

Course Number: ECED 5830.04

Instructor: Lori Diefenbacher, 966-4829 (home) 968-7490 (office)

Title: Topics in Early Learning: The Child as Naturalist

Credits: 3

Term: SU 2003 June 16-20 8:00-4:00

1. Course Description: Through activities and discussions, this course will introduce techniques and experiences that encourage a conservation ethic and nurture environmental awareness in young children. While a survey of environmental themes will be key, emphasis will be placed on the importance of nature education at the early childhood level.

2. Learning Outcomes: (MOSTEP standards that will be addressed are listed with each outcome). Participants will:

--learn to design classroom activities which foster a respect for nature
(Standards 1, 2, 4, 6)

--develop techniques and curriculum for nature experiences
(Standards 4, 5, 6, 8, 11)

--appreciate multicultural attitudes toward nature
(Standards 3, 7)

--collect techniques/ activities that enhance child's nature awareness
(Standards 5, 9)

--build and appreciate participants' adult awareness of nature
(Standard 9)

--learn to support environmental education with other curricula
(Standards 1, 4, 5)

--learn to be a "greener" teacher and access community resources
(Standards 9, 10)

3. Schedule of required readings, class preparations, and assignments, lectures, discussions, student presentations and exams: handouts each day, group preparations in class, journals

4. Textbooks: *The Geography of Childhood*, by Gary Nabhan, Stephen Trimble, *Sharing Nature with Children*, by Joseph Cornell.

5. Evaluation: Participation will be VERY important. Curricular project, Garden proposal, Nature journal

Grades

A--Completes all assignments on time with extended interpretation of required word, including research and documentation. Consistent participation in and enthusiasm for class activities.

B--Complete all assignments on time with adequate execution of requirements. Consistent participation in class activities.

C--All assignments completed but not on time and lacking in details. Make more comprehensive

Day 1: Introductions. Syllabus and assignments. Various activities in the morning will prepare students for a heightened nature experience throughout the week. Begin journals. Library research project. Field trip. **Assignment:** Various handouts; Read chapters 1-2 of *Geography of Childhood*; journals

Day 2: Focus on abiotic components of environment. Field trip. Map reading. Discuss Flow Learning. Prepare for water exploration. **Assignment:** Read chapters 3-4 in *Geography of Childhood*; journals

Day 3: Organic Gardening. Field trip. Learning about food as nature. Exploring the world of insects. **Assignment:** Garden proposal; Handouts; journals

Day 4: Field trip. How to engage young children in nature experiences. Journals. **Assignment:** Journal reflections.

Day 5: Unit Plan Curriculum. Will spend the day writing units and presenting them to each other. Other concluding activities.