Basic Multicultural Activities for all Children

Course Description:
Planning appropriate activities for young children is a process that takes time, thought and energy. This course will focus on strategies for providing children with a variety of learning experiences; both through self directed play and planned group activities. This course will focus on multicultural education issues, as a basis for understanding the cultural values of children and families in your program.

Course Structure – Organizational Overview
This course will total 10 contact hours and be offered in 4 – 2.5 hours sessions.

Course Objectives:
1) Students will examine basic principles of child development and developmentally appropriate practice and apply them to planning appropriate learning activities for young children.
2) Students will be know and be able to apply that knowledge to planning and implementing a variety of learning experiences, designed to enhance children’s social-emotional, physical, cognitive, creative and language/communication skills.
3) Students will examine guidelines for selecting culturally materials in their program Environments and develop a plans for improving the environment in their program.
4) Students will examine and evaluate their current practices, explore information on multicultural approaches in early education and demonstrate their ability to integrate that knowledge into planning appropriate learning experiences for children.

Course Materials/Text:
Instructor Materials: Anti-Bias Curriculum: Louise Derman Sparks and Roots and Wings: Stacey York available from Redleaf Press
Student Materials: Big as Life, Volume 1, Stacey York, available from Redleaf Press and in RCC’s Deb S. Fish Library.
Video Selections for the Course:
Leading Edge Video Series: Module 4: Guidelines for Early Childhood Teaching Practices and Start Seeing Diversity both available at RCC’s Deb S. Fish Library. Starting Small, Video and Book set NAEYC and Southern Poverty Law Center

Course Outline:
Class 1: Setting the Stage for Planning
Class 2: Goals for Children’s Learning
Class 3: Planning Appropriate Curriculum
Class 4: Planning Appropriate Curriculum
Class 1:  **Setting the Stage for Planning**

*Objective:* Students will examine the basic principles of developmentally appropriate early childhood practices as a basis for planning activities for young children.

1) Identify the following key concepts as basic goals of Early Childhood Education:
   a. Children need to explore, experiment and make discoveries for themselves in order to make sense of the world.
   b. A major goal of early childhood programs is to expose children to a variety of self-directed play as well as planned large and small group activities.
   c. Adults need to understand basic principles of child development and observe children in order to determine which activities best meet their needs of all children in their programs.

2) Video: Guidelines for Early Childhood Teaching Practices: (Use 1st segment)
   Creating a Community of Learners

3) Discuss the “Role of the Adult With Regard to Planning Activities”
   a. As an **Observer** adults need to note: children’s interests, abilities and emerging skills as a key to understanding their developmental levels.
   b. As a **Planner** adults need to be able to extend and expand on children’s interest with a wide range in self-directed and planned learning experiences.
   c. As an **Evaluator** adults need to use their observations to continually modify, enhance and change activities and experiences.

Class 2:  **Goals for Children’s Learning**

*Objective:* Students will examine the basic principles of planning activities within in a multicultural curriculum framework. They will demonstrate the ability to set goals and plan activities that respect the culture of the families in their programs.

1) Using *Big as Life* as a framework, explore the concept that “*Curriculum is everything we do with children*” as a component of any programs philosophy, goals and objectives. Curriculum is not only be multicultural in focus, but to foster the development of the whole child. It’s goals, objectives and learning experiences should address all areas of development: physical, cognitive, creative, language, social-emotional and self-identity.

2) Video: Start Seeing Diversity: Part 1 – Four Goals of Anti Bias Education

3) Identify the elements of a multicultural curriculum; key elements as follows:
   a. Curriculum is contextually relevant and addresses the cultural, social, and geographic context of the children and families.
   b. Curriculum supports children in making meaning in their lives and the world around them.
   c. Adults and children are co-learners and investigate the curriculum together.
   d. Curriculum is child centered and inquiry based.
   e. Curriculum is integrated and addresses all areas of a child’s development.
Class 3: Planning Appropriate Curriculum

Objective: Students will examine multicultural activities and demonstrate their ability to implement the activities in their program.

1) Video: Start Seeing Diversity: Part 2 identifies six specific examples of bias in a classroom.
2) Explore and ways to implement Anti-Bias activities.
3) Using Overheads and Handouts from Big As Life: review the Curriculum Objectives – Goals 1-4. Use Goals 1 – 4 Activities as presented in Roots and Wings as handouts for class.
4) Hands-On Experiences: Provide examples and have class identify and participate in activities. Reference ideas in the course texts, Big as Life and Roots and Wings.

Class 4: Planning Appropriate Curriculum

Objective: Students will examine multicultural activities and demonstrate their ability to implement the activities their program.

1) Video: Use Starting Small – video segments to illustrate examples of ways to implement multicultural curriculum in a program.
2) Idea Sharing: Using the Overheads and Handouts from Big As Life: Review the Curriculum Objectives – Goals 5 - 9. Use Goals 5 – 9 Activities as presented in Roots and Wings as handouts for class.
3) Hands-On Experiences: Provide examples and have class participate. Reference ideas in the texts, Big as Life and Roots and Wings.
4) Select a topic and demonstrate the unit planning process. Have students work in groups to plan a multicultural curriculum unit. Use Roots and Wings as a guide.

College Credit Option:

In addition to class participation, individuals taking this class for college credit will need to complete readings and assignments based on the texts, Big As Life and Roots and Wings.

Assignment #1 – Read Part 1 of Big As Life as a theoretical base for multicultural education. Write a 2-3 page paper outlining the key elements of a multicultural curriculum and indicate how you plan to incorporate those elements into your current curriculum planning. Key questions to be answered in this paper are:

a. How can I arrange my space and schedule to provide appropriate multicultural opportunities for children to learn?
b. How do I know what activities and experiences are appropriate for the children in my program?
c. What are examples of experiences that help children develop their physical, cognitive, create and communication/language skills.

Assignment #2 – Plan and present 1 or more multicultural activities in your program. Submit the plan and self-critique to the instructor.