

CHLD 101: Introduction to Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Special Education Observation

<p>Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>4. Identify evidence-based practices, curriculum, environments, teaching models, and technologies that support the development and learning of each young child, including those of diverse abilities.</p> <p>5. Understand the importance of relationships in young children’s lives and the benefits, barriers, skills and data needed to develop culturally competent, collaborative partnerships and teams with children, families, other professionals, and organizations.</p> <p>9. Analyze critical, current trends and issues in the early childhood field as they reflect the historical roots of early childhood education, emphasizing the impact of the dominant culture, and the influence of other diverse cultural groups.</p>
<p>DEC Recommended Practices</p>	<p>C5. Environments are designed and activities are conducted so that children learn or are exposed to multiple cultures and languages by, among other practices, allowing children and families to share their cultures and languages with others to the extent they desire.</p> <p>C9. Services are provided in natural learning environments as appropriate. These include places in which typical children participate such as the home or community settings.</p> <p>C15. Recommended practices are used to teach/promote whatever skills are necessary for children to function more completely, competently, adaptively, and independently in the child’s natural environment. Skills should include teaching those that maximize participation and membership in home, school, and community environments – including those that are typical or similar to other persons in the environment.</p>
<p>NAEYC Standards</p>	<p>1c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments.</p> <p>4a: Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work.</p> <p>4b: Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education.</p> <p>4c: Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching/learning approaches</p>

For this assignment you are required to take notes as well as respond to a series of questions. Please try to select a NAEYC accredited site, if possible, to conduct your observation. In addition to using Heartland's Child Development Lab, we also have partnerships with other centers listed in the handout "**Partner Site Information.**" These sites are NAEYC accredited, enroll diverse populations, and have already agreed to provide field experiences.

To prepare for this observation:

- Call and schedule an appointment for observing **in an Early Childhood Special Education classroom** or an inclusive classroom that has at least one child with a diagnosed disability.
- Read this entire assignment carefully so you know what questions you will be addressing in your assignment.
- Print a copy of the "**Field Experience Verification Form.**" This form will need to be signed by the classroom teacher where the observation takes place.

During the observation:

Please remember: When you are observing within an ECE environment, you are looking at one point in time. As a result, what you see may be a specific response to a specific or unique situation and not always reflective of common practices. Therefore, observations must be conducted with an open mind.

Please take **OBJECTIVE** observation notes using one of the strategies listed on the "**Common Observation Strategies**" handout. Make sure you review the framework for the written paper before you do your observation so you can address each point in your assignment. You will need to respond to each of the following:

Questions pertaining to method:

- What method of observation did you use to collect data?
- What did you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this method?

Questions pertaining to environment:

- Describe the setting you were observing within, including:
 - Number of children
 - Room arrangement
 - Number of staff
 - Activities occurring during observation time period
 - What environmental and interaction strategies are used to support child and family diversity
- Other relevant information (whether families were in the room, how children responded to strangers, etc.)
- What did you see as environment strengths?
- What did you see as environment challenges?

Questions pertaining to children:

- Describe the diversity-related characteristics of children within the classroom environment.
- How were children interacting with the environment?
- Did you feel there was a sense of classroom community?

- Did the children seem engaged?
- Would you suggest any strategies to support further engagement?

Questions pertaining to staff:

- How was the staff interacting with the children and each other?
- Did the staff seem engaged?
- Would you suggest any strategies to support further engagement?

Links to your learning:

- In what ways did your observation complement what you have learned in the course?
- In what ways did your observation contradict what you have learned in the course?
- How do observed practices reflect the standards in the above chart?

Other comments or questions?

After you complete your observation:

1. Complete your assignment as soon as possible while your notes and memories are still fresh.
2. Make sure that you clearly label each section of your assignment.
3. Be sure to address each question in each area. In the rare event that something would not apply to you, please state that it does not apply and provide details as to why this is the case.
4. Each classroom and each age group is significantly different. Be sure to consider the unique attributes and characteristics of each age level and setting as you do your observation.
5. During the course of this class no two observations should sound alike. In each observation carefully consider the impact of the environment, the time of day, and all other elements that you feel are significant to your insights.
6. Submit copies of your OBJECTIVE notes using one of the Common Observation Strategies that were taken during the observation along with the SUBJECTIVE paper answering the above questions. Also submit the signed “**Field Experience Verification Form.**”