

Mayville State University

EC 211 Observation, Assessment, & Interpretation Techniques (27776)

Fall October 20-December 14, 2025

3 Credit Hours

Course and Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Ann Willeson

Contact Information:

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Hours of Availability:

Monday- Friday: As Posted or by Appointment

Instructional Mode: On-campus face-to-face.

Course Dates: October 20-December 14, 2025

Time Zone: All times indicated throughout this syllabus reflect Central Time (CT).

Meeting Times and/or Location: Education 102, MWF 9-9:50

Course Materials and Technologies

Required

OER: *Observation and Assessment in Early Childhood Education*. This is a PDF on Blackboard in Course Introduction & Syllabus.
Liability Insurance

[MSU Technology Requirements](#)

Blackboard

Use of Artificial Intelligence in this Course

You may use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it must be properly quoted and cited every time it is used. Failure to do so constitutes an academic integrity violation, is considered plagiarism and will have the same consequences as other violations of academic integrity.

Course Description

This course emphasizes the importance of skillful observation when planning appropriate activities and experiences for children. The course will explore the use of informal and formal assessment strategies to plan and individualize the curriculum and teaching practices. Teacher candidates will review, use, and interpret assessment instruments to determine the ability levels of children (birth-8 years) representing “at-risk” populations, those with developmental disabilities and special abilities. The class serves as the required course in the assessment of young children/children with special needs for early childhood special education licensure.

Co-requisites: EC 210

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Conceptual Framework

Teacher Education courses are based upon the Conceptual Framework: Reflective Experiential Teacher. See the document 'Conceptual Framework' provided in the course shell.

Course Objectives

To successfully complete this course, the learner will be expected to meet the following objectives, as aligned to Early Childhood Education Program Approval Standards through North Dakota's Education Standards and Practices Board ([ND ESPB](#)):

1. Students will be able to describe observation tools used in the early childhood classroom (InTasc 6, NDECTS 4, NAEYC 3, CEC/ECE 4, SLO 1).
2. Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the use of observation tools in the early childhood classroom (InTasc 6, NDECTS 4, NAEYC 3, CEC/ECE 4, SLO 1).
3. Students will be able to analyze information collected using observation tools in the early childhood classroom (InTasc 1, 2, 6, NDECTS 4, 6, 7, NAEYC 1,3, CEC/ECE 4, SLO 1)
4. Students will be able to evaluate the student with the information gathered during observations using a developmental continuum (InTasc 1, 2, 6, NDECTS 4, 6, 7, NAEYC 1,3, CEC/ECE 4, SLO 1,4).
5. Students will be able to create developmentally appropriate activities to enhance children's skill development (InTasc 1, 2, 6, NDECTS 4, 6, 9, NAEYC 1,3,5, CEC/ECE 4, SLO 1).
6. Students will be able to create a final case study of a child's skills and skill development that could be shared with families (InTasc 1, 2, 6, NDECTS 4, 6, 7, 9, NAEYC 1,3, 5, CEC/ECE 4, SLO 1, 4).
7. Students will be able to describe the role of physical, social, and temporal environments in developing children's skills (InTasc 1, 2 NDECTS 4, 6, 7, 9, NAEYC 1,3, 5, CEC/ECE 4. SLO 1).

Standards Alignment (Early Childhood Education Program Approval Standards-ND ESPB):

- 1a: Understand the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age 8 across physical, cognitive, social and emotional, and linguistic domains, including bilingual/multilingual development.
- 1b: Understand and value each child as an individual with unique developmental variations, experiences, strengths, interests, abilities, challenges, approaches to learning, and with the capacity to make choices.
- 1c: Understand the ways that child development and the learning process occur in multiple contexts, including family, culture, language, community, and early learning setting, as well as in a larger societal context that includes structural inequities.
- 1d: Use this multidimensional knowledge—that is, knowledge about the developmental period of early childhood, about individual children, and about development and learning in cultural contexts—to make evidence-based decisions that support each child.
- 3a: Understand that assessments (formal and informal, formative and summative) are conducted to make informed choices about instruction and for planning in early learning settings.
- 3b: Know a wide range of types of assessments, their purposes, and their associated methods and tools.
- 3c: Use screening and assessment tools in ways that are ethically grounded and developmentally, ability, culturally, and linguistically appropriate in order to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child.
- 3d: Build assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues.
- 5a: Understand content knowledge—the central concepts, methods and tools of inquiry, and structure—and resources for the academic disciplines in an early childhood curriculum.
- 5b: Understand pedagogical content knowledge—how young children learn in each discipline—and how to use the teacher knowledge and practices described in Standards 1 through 4 to support young children's learning in each content area.
- 5c: Modify teaching practices by applying, expanding, integrating, and updating their content knowledge in the disciplines, their knowledge of curriculum content resources, and their pedagogical content knowledge.

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InTASC Principles:

- **Standard 1: Learner Development.** The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- **Standard 2: Learning Differences.** The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- **Standard 6: Assessment.** The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

ND Early Childhood Teacher Education Standards:

- **Standard 4: Assessment of Child Progress:** The program uses a variety of formal and informal assessment approaches to provide information on children's learning and development. These assessments occur in the context of reciprocal communications between teachers and families, and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children are developing. The program uses assessment results to inform decisions about the children in their care, to improve teaching practices, and to drive program improvement.
- **Standard 6: Staff Competencies, Preparation, and Support:** The program employs and supports teaching and administrative staff that have the qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
- **Standard 7: Families:** The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture.
- **Standard 9: Physical Environment:** The program has a safe and healthful environment that provides appropriate and well-maintained indoor and outdoor physical environments. The environment includes facilities, equipment, and materials to facilitate child and staff learning and development.

NAEYC:

- **Standard 1: Child Development and Learning in Context:** Early childhood educators (a) are grounded in an understanding of the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age 8 across developmental domains. They (b) understand each child as an individual with unique developmental variations. Early childhood educators (c) understand that children learn and develop within relationships and within multiple contexts, including families, cultures, languages, communities, and society. They (d) use this multidimensional knowledge to make evidence-based decisions about how to carry out their responsibilities.
- **Standard 3: Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment:** Early childhood educators (a) understand that the primary purpose of assessment is to inform instruction and planning in early learning settings. They (b) know how to use observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment approaches and tools. Early childhood educators (c) use screening and assessment tools in ways that are ethically grounded and developmentally, culturally, ability, and linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child. Early childhood educators (d) build assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues.
- **Standard 5: Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum:** Early childhood educators have knowledge of the content of the academic disciplines (e.g., language and literacy, the arts, mathematics, social studies, science, technology and engineering, physical education) and of the pedagogical methods for teaching each discipline. They (a) understand the central concepts, methods and tools of inquiry, and structures in each academic discipline. Educators (b) understand pedagogy, including how young children learn and process information in each discipline, the learning trajectories for each discipline, and how teachers use this knowledge to inform their practice. They (c) apply this knowledge using early learning standards and other resources to make decisions about spontaneous and planned learning experiences and about curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation to ensure that learning will be stimulating, challenging, and meaningful to each child.

CEC EC Standards:

- **Standard 4: Assessment Processes** Candidates know and understand the purposes of assessment in relation to ethical and legal considerations. Candidates choose developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program. Using evidence-based practices, candidates develop or select as well as administer informal measures and select and administer formal measures in partnership with families and other professionals. They analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information using a strengths-based approach with families and other professionals for eligibility determination, outcome/goal development, planning instruction and intervention, monitoring progress, and reporting.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Addressed in This Course

As part of Mayville State's effort to demonstrate continuous improvement in achieving student learning outcomes, this course will address the following SLOs:

- **Mastered SLO #1:** Students understand diversity in learning and developmental processes and create supportive and safe learning environments for students to thrive.

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- **Introduces SLO #4:** Students will take responsibility for student learning, collaborative relationships, their own professional growth, and the advancement of the profession.

Instructional Strategies

Written Reflection	Academic Writing	Inquiry & Research
Case Studies	Graphic Organizers	Videos
Discussion	Critical Thinking	Direct Instruction
Modeling	Presentations	

Course Expectations

- **APA Format (AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION)** Any papers that include research references must include citing and references in APA format. The APA Formatting and Style Guide: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- Writing Expectations: Being able to express one's thoughts in a clear and well thought out manner is held in very high regard in this course. Early Childhood Education is a profession, and professionals must be able to write well. It is suggested that students have their work proofread by a reliable person or that they access The Writing Center for assistance with their writing.

Instructor/Student Communication

- Students are accountable for all academic communications sent to their Mayville State University email address.
- Email communication-allow at least 24 business hours for a response.
- Email will be checked daily M-F 8 am-5 pm. Emails received during weekends will be responded to by Monday.
- Ensure that you are responding professionally. Refrain from using texting language.
- I encourage you to contact me to discuss any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Student input is important to make this course a worthwhile experience

Assignments and Assessments

To enhance your learning experience in this course the following is expected:

- Always ask questions- I am here to provide support, so you are successful in this course.
- Complete all assigned reading.
- Submit all your assignments by due dates, there are drop boxes for each assignment.
- Give yourself an appropriate amount of time to complete assignments.
- Make sure you read all assignment directions thoroughly.

Evaluation and Grading

The goal of evaluation is to assess if students gained the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will result in increased competence in early childhood education.

Grading Policies

- Late work is determined by the date in the Dropbox. Late assignments will receive partial credit.
- Please do not email your work, post your work in the dropbox in Blackboard.
- Please plan, do not wait until the last minute to post assignments. Each assignment is given sufficient time for completion; it is up to you to take advantage of this allotted time.
- It is the student's responsibility to monitor graded assignments. Checking the grade section of Blackboard is the best way to be sure that assignments have been submitted. You can expect to see your grade for each assignment within 10 days of the due date.

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Attendance/Participation Policies

- Attend and Participate in all course meetings, unless excused for University events or illness.
- If a student is absent from class, it is the student's responsibility to access the information and assignments on Blackboard.
- Participate in discussions in a professional manner.

Grading Scale

94-100(250-234) =A 93-87(233-219) =B 86-80(218-199) =C 79-72(198-179) =D 71-0(178-0) =F

Breakdown of Grades

Proof of Liability (15 pts) Designing Learning Environments (55 pts) Running Record (20pts) Anecdotal Observation (20pts) Social/Affective Anecdotal (20pts) Physical Development Checklist (20pts) Interview Cognitive Assessment (20pts) Language Development Checklist (20pts) Final Case Study (60pts) Total Points: 250

Enrollment Verification

Enrollment Verification: Introductions Activity Week 1

On-Campus Course Statement

The U.S. Department of Education requires instructors to conduct an activity which will validate student enrollment in this course. Class attendance will be used to verify enrollment in on campus courses. If you do not attend, your enrollment in this course will be at risk.

Proctor Notification

No proctors are required for this course.

Important Student Information

In the Announcements section of the Blackboard Institution Page, you can view and download the Important Student Information document for the current academic year. It includes information about:

- ✓ Land Acknowledgement Statement
- ✓ Academic Grievance Concerns and Instructor English Proficiency
- ✓ NetTutor - Online Tutoring Program
- ✓ Starfish - Student Success System
- ✓ Students with Documented Disabilities
- ✓ Student Learning Outcomes / Essential Learning Outcomes
- ✓ Academic Honesty
- ✓ Emergency Notification
- ✓ Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency
- ✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- ✓ Diversity Statement (Title IX)

Late Arrivals

The grading system for students adding this course after the first day of instruction will be modified. The student will be graded only on the activities that transpired while the student is enrolled. Students will not be penalized for missed assignments, but the student is still responsible for learning the course material that was covered during their initial absence.

Course Timeline/Schedule

The 8-week course is laid out in detail in Blackboard. The assignments and due dates are posted in each weekly folder on Bb. "Course Timeline and Schedule are subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor."

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Week 1 Introduction to Observation
Week 2 Environments, Running Record
Week 3 Anecdotal Record Observation
Week 4 Social Affective Anecdotal Record

Week 5 Physical Development
Week 6 Cognitive Development
Week 7 Language Development
Week 8 Families-Case Study

References / Bibliography

- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. (2010). *Temperament Continuum*, Issue 23. <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel>.
- NAEYC. (2022) *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs*, Washington, DC.
- Reed, K. & Young, J. (2018). Play games, learn math! Playing with patterns. *Teaching Young Children*, 11(2). Washington, DC:NAEYC.
- Paul, C. (2020). 10X: Increasing family involvement in school. *Teaching Young Children* 13(5), pg. 7-10
- Seitz, H. (2023). Authentic Assessment: A strengths-based approach to making thinking, learning, and development Visible. *Young Children*, 78 (1). Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Tominey, S.L., O'Bryon, E.C., Rivers, S.E., and Shapses, S. (2017). Teaching emotional intelligence in early childhood. *Young Children*, 72 (1). Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Teaching Strategies. (2001). *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc.