

New York University
Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development
Department of Teaching and Learning
ECED-GE 2314 Social Studies and Science Experiences for Younger Children
Fall 2020, Thursdays, 6:45-8:00 pm

Professor: Rebecca Light, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Zoom Office Hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00-2:00 or by appointment.

Please note if you are in the waiting room for more than a moment, I am meeting with someone else and will let you in as soon as I'm done.

<https://nyu.zoom.us/j/2202161989>

Course Overview:

For young children, science and social studies overlap in both content and appropriate teaching methodology. For the very young child, the content of these subjects revolves around developing theories and understandings about how their immediate environment works: families, neighborhoods, surrounding nature, body systems, and technology. As children grow older and enter elementary school, this circle broadens to include more nuanced and technical understandings of these subjects, as well as how the student's immediate experiences relate to and impact the broader community and world. Throughout the preschool and early elementary years, science and social studies are both a cycle of inquiry, beginning with the child's immediate experience and growing outward into understanding more abstract concepts, historical contexts, and universal scientific processes. Embedded within the teaching of science and social studies are continuous discussion and reflection - both on the part of the teacher and students - of how culture and language impact our understandings of the world around us.

The teacher's role in this process is to shift between providing inquiry-based exploratory opportunities and direct teaching. By designing an *integrated thematic curricula* and making necessary *adjustments to published curricular materials* that addresses both of these subjects and incorporates literacy, the teacher provides a variety of opportunities for students to discover and theorize on their own. Throughout the curriculum, the teacher creates relevant opportunities for off-campus trips, interaction with the larger community, and social activism. Lenses of anti-racism and culturally sustaining pedagogy must be present throughout all curriculum.

This semester's syllabus has an added focus on remote learning and trauma-informed teaching in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learner Objectives:

1. Students will plan integrated curriculum that is differentiated and builds on children's developmental abilities.
2. Students will plan curriculum that integrates social studies and science with age and grade-level standards.
3. Students will plan curriculum that integrates literacy and the arts with social studies and science.
4. Students will create curricular material that utilizes off-site local and community-based resources that supports in-classroom activities.
5. Students will embed ample opportunities to support the linguistic growth of English Language Learners within the integrated curriculum.
6. Students will create age-appropriate opportunities for social activism in their curriculum designs.

Required Readings/Podcasts/Webinars:

1. Articles, Podcasts, Webinars (available on Google Classroom and)
2. Book Club Selection (you will choose this at the beginning of the semester from a list. All books \$12.00 or under).

3. New York State Science Standards ([Introduction](#) [Standards PK-2](#))
4. [New York State Social Studies Standards](#)

Remote Course Structure:

There will be a **synchronous** session over Zoom for two weeks, and then the 3rd week will be **asynchronous** where there will not be a live session. These 3rd weeks you will be expected to watch a webinar and participate in an online discussion at your convenience.

Synchronous Sessions:

On synchronous weeks, we will be meeting on Zoom. We will spend the time hearing student presentations, guest speakers, and discussing content. We will connect everything we are doing to your placements as much as possible.

Asynchronous Sessions:

You will be assigned a webinar and asked to participate in a discussion on our Google Classroom by the end of class (8:00 pm) that Thursday.

Course Norms:

1. **Participation:** We have so much to unpack and discuss as we all enter this new environment of early childhood education in the age of the pandemic! We all will be learning together and we want to hear your thoughts, opinions, and questions. Much of our work together will be based on your participation in discussions. If participating is challenging for you, reach out and we will talk!
2. **Google Classroom:** We will be using Google Classroom as our main classroom interface, so it's your responsibility to check it and keep up to date on what's posted.
3. **Zoom:** Our Zoom meetings will be discussion-heavy, but we do ask that you mute yourself when you aren't talking. We also ask that you close other interactive applications while participating in our live sessions. Even those these are remote sessions, do let us know if you are going to be absent.

Assignments

Assignments are to be submitted via Google Classroom BEFORE the start of class on the day they are due.

Weekly Read Alouds (10%)

One student will be assigned each week to bring in a science or social studies-related book. You will show us the book, read it aloud, and share with the class how you think this book could be used with young children. Be sure to consider what age child you would use this book with. **Before you present the book, please submit on Google Classes the title, author, illustrator, and a short paragraph describing the book. I will be posting these so everyone will leave the class with an annotated bibliography. Full credit will ONLY be given if this information is submitted on time.** *Feel free to use digital editions, or pre-recorded read alouds from social media. The assignment entry on the Google Classroom includes some sites where you can access collections of digital children's books for free.*

Remote Learning Activities (30%)

During the semester, you will create three remote learning activities around a theme of your choosing. You can design these in any way you like. Be creative and be thoughtful of accessibility and age-appropriate design. Your activities should incorporate social studies and science content in an integrated way and use an inquiry-based approach. See the assignment guidelines for further details.

Virtual Field Trip (30%)

Throughout the semester we will be viewing several examples of virtual field trips. As a final assignment, you will be creating your own virtual field trip that relates to the theme you chose for your remote activities. At our final session you'll be sharing your design with the group. See assignment guidelines for further details.

Book Club (15%)

You will be signing up for a book club selection at the beginning of the semester in pairs. You'll be presenting your book to the class and writing up a brief summary of the book and how it applies to your future as an educator. See the assignment guidelines for further details.

Participation (15%)

As is clear from above, many of your assignments are presentations. Your participation grade will be determined by how much you contribute to class discussions, as well as how enthusiastically you participate in and respond to your colleagues' presentations.

Attendance Policy:

All absences must be cleared with the professor. Students are responsible for all missed work. Two unexcused absences will result in a drop of half a grade. (Ex: an A- would become a B+). Two late arrivals or early exits=1 unexcused absence.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities](#), 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor, (212-998-4980), and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for appropriate accommodation.

Academic Integrity:

Please note: All work turned in for this course must be ORIGINAL. When in doubt, cite a reference. Adherence to the Academic Code of Integrity for All Students is expected. See http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/dcc/undergraduate/Statement_On_Academic_Integrity.php. Penalties for lack of adherence to the code will be enforced. Formal proceedings will be filed.

Grading Scale

Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development Grading Scale

There is no A+

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	65-69
D	60-64

There is no D-

F	Below 60
IP	Incomplete/Passing

IF **Incomplete/Failing**

N **No Grade**

Course Calendar

Listed below is the course calendar including weekly topics, readings assignments, and assignment due dates. This is subject to change, so please check NYU Classes regularly for the most up-to-date information. Some weeks you are also asked to review particular standards relevant to that week's topic. (*Readings in italics are posted to NYU Classes.*)

As you can see, we begin the semester discussing the intersections in content of science and social studies. We then spend some weeks on each topic separately, examining content and teaching strategies, and then return to discussing them together in terms of planning and assessment at certain points throughout the semester. **These content areas, as with all content areas in early childhood, are never truly and fully separate from one another. These course topics and guiding questions are all fluid and build on one another.** Please keep this in mind as we move through the course.

Date	Topic	To Read	To Listen	To Watch	Due
Sept. 3rd	Introduction to Course <i>Where do we find science and social studies curriculum?</i>	<i>Environmental Stewardship in Early Childhood</i>	<i>Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice</i>	<i>Abolitionist Teaching and the Future of Our Schools</i>	N/A
Sept. 10th	COVID-19 and Classroom Instruction <i>How does our current situation impact our most vulnerable students?</i>	<i>Guidance On Culturally Responsive Sustaining Remote Education</i> <i>A Trauma-Informed Approach to Teaching Through Coronavirus</i>	<i>Integrated Schools Podcast: COVID-19</i>	N/A	N/A
Sept. 17th	Integrating Play and Literacy with Science and Social Studies <i>How are play and literacy situated within Science and Social Studies curriculum?</i> ASYNCHRONOUS SESSION	<i>Environmental Education and Pedagogical Play in Early Childhood Education</i> <i>STEM in the Early Years</i>	N/A	<i>Powerful Play</i>	Discussion Question <i>Please participate on Google Classroom by 8 pm tonight.</i> How does a learning approach based on play lend itself to anti-racist and culturally sustaining

					curriculum?
Sept. 24th	<p>Critical Inquiry and Social Justice, Part I</p> <p><i>What do critical inquiry and social justice look like at the early childhood level?</i></p>	<p>Early Childhood Urban Environmental Education</p>	<p>Creating A Social Justice Early Childhood Classroom</p>	N/A	N/A
Oct. 1st	<p>Critical Inquiry and Social Justice, Part II</p> <p><i>What do critical inquiry and social justice look like at the early childhood level?</i></p>	<p>Embracing a Vision of Social Justice in Early Childhood Education</p> <p>‘Doing’ Social Justice in Early Childhood: the Potential of Leadership</p>	<p>How to Connect Restorative Practices and Social and Emotional Learning</p>	N/A	<p><u>We Want to do More Than Survive</u> group presents.</p>
Oct. 8th	<p>Assessment and Choosing Topics of Study</p> <p><i>How can we measure student progress in science and social studies and use this information to make curricular decisions?</i></p> <p>ASYNCHRONOUS SESSION</p>	<p>The Assessment of Young Children Through the Lens of Universal Design</p> <p>Learning Stories as Authentic Assessment</p>	N/A	<p>Learning Stories, Part One</p> <p>Learning Stories, Part Two</p>	<p>Discussion Question <i>Please participate on Google Classroom by 8 pm tonight.</i></p> <p>How can stories help document children’s growth AND maintain a culturally sustaining environment?</p>
Oct. 15th	<p>Community-Based Studies, Part 1</p> <p><i>How can we use our local communities to inspire curriculum, both in-person and remotely? How does the history of our communities impact our curriculum?</i></p>	<p>Early Childhood Education and Sustainability: A Living Curriculum</p>	<p>Nice White Parents, Episode One</p>	N/A	Remote Activity Presentations
Oct. 22nd	<p>Community-Based Studies, Part 2</p> <p><i>How can we use our local communities to inspire curriculum, both in-person and remotely? How does the history of our communities impact our curriculum?</i></p>	<p>Finding Their Place in the Community</p>	<p>Nice White Parents, Episode Two</p>	N/A	<p>Remote Activity Presentations</p> <p><u>Children of Immigration</u> group presents.</p>
Oct.	Virtual Field Trips	List of Virtual Field	N/A	Creating Field	

29th	<p><i>How can we guide children into exciting explorations during remote learning?</i></p> <p>ASYNCHRONOUS SESSION</p>	Trips		<p>Trips in the Remote Environment (Please note that this webinar discusses designing trips for university students but has a lot of relevant tips for any age.)</p>	
Nov. 5th	<p>Urban Nature</p> <p><i>How can we facilitate our students' access to nature through our curriculum?</i></p>	Access to Parks for Youth as an Environmental Justice Issue: Access Inequalities and Possible Solutions	Children, Nature, and the Importance of Getting Kids Outside	N/A	Remote Activity Presentations
Nov. 12th	<p>Creating Activists Through Curriculum, Part One</p> <p><i>How can we use our curriculum to encourage students to leverage their agency to support their communities?</i></p>	The Faces of Young Protesters at New York City's Climate Strike	The Are No Small Activists	N/A	When We Fight, We Win: Twenty-First-Century Social Movements and the Activists That Are Transforming Our World group presents.
Nov. 19th	<p>Creating Activists Through Curriculum, Part Two</p> <p><i>How can we use our curriculum to encourage students to leverage their agency to support their communities?</i></p> <p>ASYNCHRONOUS SESSION</p>			<p>Justice From the Streets to the Early Childhood Classroom</p> <p><i>(Click "watch the recording now." You'll be asked to provide some information to register to access the webinar, but it is free.</i></p>	
Nov. 26th Thanksgiving Break					
Dec. 3rd Unit Plan Workshop					
Dec. 10th Virtual Field Trip Presentations Virtual Field Trip Due					