

COURSE DESCRIPTION
 A survey of various scientific approaches to child study methods and research, with an emphasis on their application to understanding and educating preschool children. Students will study research designs, concepts and theories and also learn how to interpret and use research findings. The course includes a research project on a research study as well as an examination and interpretation of descriptive statistics.

SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
 SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Title: PSYCH IV - CHILD STUDY METHODS AND RESEARCH

Code NO.: ED 222 - 3

Program: E.C.E.

Semester: FOURTH

Date: January, 1983

Author: Tiit Tammik, Room E460, Ext. 228.

New: _____ Revision: X

Approved: *M Koch*
 Chairperson

Jan. 22/83
 Date

PSYCH IV - CHILD STUDY METHODS AND RESEARCH ED 222 - 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A survey of various scientific approaches to child study methods and research, with an emphasis on their application to understanding and educating preschool children. Students will study research designs, concepts and theories and also learn how to interpret and use research findings. The course includes learning how to design, conduct and report on a research study, as well as understanding the application and interpretation of descriptive statistics.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY/GOALS:

To Study and develop an understanding of: -

1. - scientific methods of child study and research.
2. - child study research concepts, theories and designs.
3. - the practical application of research methodology to the study of child development and behaviour.
4. - child study research proposal development, implementation and the writing of a child study research project report.
5. - descriptive statistics; their use in communicating and interpreting research findings.
6. - how to use and interpret research findings, in order to enhance the students' understanding of child development and behaviour and their overall effectiveness as early childhood educators.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

To be able to critically discuss and demonstrate, through oral and written responses, an understanding of: -

1. - child study research methods, concepts, and designs.
2. - the interpretation and application of scientific child study research methods and descriptive statistics.

3. - **how to plan and conduct a research project, record and interpret observations and write a research project report.**
4. - **how an understanding of scientific child study research can be used to enhance an E.C.E.'s effectiveness as an educator.**
5. - (re: CHILD STUDY RESEARCH PROJECT) - **how to select an area of child study research (which interests them) in consultation with and subject to the approval of the instructor and: (a) prepare a research proposal, (b) conduct library and/or applied research on this topic, (c) prepare a research project report, and (d) give a brief oral seminar report, regarding their project, to the class, prior to submitting it to the instructor for evaluation.**

Specific guidelines, evaluation criteria, and due dates for the proposal and written project report will be discussed in class. Depending on the students' access to children for observation, they can choose to do either - (a) an applied ("hands-on") project, involving observations of behaviours etc. or (b) a library research project, involving researching theories and studies in journals and texts and preparing a research ("paper") project report.

The "library research" project report is expected to be a minimum of 2,000 words, typed, double spaced, with proper research referencing. The applied ("hands-on") research project report is expected to be approximately 1,000 to 2,000 words, typed, double spaced, with proper research report format and referencing. (Note: exact length of "applied" project reports will be expected to depend on the nature of the research, and the extent of data collection, analysis and interpretation, that is involved.) Students choosing to do this type of "applied" project, must arrange to get parental and/or placement supervisor's permission to observe the children involved in their study and insure that confidentiality is maintained.

TEXTS:

Vasta, R. Studying Children: An Introduction to Research Methods. W.H. Freeman Co., San Francisco, 1979.

Levin, G.R. A Self-Directing Guide to the Study of Child Psychology. Wadsworth Co., Toronto, 1973.

Note: Additional readings and/or student viewings of audio-visual materials may be assigned during the course at the discretion of the instructor.

SYLLABUS: Topics, weeks, 1 to 8 : -

- review of course outline and evaluation system.
- the scientific method; objectivity, operational definitions, testability, theories and explanation.
- studying children; ethical considerations, observations, drawing inferences, skills and attitudes.
- experimentation, variables, functional relationships and sources of bias.
- research methods and basic measures of behaviour.
- research proposal development and report format.
- scientific communication and interpretation of research.
- longitudinal and cross-sectional research designs.

ASSIGNED READINGS:

Vasta text: pp. 3 to 31; 103 to 118; and 187 to 205.

Levin text: pp. 14 to 26, and 121 to 126.

Article: "Intrinsic Motivation: How to Turn Play Into Work."
by Greene and Lepper.

TEST #1 (Mid-Term) Feb., 27., covers all of the above assigned readings and lecture presentation material.

SYLLABUS: Topics, weeks, 9 to 16.

- examples of child study observation projects.
- designing, planning, implementation (data collection), interpretation, summarizing and preparation of a child study research project report.
- survey of various types of research.
- experimental rationale and theory testing.
- informal and formal observational methods.
- estimating observer reliability; sources and control of observational bias.
- descriptive statistics: frequency distributions, measures of central tendency and dispersion (of data), correlation, interpretation of measurements (or test scores), normal distribution (or "bell curve") and percentile equivalents of test scores.

ASSIGNED READINGS:

Vasta text: pp. 32 to 46 and 159 to 183.

Levin text: pp. 39 to 68 and 169 to 177.

TEST*2 (final): May 1. covers all of the above assigned readings and lecture presentation material.

NOTE: Additional assigned readings, assignments, or viewings of audio-visual materials may be assigned during the course, at the discretion of the instructor.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY:

Student learning will be facilitated by lectures, class discussions, student and audio-visual presentations.

EVALUATION:

Students will be responsible for regular class attendance and participation, assigned readings, assignments and tests, as requested by the instructor. The course evaluation system can be modified at the discretion of the instructor.

The final, overall course grade will be determined as follows:

Class attendance and participation	10%
Test #1, Mid- Term.	30%
Child Study Research Project Report	30%
Test #2, Final.	30%
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TOTAL =	100%

A grade of A, B, C or R, will be awarded upon completion of the course, in accordance with the grading policy of the E.C.E. programme.

-example: A = 85 to 100%

B = 75 to 84%

C = 60 to 74%

R = below 60% (repeat course)