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C&I 421.01: Issues in Early Intervention

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Curriculum & Instruction 421: Issues in Early Intervention  
Autumn Semester 2007  
The University of Montana - Missoula  

Instructor: Stacia Jepson  

Course Syllabus

C&I 421 – 01: Issues in Early Intervention, 3 crs.

Early Childhood Setting Satellite Lab required - Minimum 3 hrs/wk. Lab TBA.

Associated Term: Autumn Semester 2007  
UM-Msla Campus  
Seminar + Lab Schedule Type  

Offered autumn odd-numbered years.

The purpose of the course if for students to gain an understanding of issues involved when serving children with disabilities birth through 8 years of age with an emphasis on children ages 3-5; family and child advocacy; disability awareness; family and school partnerships; least restrictive placements in early childhood settings; ecological considerations; transitions concerning families, special education service providers and receiving schools; case management in rural communities; transdisciplinary teaming process; and preschool individualized education programs. Includes 45 field based practicum hours in an early childhood setting. Instructor consent is required to attend class via teleconference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Schedule Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>4:10 - 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>McG 024</td>
<td>8/28 – 12/11</td>
<td>Seminar + Lab</td>
<td>Stacia L. Jepson</td>
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</tbody>
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Instructor and contact information:

Stacia Jepson, M.Ed. – DERS/Co-Teach Associate Director/C&I 421 Instructor;  
Stacia.Jepson@mso.umt.edu; 243-4280;

Office Location: McGill 025; office hours weekly by appointment
Purpose of the Course

The overall goal of this course is to equip participants with both educational and practical experience in early childhood special education. This goal will be addressed through the completion of activities that include assigned readings, group discussion, and an array of performance objectives. In addition to core experiences, it is expected that each participant will have opportunities to research, review, discuss, and write about a wide range of issues in the field of early intervention. The course requirement includes 45 field-based practicum hours in an early childhood setting. Instructor consent is required to attend class via teleconference/long distance.

Seminar will meet Tuesdays from 4:10 to 6:00 PM in McGill 024. We meet in seminar group to discuss issues, theory, readings and research-related assignments in detail. The third credit will be earned through the completion of a minimum of three contact hours per week with children birth through 8 years of age (total of 45 hours over the semester).

There are no required textbooks or Fac Pacs for this course. Reading assignments will be provided by the instructor in handout format or will be available on reserve in the Division of Educational Research and Service (DERS) Library, McGill 029.

Students requiring accommodations due to special needs must inform the instructor(s) on the first day of class. The University of Montana does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, age, sex, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability and will not tolerate such discrimination on campus or within its programs.

Examples of essential issues that pertain to the field of early childhood special education are: positive behavior supports (PBS), fostering social/emotional competence; school safety; data collection and accountability with regard to IEPs; providing Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE); comprehensive inclusive services; fostering family involvement; collaborative teaching; trans-disciplinary teaming; transition planning; and instructional techniques to address preschool-age children with disabilities.

• Tuesday, August 28, 2007 – Tuesday, December 11, 2007

Attend seminar via teleconference using Raindance system instructions provided via e-mail by instructor. This process will be implemented each Tuesday from 4:10 - 6:00 pm at the Division of Educational Research & Service (DERS). If you experience technical difficulties, please call 243-5344 to request help.

University students are encouraged to discuss their early childhood settings and the families they serve. The class will discuss programmatic and individual children’s strengths and challenges during seminar. Child, family, colleague, and program confidentiality must be strictly maintained. Please do not talk about children in front of children, do not use last names, and do not use personal identifying information when discussing schools settings and particular students/families.

• Tues., August 28, 2007 (UM student orientation via teleconference, 4:10 – 6:00 PM)
  - UM students must attend orientation from 4:10 to 6:00 PM in McGill 024
  - Welcome and Introductions (All);
  - Read and discuss the syllabus and UM student course requirements (Stacia);
  - Off-site C&I 421 students provide e-mail, phone, & mailing addresses (Stacia);
  - Description of Satellite EC settings (GPP students).

C&I 421 students will meet 7 expectations and performance objectives over the course of Autumn semester 2007. UM students will:
1. UM students will send a digital photograph and written bio to the instructor via e-mail at Stacia.Jepson@mso.umt.edu. Students must complete this assignment by September 14, 2007. UM students will communicate with instructor in person and via e-mail. To do this, UM students must each have an active UM assigned e-mail account and address that is checked daily to retrieve any messages from the instructor.

2. UM students will participate in and complete 45 hours of practicum work in an early childhood setting (instructor approval is required to determine the setting) over the course of the semester.

3. UM students will research, review, discuss, and write about a wide range of issues in the field of early intervention.

4. UM students will interview a colleague or staff member in an early childhood setting and ask questions regarding challenging administrative, programmatic and site specific issues with regard to providing early intervention services to children and families. UM students will review and describe a variety of early childhood issues and topics and exchange information about their site’s demographics during seminar discussion.

5. UM students are responsible for submitting via e-mail two reflections of practicum experiences addressing the following four areas: 1) program staffing and student demographics; 2) classroom and playground safety; 3) social interaction and social and emotional competence; and 4) observations, comments, suggestions, and questions. In the early childhood setting where they work, UM students will conduct individual and small group instruction activities as scheduled, with preschool children, using procedures described in orientation, weekly seminar, and feedback and instruction provided by instructor.

6. UM students will maintain confidentiality of all class discussions; no child or family’s identity shall be revealed or discussed outside of class; no information will be shared with parents about children in the program other than their own; no photographs shall be taken or shown without prior instructor permission and subsequent parental approval.

7. UM students will spend 6 hours observing one early childhood setting other than the one they work in over the course of the semester. The setting must be approved in advance by the instructor. Subsequent to the observation, UM students will write a 2 page double-spaced summary of their observations. The summary should focus on: observable classroom/programmatic challenges and/or issues and evidence-based strategies to address identified issues.

**Evaluation**

University student performance is assessed in order to ensure that we are satisfying departmental requirements, meeting course objectives, and grading equitably.

• **Conduct Code**

Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. Students are expected to know, understand and comply with the academic honesty policies as described in the University of Montana Student Conduct Code. A copy of this code is available at: http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321.

• **Weekly Seminars Tuesdays 4:10-6:00 PM, McGill 024**

Students are responsible for attending and participating in all seminars and for taking notes as necessary. The seminars provide a valuable opportunity to reflect the needs of children, issues and topics in early intervention, and the learning objectives of university students. Seminars are one of the occasions when adults can speak about a child’s or family’s needs without being overheard by children. Attendance is required and attendance records are maintained by the instructor for all seminars. Seminar attendance and participation is a large portion of UM students’ grades. If you are unable to attend seminar due to illness or an emergency, please contact Stacia at 243-4280.
There will be guest speakers in this course. These volunteer speakers may be people from the University or the community with expertise in a particular area. Whenever there are guest speakers, students are expected to be attentive, courteous, and polite. Failure to behave accordingly will affect the student’s class participation grade.

**Class Participation and Performance**

All students must demonstrate the ability to perform successfully in every aspect of the class including attitude, energy, and effort given to all assignments and discussions, as well as the ability and willingness to follow the instructions of the instructor. Furthermore, students are graded based on their ability to demonstrate professionalism, and respect to their peers, their instructor, and the children and families whom they serve.

**People-first language:**

The field of special education has adopted the use of “people-first language” and has identified it as a best practice when referring to people with identified disabilities. This means that the emphasis is the person before the disability. For example, we say, “child with autism” as opposed to, “autistic child”. It is expected that students participating in C&I 421 adopt people-first language when participating in class discussion and in written assignments.

**Readings**

No textbook is required. The reading assignments will be handouts provided by the instructor and/or materials located in the DERS Special Education Library in McGill 029. UM students are responsible for completing assigned readings. The instructor will snail-mail or e-mail the reading assignment at least 3 days before class each week. There may be quizzes over the assigned readings and previous week's discussion at the beginning of class on Tuesdays, so please keep up on readings and take notes during seminar if necessary.

**Electronically Submitted Reflections (Pre and Post; September 11 & November 20)**

Students are responsible for submitting via e-mail two reflections of practicum experiences addressing the following four areas: 1) program staffing and student demographics; 2) classroom and playground safety; 3) social interaction and social/emotional competence; and 4) observations, comments, suggestions, and questions. Students must address these four topics and submit the reflections via e-mail to Stacia.jepson@mso.umt.edu. The electronically submitted reflections should be related to contact time with children in the early childhood practicum setting, seminar content, handouts provided by the instructor, or assigned reading materials located in McGill 029 (DERS library). The first reflection must be submitted by Tuesday, September 11. The second reflection must be submitted by Tuesday, November 20.

**Additional Learning Opportunity/Observation in an alternate early childhood setting and 2-pg summary**

UM Students are required to observe another early childhood setting and electronically write and submit a 2-pg summary (12 pt font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins) of the observation. UM students will spend 6 hours observing one early childhood setting other than the one they work in over the course of the semester. These 6 hours of observation may count toward the total 45 practicum hours required for the semester. The setting must be approved in advance by the instructor. UM students are responsible for being well-mannered guests and for abiding by the classroom rules where and when they visit. They are to be respectful of all classroom participants and observe only. Subsequent to the observation, UM students will write a 2 page double-spaced summary of their observations. The summary should focus on: class demographics, program philosophy, physical environment, schedule of the day (routine), classroom rules, activity descriptions, etc. This assignment must be completed and submitted to Instructor by Tuesday, December 4th.

**Grades**
- Students who breach Confidentiality or who use Corporal Punishment will be immediately dismissed and receive a failing grade.
- Incompletes are issued at the discretion of the instructor and only in situations where a UM student is performing satisfactorily in all aspects of the practicum.
- Late assignments are accepted only when arrangements have been made in advance and at the discretion of the instructor.

**Passing grades** (grades ranging from C- to B+) are based on the participation and completion of the following minimum requirements and essential functions of the position/practicum that are non-negotiable. University students must:

- **Maintain confidentiality of all class discussions** and protect child/student/family identity. Students who breach confidentiality will receive a failing grade.
- **Attend and participate in weekly seminars** (listen politely when someone else is speaking, participate in group discussion, ask questions, and save unrelated conversations until after class). Students are expected to attend each class session. Two or more absences constitutes a reduction in grade.
- **Demonstrate the ability to be prompt and efficient and attend and participate during seminar** and to follow instructions and call the instructor each Tuesday at 4:10 to teleconference/participate in class.
- **Complete two electronic reflections over the course of the semester and send them to Stacia.jepson@mso.umt.edu. Respond to e-mail sent by the instructor(s) within 5 days after the e-mail was sent by the instructor. The first electronic (pre) reflection is due by September 11. The second electronic (post) reflection is due by November 20.**
- **Demonstrate professionalism and show respect to all** peers, children, families, team members, employees, and the course instructor.
- When applicable, **recognize unsafe classroom situations and child interactions and intervene appropriately** as discussed in seminar.
- **Communicate professionally,** politely, and sensitively with families, co-workers, supervisors, and instructor (includes both verbal and written communication).

**Exceptional performance** (grade of A- or A) at Co-Teach includes, but is not limited to, the passing grade criteria above as well as university students who:

- **Demonstrate the ability to be flexible** when the opportunity or need arises in class, or when asked to do something unexpected.
- **Demonstrate a willingness to collaborate** with other team members.
- **Contribute to the discussion at seminar in a thoughtful and meaningful way** (i.e., refer to the readings, previous discussions, personal teaching experiences, reflections based on classroom observations, prior knowledge, etc.)
- **Participate in one “Additional Learning Opportunity”** by observing another early childhood setting _other than the one you work in_ for a minimum of 6 hours and writing a 2 page summary.
- **Demonstrate ability to perform successfully in every aspect of the course including attitude, energy, and effort** given to all assignments and classroom tasks as well as the ability to follow the instructor’s instructions.
Thank you for your participation in C&I 421. If you have any questions throughout the semester, please feel free to contact me by phone at 243-4280 to schedule an appointment or reach me via e-mail at the following address: Stacia.jepson@mso.umt.edu.

For next week 9/11:
1. Review syllabus.
2. E-mail Stacia to confirm correct address
3. Write bio and send to Stacia via e-mail
4. Take digital photo and send to Stacia
5. Make list of three topics of interest with regard to Early Childhood Special Education; make list of three topics of interest with regard to K-12 Special Education; e-mail both lists to Stacia