

WEBSTER UNIVERSITY

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**EDUC 4880.01**  
COURSE NUMBER AND SECTION

**JOANN FORD 647-1663**  
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INSTRUCTOR

**Family & Community Resources**  
COURSE TITLE

**TERM:        **SP        2003****

**Webster**  
SITE

**1. Course Description: (Student Focus, rationale, scope, prerequisites)**

In this course students analyze and explore ways to respond to the perspectives, needs, and concerns of families of young children. During this course students will engage in experiential learning activities and analysis of literature in order to develop understanding and skills in regard to developing effective home-school-community relationships, utilizing community resources, methods of parent education, ways to involve parents as partners in the early care and education of children.

**2. Learning Outcomes: (Goals, objectives, course outcomes, etc.)**

1. Students will learn how to identify and respond to the concerns, needs, and interests of families of young children.
2. Students will identify ways to develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with parents and patrons.
3. Students will learn to identify and utilize appropriate family and community resources.
4. Students will learn how to apply and evaluate the effectiveness of alternative ways to educate and involve families.
5. Students will identify the family and community issues associated with children with special needs and show an understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity.

## EDUC 4880

### 3. Schedule of required readings, class preparations and assignments, lectures, discussions, student presentations, and exams:

**WEEK 1:** Introductions and course overview.

What assumptions do we have about the parents and community?

Is parental and community involvement a benefit to teachers?

**Assignment:** Chapters 1, 3 of text

**WEEK 2:** What do we want from parents and community?

What do they want from us?

**For next week:** Chapters 2, 8 of text plus handouts

**WEEK 3:** What does the history of family life and parent involvement mean to our current day practice?

What are the needs of parents of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and early primary?

Demonstration Home Visit

**For next week:** Chapter 7

**WEEK 4:** What roles do or should teachers and the schools play in helping to meet the needs of parents of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and early primary?

What is happening locally, statewide, nationally, and in other countries?

Parent Panel Discussion

**For next week:** Chapter 4 of text. Search for partnerships in education information on the internet.

**WEEK 5:** What are the critical factors in building effective home-school-community relationships?

How can teachers respond to the diversity of families and community: cultural differences, many kinds of family structures, socio-economic status, values?

**For next week:** Chapter 8 of text plus handouts

**WEEK 6:** A look at home schooling.

Reports on community resources.

**For next week:** Prepare community resource reports

**WEEK 7:** Reports on Community Resources.

**For next week:** Chapter 5 of text plus handouts

**WEEK 8:** Parent-teacher conferences: What are the purposes? What skills are needed?

How should parents and teachers prepare for them?

**For next week:** Review chapter 5 of text. Prepare for a parent/teacher conference to be role played next week

**WEEK 9:** Communication skills, strategies, and techniques

What are the goals teachers have for communicating with parents? What tools are available? What tools meet what goals most successfully?

**For next week:** Prepare a parent newsletter

**WEEK 10:** Parent Education: Parenting skill classes and meetings and classes developed to help parents support improved achievement.

**For next week:** Chapter 9 of text and handouts

**WEEK 11:** Working with parents of children with special needs: What does legislation require? How can teachers and other specialists collaborate to deliver individualized family service plans? How can we involve parents as true partners in individualized education programs for their children?

**For next week:** Chapter 6 in text plus handouts

**WEEK 12:** Preparation for Group Meeting Presentations

**For next week:** Review chapter 4 in text plus handouts

**WEEK 13:** Effective use of volunteers: What do teachers need to know and do in regard to needs assessment, recruitment, orientations, training and supervision? What policies are in place regarding volunteerism in school districts?

**For next week:** Review Chapter 10 in text plus handouts

**WEEK 14:**Special family problems: dealing with child abuse and neglect, drug abuse, divorce, poverty.

**For next week:** Prepare group meeting presentations

**WEEK 15:**Group meeting presentations

**WEEK 16:**Group meeting presentations

#### **4. Resources:**

**Text used:** Berger, Eugenia Hepworth (2000). Parents as Partners in Education, Fifth Edition Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill an imprint of Prentice Hall.

#### **5. Evaluation:**

a.	Group Project-Parent Group Meeting	30%
b.	Parent Newsletter	20%
c.	Community Resource Investigations	20%
d.	Reading and Class response journal	10%
e.	Experiential learning exercises and Participation in class	20%

Note: The instructor holds the expectation for mastery level work. Towards that end, students will be allowed to resubmit improved work for re-evaluation

## Assignments for 4880

Reading and Class Response Journal: Respond to a reading assignment, a classroom discussion, and a guest presenter regarding how this experience relates to meeting the learning outcomes for this class. You may choose one experience from each category mentioned. Your response should include what made the experience meaningful or how it could have been improved for meeting the learning outcomes listed on the first page of the syllabus.

10%

Experiential Learning Exercises and Participation in Class: Class meetings will include class discussions based on the important questions regarding parent and community involvement, brainstorming sessions, reflections on reading materials and classroom activities, and responding to presentations of guests in addition to student class presentations.

20%

Community Resource Investigations: Class members must bring complete information describing a resource in the community that would be helpful for parents of children participating in an early childhood program. The information must include everything that would make it possible for class members to contact the agency, company, or organizations. Include your personal response, was the contact person helpful? Was your first effort at contacting successful? Were you treated politely? Was additional material sent quickly? What information did you learn that you will remember as you decide whether or not this would be a good referral for a parent or colleague? You are responsible for three resources and copies of what you bring for each of your classmates.

20%

Parent Newsletter: Written communication is one tool available for communicating with parents and/or community. You must create a parent newsletter that you would use in an early childhood educational setting. Your newsletter can be an example of a routine communication, related to a special event, from a single classroom, a school newsletter, etc. It must be your original creation. If you choose to use a newsletter you have already written and distributed, you must include your response to it, why would you use it again? Why did you choose to submit this work? Or how would you improve it?

20%

Group Project-Parent Group Meeting: This assignment is for complete plans for a parent group meeting on the topic or activity of your choice. The plan must include the outline of the meeting, publicity, arrangements for staffing, use of facility, childcare(optional), refreshments (optional), evaluation for participants, all the details that would be necessary for actually providing this meeting. Provide enough full copies for every classmate.

30%