CD 354 Methods of Observation

Section 1: Monday, Wednesday 9 – 9:50; Friday Lab 9 – 9:50 or 10 – 10:50

Section 2: Monday, Wednesday 8 – 8:50; Lab TBA preferably Thursday

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website: www.humboldt.edu/~cgk1

Office hours: will be posted on MOODLE

Child Development Majors must get a grade of “C” or better in this course in order to meet requirements for the completion of the major.

This course addresses CALIFORNIA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS COMPETENCIES in the area of “Observation, Screening, Assessment, and Documentation,” CDE 2012, pp. 51 - 58.

Course Description, Resources, and Student Learning Outcomes


Prerequisite: general course in child growth/development (2014-15 Catalog, p. 212).

Mode of Instruction: Lecture/discussion; lab observations, peer collaborations and peer review of reports. Use of MOODLE and WordPress is a requirement of the course. Students should expect to access materials in the course online sites at least twice a week.

Special NOTE: Most students will find it necessary to observe additional mornings each week in order to complete assignments on time. In addition to regular observations on Thursday or Friday mornings, students should set aside time on at least one other morning to observe. This additional time is needed because children may be absent on the regular observation day or not exhibit the behavior that is to be
recorded or you may find it takes extra time because the use of a particular approach proves challenging. Getting observations completed on time is critical to success in this course.

Resources, readings and materials:

There is no text for this course. Instead, students are expected to access, read and apply materials available on MOODLE and WordPress. Most of these reading/resources are contained in the MOODLE “Books.” There are 10 books as well as some additional resources. Students must complete the materials and assignments in all books and use the associated resources.

Description of Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes:
This course is designed to provide experiences that will assist students in acquiring the skills needed to 1) objectively observe and record behavior to create a thorough and accurate description of a child’s competencies (database), 2) interpret that data base to make recommendations and decisions with regard to supports, interactions, curriculum and instruction, 3) understand the logistics of documentation and portfolio development, 4) evaluate standardized assessment tools and 5) be able to communicate effectively about assessment processes, strengths and challenges. Because a great deal of the data gathering and decision-making that we do with children is done by collaborative groups of professionals, assignments include collaborations.

Course SLOs: Students are expected to:

- Demonstrate understanding of specific observational strategies and devices including anecdotes, specimen/running records, time samples, event samples, frequency and duration records, checklists and rating scales and the Desired Results Developmental Profile - Preschool (DRDP-PS) by
  - Describing the key characteristics of each strategy,
  - Describing the appropriate use including identifying advantages and disadvantages

- Use each of these approaches/devices to collect data on individual children observed at the Child Development Laboratory

- Prepare summaries, interpretations, goals and recommendations for individual children based on observational records/data that the student has collected

- Complete a professionally presented case report
Describe documentation and portfolio development as assessment processes, identifying strengths and challenges

Describe ethical standards and reflective practices related to assessment and screening including appropriate use, procedures and connections with families and professionals

Identify appropriate uses of standardized tests and the criteria for selecting a standardized test to use with children.

Review commercially prepared standardized observational devices - examining them for validity, reliability and appropriateness for particular groups or individuals.

Write and explain clear, objective and professional descriptions of a child’s behavior

Department and University Student Learning Outcomes
In addition to the specific course objectives listed above, this course is designed to meet the following Child Development Department and University Student Learning outcomes

Child Development Department Student Learning Outcomes
- Observe, record, summarize, interpret and make recommendations about behavior
- Apply of knowledge of child growth and development
- Analyse current views for underlying assumptions and practices (with regard to assessment)
- Evaluate the influence of diversity on development
- Professionally interact, communicate and collaborate with peers in a variety of settings
- Write and present professionally

University Student Learning Outcomes
1. Effective written and oral communication
2. Critical and creative thinking skills in acquiring a broad knowledge base and applying it to complex issues
3. Competence in the major area of study
4. Success in chosen careers

Course Requirements:
Your work will involve several different types of activities:

1. Reading assignments and review of materials provided on-line and in class
2. Participation in class meetings and peer review activities
3. Observations of a child at the Child Development Lab
4. Write-ups from observations
5. Research into and evaluation of an assessment tool and presentation of your findings (with a partner)
6. Creation, with a partner, of a Case Report on an individual child
7. Completion of the final exercise and exam

Use of MOODLE will be a required for this course and critical to your success. If you need assistance or have problems, let me know. If you have not yet activated your email account, please do so right away. We will use email as a way to communicate. If you need help, let me know or contact the “Help Desk.”

Your graded assignments will include:

- 10 observations and 7 observation reports
- Case Study
- Evaluation and presentation of a standardized assessment tool
- In class activities
- Final exercise and exam

The specific assignments appear in the Working Calendar and the Assignment Books on Moodle. A list, including points for each assignment, is provided at the end of the Calendar document so you can check off assignments as you complete them. Students are responsible for knowing the content of the Assignment Books and using the guidelines and templates provided. There will be periodic short in class writing/reflecting/assessment activities as well. Precision is a critical element in all assignments.

Assignment preparation and participation:

We only have two class sessions most weeks in which to discuss the observational devices and assignments. Make sure you have completed the reading assignments and reviewed the materials provided in the “books” on MOODLE (including the powerpoints) before coming to class so you can ask effective questions, get feedback, participate fully in practice sessions and peer reviews and otherwise efficiently prepare for your observation. Do not use class time to do lab observations or write-ups. Attendance and participation in class and lab is critical. If you have any issues regarding class or lab observation time, please contact me immediately.

All written assignments are to be completed on a computer. You will be uploading your assignments to MOODLE, so they must be in digital form. Saving files as Word documents is the most reliable form for uploading. Save your assignments and make sure you have a backup (flash drive, usb, something!) since the completion of later assignments will include observation data from earlier assignments. Do whatever you need to do to make sure that you don’t lose any work. You may need to use your data before you get reports back from me.
All written assignments should be professionally presented. *Proof read for spelling, grammar and appropriate word use.* If you have doubts, check Chapters 3 and 4 of the **APA Style Manual, 6th Edition** or the on-line resources. Purdue OWL is one of the best online resources for APA. It’s at [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)

Pay attention to the writing and assignment rubrics for this class. They will be used to evaluate/grade assignments and you can use them as a way to self-evaluate your work.

When your assignment is complete and you have reviewed and edited it, upload it to the specific assignment link on MOODLE. Assignments should be uploaded as one document that includes all elements of the assignment.

As the semester progresses, students are expected to improve their skills as observers and recorders. *Errors or omissions noted in feedback on early assignments should not reappear on later assignments. Grading will get harder as the semester progresses.*

The first draft of all assignments must be complete for the beginning of class on peer review days. These days are listed on the course calendar. You have been assigned to teams for peer review (See the “peer group teams” document on MOODLE). When your work is returned, read the comments and evaluation page carefully so you can continuously improve your work. Ask questions right away if anything is unclear. *All assignments must be completed to support the final case report.*

Once students are aware of changes needed on their observational reports, they should edit their computer copies. The edited data will be used for the case study. Students who have edited their assignments throughout the semester will find the case study an easier task than will those who have all the editing to do at the end. *You may resubmit one (1) assignment for an improved grade* as long as that assignment is received *before* the case report is due. It may not get graded until after the final.

*The points given for participation* will include points for:

- attendance and professional behavior in the classroom and in lab
- evidence of preparation and contribution including quality peer reviews
- participation in discussion and in-class activities in a professional manner
- evidence of contribution and collaboration on assignments done in pairs

**Assignment Guidelines**

Each observation assignment has specific guidelines, supporting materials and checklist. This information is contained in the assignment “books” on MOODLE. *Make sure to review all of the material in the assignment book prior to the discussion in class and your observation.*
All assignments must follow the guidelines provided. *Points will be deducted for failure to use provided formats and/or follow prescribed procedures.*

**Grading Criteria**
Each assignment will be graded based on the evaluation criteria for that specific assignment and the writing rubric for the class.

Course grades will be based on total points received. Specific points for each assignment appear below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report #1 Behavioral Description</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report #2 Anecdotes and COR</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report #3 Running/Specimen Records</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report #4 Checklists and DRDP-R</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report #5 Frequency and Duration Records</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report #6 Time Sample</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report #7 Event Samples</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Report</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standardized Test Evaluation Form &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation:</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Peer Review Participation</td>
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<td>• Partner Contribution</td>
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<td>• Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points Possible</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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*NOTE: You cannot receive an “A” unless all assignments are attempted and you have fully participated in class, peer and partner activities. There will be no opportunities for extra credit.*
*Please note: An “A” demonstrates that a student has:

- exceeded the requirements of a course or assignment;
- demonstrated initiative, independence and resourcefulness or otherwise unusual effort;
- contributed to the learning environment of the classroom;
- been consistently responsible and prepared, and
- shown growth and development from entry level skills, behaviors and understanding.

Students will not receive “A’s” for simply meeting basic requirements. As described above, a student receiving an A would clearly demonstrate strong performance in all graded areas.

Grades will be calculated on straight points; half a point or more will round up, less than half a point will round down.

100 – 93 = A  
90 – 92 = A- 
87 – 89 = B+  
83 – 86 = B  
80 – 82 = B-  
77 – 79 = C+  
73 – 76 = C  
70 – 72 = C-  Child Development majors must receive a C- or better to meet major requirements.  
67 – 69 = D+ 
63 – 66 = D  
60 – 62 = D-  
Below 60 = F

If you have questions about grades or grading practices, please come talk with me.

**Attendance and Class Behavior**

Because participation in class is essential to completion of class activities and a responsibility to our learning group, absences are very detrimental to our process. Come and come prepared to participate. Professional, responsible and reflective participation in class is a part of your grade.

In every case, it is your responsibility to stay in touch, to contact me regarding your absence, to make up any work missed, to provide materials to your peer team members on collaborative projects and to be prepared when in class. Anyone can experience a crisis or emergencies from time to time; it is not my intent to penalize people who get caught in such circumstances. As always, communication is critical.

Students are responsible for knowing policy regarding attendance and disruptive behavior:

at [http://www.humboldt.edu/studentrights/attendance_behavior.php](http://www.humboldt.edu/studentrights/attendance_behavior.php)  and
Disruptive behavior is any behavior that

- interferes with another individual’s opportunity to learn or participate including making noise, interrupting others or dominating class discussion;
- detracts from the work of the class including making off-topic remarks, repeatedly asking the same questions or continuing to engage the instructor in a discussion after instructed to meet after class or during office hours, or
- intimidates or disrespects another member of the class including the instructor, or otherwise diminishes the physical or psychological safety of the classroom or learning environment.

Co- or extracurricular activities: If you have commitments to co- or extracurricular activities which may require you to be away from class, contact me in advance. I will ask you to provide a proposal for how you will meet your responsibilities to the class and to any group work that may be affected. I have found that it is usually quite possible to work out something that is mutually agreeable to all concerned including group members. If you fail to inform me of the circumstances prior to your absence, it will count as an absence.

Policy on due dates and make up work

Work is due by 5PM on the days indicated on the working calendar. Changes in due dates may occur and will be announced in class. It is the responsibility of students to keep track of this information. Late or make up work will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances with prior consent of the instructor. If late or make up work is accepted, it may not be graded until the end of the semester due to time constraints.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Don’t! Plagiarism and academic dishonesty are unprofessional behaviors under all circumstances and will endanger your grade, your standing in the department and your ability to receive a positive reference from faculty, to say nothing of being a total waste of your time, money and opportunity to learn.

Students are responsible for knowing policy regarding academic honesty: http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/judicial/academic_honesty.php or http://www.humboldt.edu/~humboldt/catalogpdfs/catalog2007-08.pdf
Check the links above. They describe University policy with regard to disciplinary action. This is important information for you.

If you have any questions about a specific situation, consult the APA manual or a faculty member. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Plagiarism of the members of our community, students, staff and faculty, is as heinous a crime as plagiarism of printed, electronic or presented material originating outside our community. Cheating, misrepresentation and other forms of academic dishonesty are not tolerable in a professional community. Responsible ethical behavior is essential as a foundation for our profession.

**NOTE:** Collaboration is clearly expected. We will be working together as a learning community. In that context, we will be sharing ideas and information, learning from and with one another. It is still important that individual contributions be respected and that each person receives credit for the work contributed. In documenting and presenting your work it will therefore be important to identify the contributions of your collaborators.

**Special support and special circumstances**
If particular aspects of the course structure, readings or assignments present particularly difficult challenges for you and you would appreciate further assistance, please contact me immediately or contact Student Services. I will be happy to work with you and with other support staff on our campus.

Persons who wish to request disability-related accommodations should contact the Student Disability Resource Center in House 71, 826-4678 (voice) or 826-5392 (TDD). Some accommodations may take up to several weeks to arrange.  
http://www.humboldt.edu/disability

It is my intent that all students have every possible access to maximizing their learning. We can’t help if you don’t contact us.

**Cell phones and other disturbances**
Respect for the shared processes of the classroom is a basic professional courtesy. If you routinely carry a cell phone, please turn it off and put it in your backpack or other safe place when you enter class and the observation booth. If you must bring a cell phone to class for some reason, set it to vibrate or silent so it does not ring and attach it to your person so it is not sitting out on the desk. If you must answer your cell phone, please QUIETLY get up and leave the room to do so. When your business is completed, return to your seat QUIETLY. Noise that interrupts discussion and detracts from communication is not welcome.
7/2/2014

Do not use your laptop during class for anything other than class work. This is distracting to other students and interferes with your ability to be fully present in class. Do not check email, surf the web, listen to music or anything else! Such behavior is fundamentally disrespectful.

Professional, respectful and on-task behavior at all times is necessary to our task.

University dates and policies for adding or dropping classes, etc.
Information is provided on-line and through the AIR center in the Student Business Services building. Students are responsible for knowing the University policy, procedures, and schedule for dropping or adding classes. [http://www.humboldt.edu/~reg/regulations/schedadjust.html](http://www.humboldt.edu/~reg/regulations/schedadjust.html)

Emergency Evacuation
Please review the evacuation plan for the classroom (posted on the orange signs), and review [http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/emergencyops/campus_emergency_preparedness.php](http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/emergencyops/campus_emergency_preparedness.php) for information on campus Emergency Procedures. During an emergency, information can be found campus conditions at: 826-INFO or [www.humboldt.edu/emergency](http://www.humboldt.edu/emergency)

Have I forgotten anything???
Probably, so ask me! If you don’t have a chance to ask in class, email me or ask a question in the discussion forum. That way I can post the answer to MOODLE and then everyone gets the benefit of your having ask the question, unless of course you would prefer that I not do so. Just let me know. If you have an idea about how to do something more effectively, please share it. Observing children is challenging and terribly important business. We can all learn from one another’s insights!