

CFS-124: OBSERVATION & ASSESSMENT

Effective Term

Fall 2026

CC Approval

11/07/2025

AS Approval

11/13/2025

BOT Approval

11/20/2025

SECTION A - Course Data Elements

CB04 Credit Status

Credit - Degree Applicable

Discipline

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Child Development/Early Childhood Education (Master's Degree)	

Subject Code

CFS - Child and Family Studies

Course Number

124

Department

Child and Family Studies & Education

Division

Career Education and Workforce Development (CEWD)

Full Course Title

Observation & Assessment

Short Title

Observation & Assessment

CB03 TOP Code

1305.00 - *Child Development/Early Care and Education

CB08 Basic Skills Status

NBS - Not Basic Skills

CB09 SAM Code

C - Clearly Occupational

Rationale

Updates to prerequisites were made; Section G and Section H were also updated.

SECTION B - Course Description

Catalog Course Description

Introduces the appropriate use of assessment and observation tools and strategies to document young children's development and learning. The use of findings to inform and plan learning environments and experiences are emphasized. Recording strategies, rating systems, portfolios, and multiple assessment tools will be discussed, along with strategies for collaboration with families and professionals.

SECTION C - Conditions on Enrollment

Open Entry/Open Exit

No

Repeatability

Not Repeatable

Grading Options

Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass

Allow Audit

Yes

Requisites

Prerequisite(s)

Completion of CDEV-C1000 with a minimum grade of C.

Requisite Justification

Requisite Description

Course in a Sequence

Subject

CDEV

Course

C1000

Level of Scrutiny

Content Review

Upon entering this course, students should be able to:

1. Understands stages of development from conception to adolescence.
2. Recognize and apply principle theories of development, historical perspectives on child development, ethical issues, and recent trends in the field.
3. Apply techniques of unbiased observation.
4. Examine the use of a holistic perspective in studying child development in a sociocultural context.

SECTION D - Course Standards

Is this course variable unit?

No

Units

3.0

Lecture Hours

54.00

Lab Hours

0.00

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Contact Hours

54

Total Student Hours

162

Distance Education Approval

Is this course offered through Distance Education?

Yes

Online Delivery Methods

DE Modalities	Permanent or Emergency Only?
Entirely Online	Permanent
Hybrid	Permanent

SECTION E - Course Content

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Describe and evaluate the characteristics, strengths and limitations of common assessment tools with all children's developmental, cultural and linguistic characteristics.
2.	Demonstrate systematic observation methods to provide data to assess the impact of the environment, interactions and curriculum on all domains of children's learning and development.
3.	Describe the ethical and professional responsibilities for educators in observing and assessing young children's development and learning.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Differentiate between various observation and assessment tools according to their purpose and validity.
2.	Demonstrate basic formative and summative assessment techniques.
3.	Apply knowledge of development and other influencing factors to interpret observations and assessments.
4.	Use standardized observation and assessment tools to evaluate quality in environments, interactions, and curriculum.
5.	Discuss logistical challenges, biases, and preconceptions about observing and assessing children.
6.	Demonstrate how observation and assessment are used to plan for and adjust learning experiences.
7.	Describe legal and ethical responsibilities in relation to observation, assessment, documentation, and recordkeeping.
8.	Discuss the role of partnerships with families and other professionals in utilizing interpretations of observational and assessment data.

Course Content

1. Observation and Assessment Based on Theories of Child Development and Learning
 - a. California Infant-Toddler Learning and Development Foundations
 - b. California Preschool Learning Foundations
2. Tools of Observation and Assessment
 - a. Purpose and use
 - b. Current and historic
 - c. National tools such as the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), and Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)
 - d. State tools such as the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), and the resources of the California early care and learning systems
3. Observation and Reporting
 - a. Formal and informal
 - b. Legal and ethical responsibilities
 - c. Confidentiality
 - d. Data collection methods such as:
 - i. Direct observation
 - ii. Time and event samples
 - iii. Interviews
 - iv. Questionnaires
 - v. Rating scales
 - e. Reporting methods such as:

- i. Anecdotal records
 - ii. Running records
 - iii. Checklists
- f. Subjective and objective reporting
- g. Qualitative and quantitative
- h. Documentation
 - i. Types
 - ii. Purposes
- 4. Impact of Situational Factors in the Process of Observation and Assessment
 - a. Factors outside of the school setting
 - b. Demographics, cultural background, and perspectives of the children and families
 - c. Observers' cultural perspectives, expectations, and personal bias
- 5. Use of Observation and Assessment to
 - a. Monitor children's health, well-being, development, and learning
 - b. Determine, plan, and adjust teaching strategies and curriculum to meet
 - i. Various content and curriculum purposes
 - ii. Child's interests, skills, and abilities
 - iii. First and dual-language learners
 - iv. Environmental design needs
 - v. Guidance and behavior needs
 - c. Inform referral and intervention
- 6. The On-Going Cycle of Curriculum Development
 - a. Observation
 - b. Planning
 - c. Implementation
 - d. Assessment
 - e. Reflection
- 7. Collaboration with Families and Professionals
 - a. Use of assessment data
 - b. Promoting family involvement
 - c. Referral processes
 - d. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct
 - e. Recordkeeping
 - f. Rights of children and families

Methods of Instruction

Methods of Instruction

Types	Examples of learning activities
Lecture	Lecture: utilizing white board, video, and technological supplements.
Group Work	Students working in groups on projects relevant to course content and joint problem solving.

Online Adaptation

Types	Examples of learning activities
Lecture	Students will complete weekly modules which include reading, videos and power points.
Discussion	Students will engage in weekly discussion relevant to the topic.
Other	Students will practice observational techniques through group work and games.

Instructor-Initiated Online Contact Types

Announcements/Bulletin Boards
 Chat Rooms
 Discussion Boards
 E-mail Communication
 Telephone Conversations
 Video or Teleconferencing

Student-Initiated Online Contact Types

Chat Rooms
Discussions
Group Work

Course design is accessible

Yes

Methods of Evaluation**Methods of Evaluation**

Types	Examples of classroom assessments
Exams/Tests	Exams which demonstrate the student's ability to interpret various ideas and theories presented in the course.
Quizzes	Students will complete weekly quizzes.
Essays/Papers	Students will complete weekly observations using one of the tools listed in the text book.
Skills Demonstration	Complete an anecdotal record on a child in the lab and describe what you learned about the child from this experience.
Other	A. Class participation and discussion. B. 3 hours of child observations in the lab on campus. C. Written assignments.

Assignments**Reading Assignments**

Reading assignments are based on textbook readings or instructor generated handouts:

For example:

1. Read Chapter 8 in "Week By Week" which covers using standardized measurements to look at cognitive development.
2. Read various content regarding the "Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS)" as an example of a tool that might be used for authentic assessment.

Writing Assignments

1. Reading response

For example: Read Chapter 6 in "Week By Week" on using conversation to listen to language and speech. Answer the following question: Describe how speech or language might be affected by hearing, muscle development, geography, abuse, siblings, heredity, and ethnicity.

2. Quiz

For example: An example of an essay question on the midterm may be: Critically compare the purpose, value and use of formal and informal assessment in early childhood settings.

SECTION F - Textbooks and Instructional Materials**Material Type**

Textbook

Author

Nilsen, Barbara

Title

Week By Week

Edition/Version

7th

Publisher

Thomson Delmar Learning

Year

2017

ISBN #

978-1-305-50100-3

Material Type

Open Educational Resource (OER)

Author

Peterson, G; Elam, E

Title

Observation and Assessment in Early Childhood Education

Edition/Version

1

Publisher

Zero Textbook Cost

Year

2020

ISBN #

N/A

SECTION G - Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity

How does your course and/or course outline of record reflect strategies for accommodating and engaging diverse student populations, advancing equitable outcomes, and fostering inclusion for all students?

This course prepares students to critically evaluate assessment tools and observation methods with attention to children's developmental, cultural, and linguistic diversity. By emphasizing ethical responsibilities and culturally responsive practices, the course equips future educators to foster equitable outcomes and advocate for inclusive learning environments.

Course Codes (Admin Only)

CB10 Cooperative Work Experience Status

N - Is Not Part of a Cooperative Work Experience Education Program

CB11 Course Classification Status

Y - Credit Course

CB13 Special Class Status

N - The Course is Not an Approved Special Class

CB23 Funding Agency Category

Y - Not Applicable (Funding Not Used)

CB24 Program Course Status

Program Applicable

Allow Pass/No Pass

Yes

Only Pass/No Pass

No