ECE 366 LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (3 HRS)

Course syllabus: Online Fall 2025

PROFESSOR INFORMATION

Professor: Josh Thompson, Ph.D. (he, him) (I prefer to be called Dr. Thompson)
Office Location: Ed South 200
Office Hours: by appointment on Zoom
Office Phone: 903-886-5537
University Email Address: Josh.Thompson@etamu.edu
Professor's Webpage: https://www.tamuc.edu/people/josh-thompson/
Course Webpage http://faculty.tamuc.edu/jthompson/366

Preferred Form of Communication: For general questions, I prefer you to post questions in D2L (https://myleoonline.tamuc.edu/) Virtual Office. That way others may see our communication and they may benefit. Please email me anytime to ask a question about your particular work. Always put 366 in the subject line so we know which class you are writing about. You may call or text my cell phone anytime between 9am-9pm, Mon-Fri, or up until 3pm on Saturdays.
Communication Response Time: Expect to hear back from me within the next working day or two. Please ask again anytime I don't answer promptly or completely.

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook Required:

Kostelnik, M., Soderman, A. K., Whiren, A. P., & Rupiper, M. (2019). *Developmentally appropriate curriculum: Best practices in early childhood education (7th ed.)*. Pearson. ISBN 9780134747675
(Previous editions are welcome, digital subscriptions are fine. I use Vital Source https://bookshelf.vitalsource.com/books/9780134747637. No supplemental code required.).

Required eTexts (available in D2L (MYLEOONLINE)):

CCIE. (2016). *Exchange Everyday*. Redmond, WA: Childcare Information Exchange. Delivered five days a week containing news, success stories, solutions, trend reports, and much more. Enroll in *ExchangeEveryDay*, a daily electronic newsletter all about early childhood education. This will help you keep up-to-date with all things topical and pertinent in early childhood education. *ExchangeEveryDay* is the official electronic newsletter for ChildCareExchange.com. It will be delivered to you five days a week bringing news stories, success stories, solutions, trend reports, and much more. To subscribe to *ExchangeEveryDay* go to www.childcareexchange.com/eed.

NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice: A Position Statement*. National
Association for the Education of Young Children.
https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/dap/contents

Texas Education Agency. (2009). *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)*.
www.englishspanishteks.net/teachers
http://lead4ward.com/
www.masteryconnect.com/

Texas Education Agency. (2009). *English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)*.
www.englishspanishteks.net/teachers

Required Readings, as provided by the professor, available in D2L (MYLEOONLINE). For example:

Duncan, S. (2011). Breaking the Code: Changing Our Thinking about Children's
Environments. *ChildCareExchange*. www.childcareexchange.com/article/breaking-
the-code-changing-our-thinking-about-childrens-environments/5020013/

Recommended Resources:

Curtis, D. & Carter, M. (2014). *Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early
Childhood Environments (2nd ed.)*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

DeVinney, J., Duncan, S., Harris, S., Rody, M.A., & Rosenberry, L. (2010). *Inspiring
Spaces for Young Children*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House.

DeVinney, J., Duncan, S., & Rosenberry, L. (2010). *Rating Observation Scale for
Inspiring Environments: A Common Observation Guide for Inspiring Spaces for
Young Children*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House.

Duncan, S., Martin, J., & Haughey, S. (2019). *Through a Child's Eyes: How Classroom
Design Inspires Learning and Wonder*. Gryphon House.

Greenman, J. (2017). *Caring spaces, learning places: Children's environments that
work*. Lincoln, NE: Exchange Press.

Course Description

This course focuses on the physical and affective learning environments. Students will
design a safe, supportive, and challenging learning environment that builds on
children's assets and fosters pro-social behaviors

This course assists students in planning, designing, and evaluating environments for
young children. Early childhood organization, management, procedures, and physical
facilities are explored along with a survey of materials and equipment.

Student Learning Outcomes

The learner who successfully completes this course will be able
   A. To clarify developmentally appropriate principles and practices of early childhood education
   B. To identify behavioral characteristics of young children to meet individual, developmental, and diverse needs
   C. To equip and supply an early childhood classroom
   D. To plan and organize a child-centered environment
   E. To build communication skills with parents & paraprofessionals
   F. To associate ECE PPR TExES competencies with course content

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Professional Behaviors: This is a wholly online course. Attendance online in D2L (MYLEOONLINE) is expected; regular, consistent participation is important. We do important things every week of class – don't miss it. Excessive absences (less than 3 hours a week logged in to course materials, or 10 days without logging into D2L (MYLEOONLINE)) may prompt an administrative withdrawal.

- Read textbook assignments, supplemental reading assignments, lecture notes, and PowerPoint presentations.
- Check Leo email frequently, at least twice a week.
- Discussions: Participate in frequent online class discussions, whole class or small groups. Most are asynchronous – not live. Occasional synchronous (real-time, live) YouSeeU or ZOOM sessions require your participation when scheduled. Occasional opportunity, optional, to go onsite to schools and centers for guided observation.
- Quizzes: Read all assigned readings. Participate in frequent chapter quizzes as posted in D2L (MYLEOONLINE) modules.

Self-evaluate your professional behaviors TWICE, at the beginning and end of course.

Technical Skills Needed:

   Check Leo Mail frequently, at least twice a week.
   Use Adobe Reader to access required digital files.
   Create papers and presentations in MS Office, or Open Office, or Pages.
   Communicate regularly and robustly with colleagues and peers through Discussion Boards in D2L (MYLEOONLINE).

Instructional Methods

Class meets online in D2L (https://myleoonline.tamuc.edu/). Assigned readings must be completed before class. Lectures include PowerPoint, videos of children and adults talking, creating hands-on materials, and handouts. Active participation in class discussion is expected from everyone. Class leadership is welcomed and encouraged; bring a song, a book or story, a game to play, or insights from the readings or field work with your case study participant. Upload work in D2L (MYLEOONLINE), such as pictures of inspiring spaces, materials you are making for Gallery Walk and for your

future classroom, and questions about designing Learning Environments for young children. Regular quizzes over the chapters in the textbook help deepen your knowledge of the course content. Timely completion of online discussions is required.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Successful students come to class prepared, on-time, and ready to engage and participate in active learning. Online work frequently requires extensive reading beyond the textbook. Plan to work in D2L (MYLEOONLINE) about one to two hours per week, with regular textbook reading assignments about one-hour every week. Time making materials will vary, but expect to spend around 10 hours total over the course of this semester.

GRADING

A holistic grading approach is sought. Rather than a scorecard with points, students must account for their mastery of the course objectives, and thus their grade in the course. This is done through the use of the Professional Behavior Survey. You will **self-evaluate your professional behaviors** TWICE, once at the beginning, and again at the end of the course.

Assessments (each worth 10 points, 10% final grade)

1. Evaluate a specific learning environment, utilizing one of the design criteria discussed in D2L (MYLEOONLINE) Unit 2.
    Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: B, C, D, E

2. Performance-based Assessment: **Create a Physical and Affective Learning Environment Design**
    a. Context for Learning.
    b. Upload a presentation (powerpoint, canvas) to describe the physical and affective learning environment you designed
    Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: C, D, E

MATERIALS PRESENTATIONS FOR GALLERY WALK
3. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT. Design a **Family Communication** feature. It could be an APP-based program, a letter of introduction outlining your family communication procedures, or it could be a **Family Literacy Backpack** for sending early childhood activities home to encourage parent/child interaction. Share this with class in a Gallery Walk. Further directions and a rubric posted in D2L (MYLEOONLINE).
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: B, D, E

4. Design an interactive **bulletin board** on Smart Board or poster board for use in an early childhood classroom. Provide a statement of goals and children's participation. Share this with class in a Gallery Walk. Further directions and a rubric posted in D2L (MYLEOONLINE).
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: B, C, D, E, F

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5. Invent a **folder game** that will teach some aspect of the early childhood curriculum and coordinate with the TEKS standards. Design this manipulative material for use as a center activity with a small group of children. Share this with class in a Gallery Walk. Further directions and a rubric posted in D2L (MYLEOONLINE).
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: B, C, D, F

6. Compile a **sub-folder** with essential information for you to share with a substitute teacher. Align your classroom routines and procedures with your core beliefs and principles of DAP. Share this with class in a Gallery Walk. Further directions and a rubric posted in D2L (MYLEOONLINE).
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: B, C, D, E, F

7. Share a **playlist of at least 10 songs** appropriate for different times of the school day and transitions. Share this with class in a Gallery Walk. Further directions and a rubric posted in D2L (MYLEOONLINE).
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: B, C, D, E, F

Write a **reflective essay** discussing the merits and critical analysis of at least 5 Materials Presentations in our Gallery Walk.
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: C, D, E, F

8. Participate together with the class to write and illustrate a **DAP book** demonstrating key developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education as discussed in Chapters 1 & 2 of the Kostelnik textbook, in Copple, and in our D2L (MYLEOONLINE) unit on DAP. Share your portion with our class and the final product will be combined in Gallery Walk and in Virtual Gallery Walk online in D2L (MYLEOONLINE).
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: A, B, E

9. Complete unit quizzes and exams over course content.
Aligns with Student Learning Outcomes: A-F

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements
LMS Requirements:
https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements
LMS Browser Support:
https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

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ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course https://myleoonline.tamuc.edu/. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.
Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Preferred Form of Communication: For general questions, I prefer you to post your question in Virtual Office. That way others may see our communication and they may benefit. Please email me anytime to ask a question about your particular work. You may call or text my cell phone anytime between 9am-9pm, Mon-Fri, or up until 3pm on Saturdays.

Communication Response Time: Expect to hear back from me within the next working day or two. Please ask again anytime I don't answer promptly or completely.

Communicate with me as needed. Use Josh.Thompson@tamuc.edu or C&I department office phone 903-886-5537 or cell phone 214-663-6102 (preferred).

Feedback on student work: Quizzes and online exams are auto-graded. Short answer questions require manual grading, as do all objects uploaded in assignments or online Gallery Walks. Generally, I catch up reviewing your work around the end of the month – please permit me two to three weeks to respond to your work with my feedback. If you don't hear from me within a month, please ask me to review your work again.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Attendance
Attendance online is expected; regular, consistent participation is important. We do important things every week of class – don't miss it. Excessive absences (less than 3

hours a week logged in to D2L (MYLEOONLINE), or 10 days without logging into D2L (MYLEOONLINE), or missing more than 20% of face to face classes) may prompt an administrative withdrawal.

Participation
This course builds cumulative knowledge and insight; you cannot pass the class by just completing assignments all at one time. You must follow along and contribute as chapters, units, discussions, and projects unfold throughout the semester.

Grading
A holistic grading approach is sought. Rather than a scorecard with points, students must account for their mastery of the course objectives, and thus their grade in the course. This is done through the use of the Professional Behavior Survey. You will **self-evaluate your professional behaviors** TWICE, once at the beginning, and again at the end of the course.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.
http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx
Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:
https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.
http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx
http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:
Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

Josh Thompson, Professor

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf

AI use in course [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty
13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
East Texas A&M University
Waters Library- Room 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran

status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and EA&MU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.
For a list of locations, please refer to the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer.
Web url:
http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf
Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all EA&MU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit **www.tamuc.edu/counseling-center**

Mental Health and Well-Being
The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.

Josh Thompson, Professor

ECE 366 Learning Environments

Kostelnik, M., Soderman, A. K., Whiren, A. P., & Rupiper, M. (2019). *Developmentally appropriate curriculum: Best practices in early childhood education (7th ed.).*

Course Outline Fall 2025 (updated 07/21/2025)

DATE	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENT
Unit 1 August/ September	Intentional Environments	D2L: Unit 1 Duncan article Kostelnik, chaps. 1 & 2	Post Intro Professional Behavior Survey Unit 1: Discussion & Quiz Due September 15
Unit 2 September	Context for Learning	D2L: Unit 2 T-TESS ECERS CLASS Kostelnik, chaps 3-8	1Evaluate environments 2 PBA Design environment Unit 2: Discussion & Quiz Due September 30
Unit 3 October	P.L.A.C.E.S. Domains of Curriculum	D2L: Unit 3 Kostelnik, chaps 9-14	1st Gallery Walk 3. Family engagement 4. Bulletin board 5. Folder game Unit 3: Discussion & Quiz Mid-Term Exam Due October 31
Unit 4 November	Integrating Curriculum Designing Learning Observing Learning	D2L: Unit 4 Kostelnik, chaps 15-16	2nd Gallery Walk 6. Sub folder 7. Playlist Unit 4: Discussion 8. DAP book Due November 30
Gallery Walk	Celebration of Learning	D2L: Gallery Walk	3rd Gallery Walk Post all assignments in U5 Participate in all Unit 5: Discussions 9. Reflective essay Professional Behavior Survey Due Wed 12/10 @ 8pm
All work due Wednesday, December 10, 2025 @ 8pm			

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.
Revised 07/21/2025