



EAST TEXAS A&M

UNIVERSITY

EDCB 303 – Organizing Positive Learning Environments

COURSE SYLLABUS

Term:		Year:	

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor Name:	Jennifer Sewell
Office Phone:	
East Texas A&M Email Address:	
Instructor Notes:	

Office Location: Online/Remote

Office Hours: Email, Telephone, or Virtual by Appointment

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 24 Hours or Less (Grading of assignments is typically not completed in 24 hours or less)

[CBE Handbook Link](#)

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Materials

This course has been designed using Open Educational Resources (OER) and/or materials that are available through the [Waters Library](#). All materials are embedded within the course or are accessible via the internet or accessible through the Waters Library resource portal. After

taking the pretest, students are encouraged to bookmark, download, or save materials provided via the internet for use with assignments and projects in this class.

B.S. Early Childhood Education

This competency-based program prepares candidates to become highly skilled, developmentally responsive teachers for children from early childhood through third grade. Grounded in the TEA's teacher Standards and curriculum standards, the program promotes whole child development emphasizing learning across the domains and content areas. Candidates progress by demonstrating mastery of competencies through authentic, performance-based assessments and field-based experiences in diverse classrooms.

Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the EC–3 CBE program will be able to:

1. Apply Developmental Knowledge – Design and implement developmentally appropriate, standards-aligned instruction that supports learning and development across domains and content areas (birth–age 8).
2. Implement Data-Driven Instruction – Apply assessment literacy to analyze student learning data, monitor progress, and adjust instruction to meet the diverse academic, linguistic, and developmental needs of students.
3. Create Positive Learning Environments – Establish safe, supportive, and engaging learning environments that foster belonging, family partnerships, and learning opportunities for diverse learners, including emergent bilinguals and children with exceptional needs.

B.S. Elementary Education

This competency-based program prepares candidates to become highly skilled, developmentally responsive teachers for students in grades EC–6. Grounded in TEA's teacher standards and curriculum standards, the program ensures candidates demonstrate proficiency in standards-aligned instruction, assessment literacy, and classroom management. Candidates progress through performance-based demonstrations of teaching competencies in field-based experiences.

Program Learning Outcomes (EC–6)

Graduates of the EC–6 CBE program will be able to:

1. Design and Deliver Standards-Aligned Instruction – Plan, deliver, and assess developmentally appropriate, differentiated instruction across all core EC–6 content areas using TEKS and evidence-based practices.

2. Implement Data-Driven Instruction – Apply assessment literacy to analyze student learning data, monitor progress, and adjust instruction to meet the diverse academic, linguistic, and developmental needs of students.
3. Demonstrate Professional Practice and Classroom Leadership – Create positive learning environments that promote engagement and collaboration while incorporating ethical, professional, and reflective practices aligned with the Texas Teacher Standards.

Course Description

This course introduces research-based strategies for creating and maintaining positive and productive learning environments across elementary contexts. Emphasis is placed on classroom organization, clear expectations, consistent routines, and proactive strategies to foster motivation and autonomy.

Student Learning Outcomes

Completion of this course provides the student with the knowledge to:

- Design a classroom environment that is safe, physically accessible, emotionally supportive, and organized to maximize instructional time, manage transitions, and promote cooperation evaluating physical arrangements, safety procedures, and accessibility features for diverse learners.
- Plan consistent routines and procedures that establish clear behavioral expectations, accountability, and efficient use of instructional time incorporating strategies for managing materials, supplies, technology, and transitions to minimize disruptions and maximize learning.
- Identify strategies that foster student motivation, social-emotional learning, active engagement, and self-regulation to demonstrate how respectful teacher-student and peer interactions build positive classroom climates that encourage ethical behavior, responsibility, and enthusiasm for learning.
- Plan authentic and developmentally appropriate learning environments that include routines, transitions, and group structures that support productivity and minimize disruptions.
- Create a multimedia presentation depicting a classroom environment that reflects respect, rapport, inclusivity, and positive student-teacher and peer interactions to highlight strategies for family engagement, collaboration with paraprofessionals, and community building that foster equity and a safe, productive learning climate.

Regular and Substantive Course Interaction

As a general guide, students enrolled in a three-semester hour course should spend one hour engaged in instructional activities and two to three hours on out-of-class work per week in a traditional semester. Students are expected to double this effort of engagement given that this course is being delivered in a seven-week term. Educational activities in this course are designed to ensure regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty to ensure that students can demonstrate competency.

To be successful in this course, all content and course modules should be read and reviewed. All assignments and quizzes (both graded and not graded) should be completed. Please contact the instructor by email for any assistance.

Dropping the Course Due to Failure

Students are NOT allowed to drop a course due to failure in the course. In the event a student does not make 80% or higher on a posttest or culminating project by the third attempt, the student is not allowed to drop the course due to failure. The student is also ineligible to accelerate or re-enroll/re-take the course in the current term.

To drop a course, students must have passing grades in the course or have not attempted any assignments in the course. Please reach out to an academic advisor to drop the course.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

Instructional Methods

This course is an online course. To be successful in this course, all content and course modules should be read and reviewed. All assignments and quizzes (both graded and not graded) must be completed by the due date specified. Please contact the instructor by email for any assistance or support.

CWID and Password

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. 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@etamu.edu.

Technology-Related Issues

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, an ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Learning Management System (LMS) – D2L

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 the technical requirements:

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

This is an online course; therefore, expect most communication to be online as well. If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). **You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication.** The instructor will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 provided the correspondence follows the requirements listed below. Students are encouraged to check university emails daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line (ex. EDCB 517 – Posttest)
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

Studio

The Studio is in D2L and available to all CID students. The CID Studio contains modules intended to support and inform students on their educational journey.

Studio Link – Please contact your advisor if you need access.

RESPONSE TIME & GRADING TIME IN CBE COURSES

Instructors for competency-based education courses are expected to respond to students in 24 hours. If you are not able to reach your instructor, please reach out to your advisor for help. The grading of assignments in courses will be done in a timely manner, but grading responses will not be returned in 24 hours.

ACCELERATION IN CBE COURSES

Students enrolled in competency-based education courses in the College of Innovation and Design are permitted to accelerate from one CBE course to another during a seven-week academic term under certain conditions. The request to accelerate from one course to another must be initiated by the student upon successful completion of currently enrolled CBE courses. Students are responsible for maintaining communication with faculty and their assigned advisor(s) throughout the acceleration process. Students who fail a course or who drop/withdraw from a CBE course are not eligible for acceleration. Students may only request

permission to accelerate in one course at a time. **Request to accelerate is initiated and completed by 5:00 pm CST on the fifth Friday of a seven-week academic term.**

Acceleration Process:

1. Student successfully completes all required coursework in their CBE courses(s) with a grade of "A" or "B."
2. Student receives emailed verification from the assigned instructor that the course has been satisfactorily completed (Grade of A or B only).
3. Student contacts assigned advisor to provide proof of completion and discuss eligibility for acceleration into another course.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

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.

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 online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#).

Academic Integrity

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

[East Texas A&M Academic Integrity Guide](#)

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Academic Integrity Reporting Form](#)

[Overview of Academic Misconduct Reporting Process](#)

CID Policy on Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, complicity in cheating, multiple submissions (or substantial portions) of the same work for credit without authorization, submitting another's work, plagiarism, submitting algorithmically (AI) plagiarized work, and other acts that may reasonably be called academic dishonesty.

- Students who commit academic dishonesty will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment in the course and be issued a Written Warning that is reported to the CID Assistant Dean's office and listed in a database.
- If the student does NOT have a previous Written Warning for academic dishonesty reported in CID courses and has additional attempts available for the assignment, the student may resubmit the assignment (this applies to CBE courses only).
- If the student has a Written Warning of academic dishonesty reported in CID courses, the student may NOT resubmit the assignment, and the instructor will follow the procedure detailed in [Policy 13.99.99.R0.03](#) for Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty and report the incident to the Provost Office.

Submitting Past Work

The resubmission of work submitted in a past course is self-plagiarism. Also, the resubmission of substantial parts of work submitted in a past course is self-plagiarism. **If a student would like to resubmit past work or substantial parts of past work, the student must gain permission from the instructor prior to submission and cite the work properly.** If the student does not gain permission and cite the work, then the submission will be flagged for self-plagiarism and result in actions detailed in the CID Policy on Academic Integrity.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

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

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

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

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 ETAMU 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 with your event organizer.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health – Counseling Services

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 **their website:** <https://www.etamu.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.



COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Requirement for Successfully Passing Course

Students must achieve 80% or higher for **every** posttest **and** culminating project to demonstrate mastery of all competencies and pass the course.

Using Remaining Attempts to Improve Grade

Students are permitted to use remaining attempts on a posttest and/or culminating project after scoring 80% or higher to attempt to make a higher score on the assignment. Students are not permitted to exceed 3 attempts for any posttest or culminating project.

- **Must** complete all required posttests and culminating project and receive a grade on the assignments before doing additional attempts.
- The **highest** grade achieved on the posttest or culminating project will be used for the **final grade** for the posttest and culminating project.
- Please keep in mind that submitting during the final days and hours of the term means that you may not have time to resubmit or receive feedback.
- Once you have accelerated out of the course and received a completion email, you may not return to the course to resubmit work.

Pretest

The purpose of the pretest is to provide students with a baseline understanding of your knowledge in the competency. Pretests are taken once and should be completed upon the first couple of days of a CBE academic term or entry into a course if a student is an accelerator. The pretest is required before you begin studying course materials. A passing score on the pretest does NOT provide permission to skip required assignments in the course. The grade on the pretest does **not** count in the final grade for this course.

Posttest

At the end of a module or course is a comprehensive exam that assesses student knowledge and understanding of major concepts, theories, processes, etc., in the module or the course. A **score of 80% or higher is required** to demonstrate mastery of the competency. If a student scores less than 80% on a posttest, the student will have an opportunity to review the material and retake the posttest two additional times. Students who fail the posttest should review feedback from the instructor before reattempting the posttest on another attempt. If the posttest score is less than 80% within three attempts, students will receive a grade of “F” in the course and will

be required to retake the course in the new term. All posttests in the course have a due date: **Last day of week 7, Friday by 11:59 PM CST.**

Culminating Project

The final project in the course assesses your knowledge of terms and the application of concepts presented in this course. You will demonstrate your understanding of urban and regional planning principles by conducting a comprehensive analysis of a selected city and developing a strategic plan to address a specific urban challenge. This will be showcased in a PowerPoint or Slides presentation. A **score of 80% or higher is required** to demonstrate mastery of each competency. If students score less than 80% on the culminating project, they will have an opportunity to review the material and resubmit the project up to two additional times. If the culminating project is less than 80% within three attempts, students will receive a grade of F in the course and will be required to retake the course in the new term. **If you want feedback for revisions, submit by the end of week 6.** Culminating projects have a due date: **Last day of week 7, Friday by 11:59 PM CST.**

GRADING

A score of 80% or higher on the Culminating Project and **all** Posttests is required to demonstrate mastery of the competencies and receive credit for the course. The following items will be used to calculate the final grade in the course.

Assignment	Points
Module Pretests*	110 points*
Module 1 Posttest	100 points
Module 2 Posttest	100 points
Module 3 Posttest	100 points
Module 4 Posttest	100 points
Module 5 Posttest	100 points
Culminating Project	100 points
Total	600 points *

*Pretests are not included in the calculation of final grade.

Grading Scale

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

F = 79% or Below

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Suggested Schedule

Module	Competency	Required Activities

1	Competency: Design a classroom environment that is safe, physically accessible, emotionally supportive, and organized to maximize instructional time, manage transitions, and promote cooperation evaluating physical arrangements, safety procedures, and accessibility features for diverse learners. Module 1 Posttest: Classroom Environment Layout Analysis Standards: §228.41 E PPR 2.1-3k	● Complete Pretest (once completed, the module contents will open) ● Review Module Contents ● Complete Posttest – Must score 80% or higher to successfully pass the course. Three attempts allowed.
2	Competency: Plan consistent routines and procedures that establish clear behavioral expectations, accountability, and efficient use of instructional time incorporating strategies for managing materials, supplies, technology, and transitions to minimize disruptions and maximize learning. Module 2 Posttest: Routines and Procedures Plan Standards: §228.41 F PPR 2.6-12k	● Complete Pretest (once completed, the module contents will open) ● Review Module Contents ● Complete Posttest – Must score 80% or higher to successfully pass the course. Three attempts allowed.
3	Competency: Identify strategies that foster student motivation, social-emotional learning, active engagement, and self-regulation to demonstrate how respectful teacher-student and peer interactions build positive classroom climates that encourage ethical behavior, responsibility, and enthusiasm for learning. Module 3 Posttest: Motivation and Climate Reflection Standards: PPR 2.4-5k PPR 2.006.A-E	● Complete Pretest (once completed, the module contents will open) ● Review Module Contents ● Complete Posttest – Must score 80% or higher to successfully pass the course. Three attempts allowed.
4	Competency: Plan authentic and developmentally appropriate learning environments that include routines,	● Complete Pretest (once completed, the module contents will open)

	transitions, and group structures that support productivity and minimize disruptions. Module Posttest 4: Learning Environment Organization Plan Standards: PPR 2.19-23k PPR 2.006.F-J	● Review Module Contents ● Complete Posttest – Must score 80% or higher to successfully pass the course. Three attempts allowed.
5	Competency: Create a multimedia presentation depicting a classroom environment that reflects respect, rapport, inclusivity, and positive student-teacher and peer interactions to highlight strategies for family engagement, collaboration with paraprofessionals, and community building that foster equity and a safe, productive learning climate. Module 5 Posttest: Classroom Environment Showcase Standards: PPR 2.005.A-G	● Complete Pretest (once completed, the module contents will open) ● Review Module Contents ● Complete Posttest – Must score 80% or higher to successfully pass the course. Three attempts allowed.
Culminating Project	Complete your TEA-required 10-hour Field Based Experience hours log and reflection, connecting classroom observations and active participation to course concepts in oral language development and early literacy instruction. Both must be uploaded in Educator Portal for credit.	● Required – Must score 80% or higher to successfully pass the course. ● Three attempts allowed

- **All assignments must be submitted by 11:59PM/CST on the Friday of Week 7 of the term.**
- A score of 80% or higher on the Culminating Project and all Posttests is required to demonstrate competency and receive credit for the course.
- **Tip:** After a failed attempt at a posttest or the culminating project, review feedback provided by your instructor and/or reach out to your instructor with questions before moving to the next attempt.

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY (TEA) REQUIRED CONTENT

Clock-Hour Contribution

This course is part of an SBEC-approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP) and contributes 45 clock-hours toward the minimum 300 clock-hour requirement for initial classroom teacher certification in accordance with 19 TAC §228.37.

Clock-hours represent the instructional design and required engagement expectations of the course, including:

- Structured module instruction
- Standards-aligned performance tasks
- Instructor feedback cycles
- Benchmark assessments
- Independent application activities

Acceleration does not reduce required instructional content, performance tasks, or mastery expectations.

Course Alignment to TEA Standards, Crosswalks, and TAC

This course is aligned to the Texas Teacher Standards and certification test framework competencies. Candidates demonstrate proficiency through structured assessments and performance-based tasks.

Mastery Requirement & Benchmark Monitoring

This course follows a competency-based mastery model.

To successfully complete this course, candidates must:

- Complete all required instructional modules.
- Demonstrate proficiency on performance-based assessments aligned to educator standards.
- Earn 80% or higher on all posttests and the culminating project.

Attempt Policy

Candidates are permitted up to three (3) attempts on each posttest and the culminating project. After an unsuccessful attempt:

- Candidates must review instructor feedback.
- Targeted remediation or additional study may be required.
- Candidates may consult with the instructor before reattempting.

If mastery is not achieved within three attempts, the candidate will receive a failing grade and must retake the course in a subsequent term.

Structured Support & Intervention

In alignment with 19 TAC §228.31(c), candidate progress is monitored through structured benchmarks.

Candidates who do not demonstrate mastery may be required to complete:

- Targeted remediation activities
- Structured review modules
- Standards-aligned practice tasks
- Instructor consultation

All interventions are documented as part of the candidate's preparation record.

Certification Examination Readiness

In accordance with 19 TAC §228.31(d)-(g), the Educator Preparation Program (EPP) is responsible for determining a candidate's readiness prior to granting approval for any certification examination attempt.

Test approval is competency-based and is not automatic.

- Candidates must meet all admission requirements, complete required coursework and program benchmarks, successfully complete embedded practice assessments at the established proficiency threshold, and be in good academic and professional standing.

Readiness is evaluated prior to each examination attempt.

- Candidates who do not pass an official certification examination will be placed on a structured remediation plan.
- Retake approval will be granted only after the candidate demonstrates readiness as determined by the EPP.

The EPP reserves the right to require additional preparation prior to granting test approval in order to protect candidate success and program accountability.

Field-Based Experience (FBE)

In accordance with 19 TAC §228.43, candidates must complete 50 clock-hours of pre-clinical Field-Based Experiences (FBE) prior to clinical teaching, internship, or residency.

- The 50 hours are structured into five (5) Defined Field-Based Experiences, each requiring 10 documented hours and one guided written reflection:
 1. Professional Responsibilities
 2. Instructional Support & Small Groups
 3. Classroom Management & Routines
 4. Assessment & Feedback
 5. Family & Community Engagement

Each experience may include multiple visits but must total 10 clock-hours completed in an authentic school setting during the school day. At least 25 of the 50 hours must include active engagement in instructional or educational activities. Reflections do not count toward clock-hours.

- For each experience, candidates must submit documentation verifying the school and district, grade level/content area, classroom teacher verification, dates of participation,

and hours completed, along with one unique structured reflection identifying instructional practices observed and/or implemented.

All materials must be submitted in the electronic portfolio and approved by the EPP prior to clinical progression. Incomplete FBE requirements will delay advancement to clinical experiences.

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

As candidates preparing for professional educator certification, students enrolled in this course are required to adhere to the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics (19 TAC Chapter 247).

Ethical conduct, professional communication, academic integrity, and responsible use of instructional materials are expected in all coursework and field experiences.

Failure to adhere to the Code of Ethics may result in course-level consequences and/or program-level review.