Castleton University

Early Childhood Educators Institute
Summer 2021 Course Syllabus

NOTE: To this date, the Agency of Education has not completed its analysis of the endorsement standards for early childhood for this course. When the Agency of Education does complete analysis, this syllabus and the Institute website will be updated.

Course Title: Nurturing a Sense of Wonder Through Nature, Science and Engineering

Number of Credits: 3 graduate or undergraduate credits

Level: Graduate & Undergraduate
Students may elect to take this course at the undergraduate level. If so, some assignments and expectations for scholarly writing (paper page length, APA expectations) will be minimized to the level of complexity for what would be expected of an undergraduate student. Any adjustments to course expectations for this purpose should be determined collaboratively by the instructor and the student(s).

Course Code: EDU 5515 C13 (graduate) & EDU 4710 CFS14 (undergraduate)

Dates: July 20 – November 1, 2021.
This course is part of the 2021 Early Childhood Educators Institute and requires attendance all 4 days of the online institute July 20, 22, 27 & 29. The course continues in an online environment until November 1, 2021 at the latest.

Times: July 20, 22, 27, 29 from 9:00 am - 4:05 pm.

Format: Online asynchronously and synchronously using Zoom videoconferencing.

Location: Online

Instructor(s): Hannah Gelroth, M.Ed, hgelroth@vinsweb.org, (802) 359-5000

Course Cost to Student: $375 for this 3-credit course. The institute fee is $200. Total: $575

Course Description:
Through guided hands-on activities that can be done both synchronously and asynchronously, engaging use of digital tools, dynamic conversations and helpful resources that can be implemented right way, this course will help participants embed nature, engineering and science education into their curriculum. This STEM-focused course will provide practical tips, sample activities and resources for facilitating

nature play, engineering and science activities, as well as help participants gain confidence in identifying common plants and animals.

Audience: Teachers of toddlers and Pre-k students

Course Goals:
Upon successful completion of this course, participants will know the skills needed to facilitate nature play, science investigations and engineering activities in their classrooms.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

Use facilitation techniques to successfully guide engineering activities in their classroom or outside.

Demonstrate an understanding of the role of loose parts through incorporating nature play activities in the curriculum

Explain the importance of fostering a classroom environment rich in STEM learning.

Required Readings/Texts: (required texts not included in the course tuition)
Provided during the course as PDFs and online articles

Assignments:
Assignments for this course include daily prompts posted for reflection and discussion and daily hands-on activities to be completed asynchronously. Documentation of completed activities will take place on Jamboard. Participants will be expected to video themselves teaching, and submit a self-reflection, as well as a final reflection essay on implementation and practice.

Evaluation:
Participants are expected to participate fully in each day of the institute, including having video on during the virtual components. Evaluation of completed activities, video recording, reflections and posts will utilize the grading rubric.

Grading:

Category	1	2	3	4	Points
Depth of participation in discussions and daily posts	Response shows little to no evidence of thought or effort	Response shows that article was read but shows little understandin	Response shows the article was read and content is understood;	Articles read & understood; response is very thorough, and includes reflections on incorporating	

		g of topic or content	response is thorough	content into practice	
Depth of Jamboard posting about asynchronous activities	Posts lack photo documentation and elements of the assignment are missing	Posts include photos of activity, but little effort was put into the assignment	Posts include several photos of activity, and effort was put into the assignment	Posts include several photos and detailed notes about activity, as well as thoughts on how this could be done in own setting	
Video and self-reflection	Video submitted but self-reflection missing	Video and self-reflection submitted but shows little effort was put into assignment	Video and self-reflection submitted and effort was put into assignment	Video and self-reflection submitted, response is thorough and includes how content might be applied in a different setting (outside vs inside for example)	
Implementation and Practice Reflective Essay	Response shows little to no evidence of reflection, implementation or effort	Only one or two course elements were implemented; reflection lacks detail	Several course elements were implemented and reflection is thoughtful and thorough	Essay is very thorough, written clearly and with no grammatical errors; includes impact of instructional practice on students and families	
Category	1	2	3	4	**Score:**

Grading Policy:
Grades are indicated by letters with a designated "quality point" value assigned to each as follows:

      A   4.0

      A-   3.7

      B+   3.3

      B   3.0

      B-   2.7

      C+   2.3

      Additional grading information can be found in the Castleton University Graduate Catalog, under Academic Policies, accessible online at: http://catalog.castleton.edu/index.php

Academic Honesty Policy:

Castleton University is a learning institution committed to the highest standards of scholarly conduct. The students, faculty, and administration make up a scholarly community whose integrity and success necessarily stem from a mutually agreed upon code of academic standards and principles that promote trust and honesty and prohibit the attempt to gain unfair academic advantage. Membership in the Castleton community means sharing responsibility for upholding and safeguarding these academic standards and principles.

Any violation of academic honesty will be considered cheating and will be dealt with accordingly by the appropriate authorities.

For more information click the link below to access the Castleton University Graduate Catalog Academic Policy section:

http://catalog.castleton.edu/content.php?catoid=16&navoid=1204#Academic_Honesty

Use and Ownership of Copyrighted Materials:

For information and guidance, faculty and students are referred to the Vermont State College Manual of Policy and Procedures as it relates to the use and ownership of copyrighted materials. Guidelines are set out in Policy 416, accessible online at the following address:

http://www.castleton.edu/library/information-literacy-graduation-standard/information-literacy-tutorial/information-ethics-citing-sources-and-fair-use/

Accommodations:

Castleton is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities so that no such student shall, by reason of a disability, be excluded from participating in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of Castleton University. For more information, please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, at (802) 468-1428.

Course Drop Policy:

Castleton University offers courses to educators with the expectation that participants will complete the course. However, the University realizes circumstances arise in one's personal life that may cause disruptions. **The policy for dropping a course is that a participant will notify the instructor in writing of the intent to withdraw from the course. The withdrawal notice should be made within the first week of the course and should include the reason for withdrawing.** After week one, changes in class status will be considered for health, bereavement, and personal or emergency situations only. Those who withdraw without adhering to this policy may receive a failing grade on their transcript and/or be liable for associated course costs. For more Academic Policy information, check the link below to access the Castleton University Graduate Catalog:

http://catalog.castleton.edu/content.php?catoid=23&navoid=2159

Transcript Request:

www.castleton.edu/transcripts