B	200-209 = B-
193-199 = C+	179-192 = C	175-178 = C-
168-174 = D+	154-167 = D	150-153 = D-
<150 = F (See Instructor)		

References/Reading Sources (partial listing)

Note: The reading selections that are required for this course will be provided for you and available through Moodle as PDF files each week.

- Dahlberg, G., & Moss, P. (Feb. 2008). *Beyond quality in early childhood education and care: Languages of evaluation*. CESifo DICE Report, pp. 21-26, retrieved from https://www.cesifo-group.de/portal/page/portal/DocBase_Content/ZS/ZS-CESifo_DICE_Report/zs-dice-2008/zs-dice-2008-2/dicereport208-forum4.pdf
- Harkness, S. (1996). *Anthropological images of childhood*. In Hwang, C. Philip, Lamb, E., & Sigel, I. eds., (pp 36-46). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Lewin-Benham, A. (2008). *Powerful children: Understanding how to teach and learn using the Reggio approach*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Neugebauer, R. (May/June 2007). *Early childhood trends around the world*. Exchange, The Early Leaders' Magazine, (pp. 58-68), retrieved from <http://www.childcareexchange.com/library/5017502.pdf>
- Reagan, T. (2005). *Non-western educational traditions: Indigenous approaches to educational thought and practice* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Tobin, J., Hsueh, Y., & Karasawa, M. (2009). *Preschool in three cultures revisited: China, Japan, and the United States*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Tobin, J., Wu, D., & Davidson, D. (1989). *Preschool in three cultures: Japan, China, and the United States*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Wexler, A. *A theory for living: Walking with Reggio Emilia*. [online link provided]
- Young Children: The Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children* (November 2010), V. 65(6).

Additional References

- Biddle, J. K., & White, B. (Eds.) (2010). *The power of we: The Ohio study group experience*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc.
- Brown, S., & Vaughan, C. (2009). *Play: How it shapes the brain, opens the imagination, and invigorates the soul*. New York, NY: Avery.
- Cadwell, L. B. (1997). *Bringing Reggio Emilia Home: An innovative approach to early childhood education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Cadwell, L. B. (2003). *Bringing learning to life: The Reggio approach to early childhood education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

- Edwards, C., Gandini, L., & Forman., G. (Eds.) (1998). *The hundred language of children (2nd ed)*. Norwood, MA: Ablex.
- Fraser, F., & Gestwicki, C. (2001). *Authentic childhood: Exploring Reggio Emilia in the classroom*. Albany, NY: Delmar, a division of Thomson Learning.
- Gandini, L. (Ed.) (2005). *In the spirit of studio: Learning from the atelier of Reggio Emilia*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Gardner, H. (1989). *To open minds*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1991). *The unschooled mind: How children think and how schools should teach*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1999). *The disciplined mind: What all students should understand*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
- Gardner, H. (2006). *Five minds for the future*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hill, L. T., Stremmel, A. J., & Fu, V. R. (2005). *Teaching as inquiry: Rethinking curriculum in early childhood education*. Boston, MA: Pearson Ally and Bacon.
- Pelo, A. (2007). *The language of art: Inquiry-based studio practices in early childhood settings*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.
- Rinaldi, C. (2006). *In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, researching, and learning*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Vecchi. V. (2010). *Art and creativity in Reggio Emilia: Exploring the role and potential of ateliers in early childhood education*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Wurm, J. P. (2005). *Working in the Reggio Way: A beginner's guide for American teachers*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press and NAEYC.
- Young Children on the Web. (September 2004). *Print and online resources for exploring Early Childhood Education around the globe*. Beyond the Journal. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200409/cr.pdf>

In Education programs, we use the conventions of documentation recommended by the American Psychological Association (APA) for all of our formal papers. APA involves two basic formats of primary concern for this class: inserting an in-text citation at each point where a paper or project needs to be cited (or referenced) as a source, then recording all sources used in these citations in a "References" list at the end of the paper.

Course Planner: Tentative Outline of Topics and Assignments(Last revised 9-14-18)*

Week	Topics	Readings/Assignments
I	Introductions Syllabus content and course expectations Surveying the global landscape	Post your introduction message/photo Carefully read syllabus <i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings
II	PART I Foundations: Indigenous perspectives	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings
III	Foundations: Preschool in Three Cultures Film watch: “Babies”	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings “Babies” Analysis paper due
IV	Foundations Preschool in Three Cultures–Past & Present Book clubs form, set reading/meeting schedule	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings Individual Book Club Wiki avail.
V	PART II Current practices around the world Begin study of Reggio Emilia approach	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Book club meeting #1 (of 2) Readings and Forum postings Synthesis Project topic due
VI	Current practices around the world Continue study of Reggio Emilia approach	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Book club meeting #2 (of 2) Readings and Forum postings Synthesis Project topic feedback
VII	Current practices around the world Roong Aroon School in Bangkok, Thailand Begin Cross-Cultural Analysis assignment and small group seminar.	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings Synthesis Project - Collect data
VIII	Current practices around the world Complete Cross-Cultural Analysis	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings Cross-Cultural Analysis paper due. Continue Synthesis Project
IX	Toward a more global philosophy on child development and ways of working with young children and students	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings Begin Synthesis Project postings Exam–2 hours from time of access
X	Synthesis Project presentations due/posted Course evaluation	<i>Topics & Activities</i> document Readings and Forum postings Synthesis Project Due

*Please Note: The above schedule is for overview purposes only and is subject to change.

SOU Cares

SOU has a wide range of resources to help you succeed. Our faculty, staff, and administration are dedicated to providing you with the best possible support. The SOU Cares Report allows us to connect you with staff members who can assist with concerns, including financial, health, mental health, wellbeing, legal concerns, family concerns, harassment, assault, study skills, time management, etc. You are also welcome to use the SOU Cares Report to share concerns about yourself, a friend, or a classmate at <https://inside.sou.edu/ssi/index.html>. These concerns can include reports related to academic integrity, harassment, bias, or assault. Reports related to sexual misconduct or sexual assault can be made anonymously or confidentially. Student Support and Intervention provides recourse for students through the Student Code of Conduct, Title IX, Affirmative Action, and other applicable policies, regulations, and laws.

Academic Honesty Statement and Code of Student Conduct

Students are expected to maintain academic integrity and honesty in completion of all work for this class. According to SOU's Student Code of Conduct: "Acts of academic misconduct involve the use or attempted use of any method that enables a student to misrepresent the quality or integrity of his or her academic work and are prohibited".

Such acts include, but are not limited to: copying from the work of another, and/or allowing another student to copy from one's own work; unauthorized use of materials during exams; intentional or unintentional failure to acknowledge the ideas or words of another that have been taken from any published or unpublished source; placing one's name on papers, reports, or other documents that are the work of another individual; submission of work resulting from inappropriate collaboration or assistance; submission of the same paper or project for separate courses without prior authorization by faculty members; and/or knowingly aiding in or inciting the academic dishonesty of another.

Any incident of academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action(s) as outlined in SOU's Code of Student Conduct:

<https://inside.sou.edu/assets/policies/CodeofStudentConduct.pdf>

In case of loss, theft, destruction or dispute over authorship, always retain a copy of any work you produce and submit for grades. Retain all written work that has been graded and handed back to you.

Emergency Notifications

SOU is committed to a safe community. Student, faculty and staff emails are automatically enrolled in SOU Alert, the campus emergency communication system. In the event of emergency, closure, or other significant disruption to campus operations, such as inclement weather, messages are delivered via SOU Alert. To ensure timely notification, students, faculty, staff are **strongly** encouraged to visit InsideSOU to register their cell phone numbers and/or add family members to the system. Campus Public Safety is available 24 hours/day by dialing 541-552-6911. CPS responds to safety concerns, incidents, and emergencies and can provide safety escorts to on-campus locations. CPS works in collaboration with Ashland Police and Fire.

Statement on Title IX and Mandatory Reporting

Federal law requires that employees of institutions of higher learning (faculty, staff and administrators) report to a Title IX officer any time they become aware that a student is a victim or perpetrator of gender-based bias, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking. Further, Oregon law requires a mandatory report to law enforcement of any physical or emotional abuse of a child or other protected person, including elders and people with disabilities, or when a child or other protected person is perceived to be in danger of physical or emotional abuse. If you are the victim of sexual or physical abuse and wish to make a confidential disclosure please use the confidential advising available at <https://inside.sou.edu/ssi/confidential-advisors.html>, or use Southern Oregon University's Anonymous Harassment, Violence, and Interpersonal Misconduct Reporting Form: https://jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_7R7CCBciGNL473L

SOU Academic Support/Disability Resources:

To support students with disabilities in acquiring accessible books and materials, and in planning their study and time management strategies, SOU requires all professors to include information regarding Academic Support and Disability Resources on course syllabi. It is the policy of Southern Oregon University that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to, participation in, or benefits of any service, program, or activity operated by the University. Qualified persons shall receive reasonable accommodation/modification needed to ensure equal access to employment, educational opportunities, programs, and activities in the most appropriate, integrated setting, except when such accommodation creates undue hardship on the part of the provider. These policies comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other applicable federal and state regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

If you are in need of support because of a documented disability (whether it be learning, mobility, psychiatric, health-related, or sensory) you may be eligible for academic or other accommodations through Disability Resources. See the Disability Resources webpage at <https://inside.sou.edu/dr/index.html> for more information or to schedule an appointment. If you are already working with Disability Resources, make sure to request your accommodations for this course as quickly as possible to ensure that you have the best possible access.